

# About Personal Budgets

*In this how to guide you'll find out about...*

- *What a Personal Budget is*
- *How to request an assessment?*
- *What to think about before your assessment*
- *What you can use your budget for*
- *How the budget can be managed?*

## What is a Personal Budget?

Personal budgets are an amount of money given by your Local Authority to provide support that's been identified in your child's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The personal budget is used to help your child's individual needs and help them live more independent lives. You may be able to use it so a carer can take your child to Scouts, the cinema, out shopping, to help with personal care or to come along with you and help you while on holiday.



## How do I get a Personal Budget for my Child?

Contact your Local Authority's disability social worker team to get the ball rolling or ask to speak to someone at your LA who deals specifically with direct payments. Your local Authority will then carry out a needs assessment to get a clear picture of what your individual family needs.

### Before your assessment think about...

- What sort of help do you need?
- How does your child's disability/health affect them and your whole family?
- What are you having trouble with at the moment?
- How could your child have more control over their life?
- Do your/their needs change?
- How much help do you need and how often?
- What do you imagine could change if you had the help?

### You could ask for help to do the following...

- Getting in or out of bed, washing, toileting, dressing
- Playing outdoors, clubs, leisure or educational activities.
- Shopping
- Respite care or short breaks
- Cooking
- Socialising including going to events or places of worship

## Top tips...

- *Find out what your local council's assessment criteria is before your first meeting*
- *Take notes during the assessment.*
- *Ask what help your LA gives in order to manage your budget.*

## This is what your Local Authority have to do....

- Tell you how they calculate your personal budget
- Ensure that the budget is sufficient to meet your needs
- Consider the local cost for the type of services you require
- Let you know what your budget is in good time

## Different ways to Manage your Personal Budget

Your Local Authority will give you loads of information and help about what options they offer and which way or combinations of ways you can get your direct payments.

**Direct payments** – your local council pays some or all of your budget into a bank account managed by you or someone else who will manage the budget for you like a broker.

**An account managed by the council...indirect payments** – the council will manage your budget and will sort out services on your behalf.

**As an Individual Service Fund (ISF)** – Your local authority pays an organization that provides support services and will follow your instructions in getting the services you need. You have a say as to how this support is provided.

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