# Support for Siblings


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## Barnet Mencap


## Barnet EYSEND Settings and Parent Carer Conference
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We are a Barnet based learning disability and Autism charity which offers a variety of services to both children and adults.

- **What our service offers to families**

**-Information, Advice and Guidance Service**-Support with DLA, Blue Badge, Short Breaks etc

**-Open Door -**Family Activities for families with a child 5 and under with additional needs

**-Bright Start-**(in collaboration with Home Start Barnet) -New Project based in Graham Park to support with school readiness

**-Parenting Project**-Family Links Course, workshops and Coffee Mornings

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# What we don't do

- Support with Housing issues
- Attend Tribunals
- Support with benefits that are not disability benefits
- Therapies or Mentoring for the child/Young Person
- EHCP or Education issues (We signpost to SENDIASS)

# Things to remember

- Relationships between sibling are complex in any family
- Relationships with siblings are life long and can change at different stages
- Even challenging experiences can have a positive learning outcome
- Siblings of children with special needs are often empathic, resilient, independent and have a unique view on the world

# What are the common challenges?

- Limited time and attention from parents
- Confusion/anxiety about their sibling's disability
- Worry about friends' reactions
- Worry about upsetting parents if express negative feelings about sibling
- Lack of sleep!

# Top Tips

- Be Kind to yourself- You have a lot on your plate.
- Take a step back to look at the family-how do you communicate/interact/have fun etc
- Let siblings express themselves –even if what they are saying is difficult to hear
- Don’t need to always do things together Both children need to develop their own interests and identity
- Is there anything the child with a disability can do to support their sibling? e.g bringing them a treat, teaching them to sign

# Top Tips

Age appropriate information about their sibling's condition can help- talking, books, tv, meeting other siblings.

What do they **really** want from you. Might be different from what you think they want. Is there a way to make it happen?

Talk to school or nursery to make them aware of their challenges as a sibling

# Top Tips

- How we talk about everyone in the family can really influence their view of themselves and others. Remember the importance of praise-for everyone including yourself
- Make sure that everyone in the family receives both praise for doing and praise for being
- Make sure that praise isn't always centred around how helpful/kind/patient etc they are to their sibling
- Can show interest in their interests/dreams in lots of different ways. Doesn't always need to be time consuming

# Support for Siblings



- Barnet Carer's Centre-Young Carers
- https://barnetyoungcarers.org.uk/

- SIBS –really useful website with information for parents, school and the sibling themselves
- https://www.sibs.org.uk/

- Cerebra- can borrow books from their library for free
- https://cerebra.org.uk/
- Book list link

# Your Questions



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# Thank you!

- **How to get in touch with us**

Visit www.barnetmencap.org.uk to download a referral form

Or call us on **0208 349 3842**

- Projectsupport@barnetmencap.org.uk

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