

# CARMARTHENSHIRE SHORT BREAKS SERVICE

## Working with children and young people with disabilities

Could you be a Short Breaks Carer for Children and Young People with Disabilities?



*Artwork was provided by children and young people in receipt of short breaks in Carmarthenshire*



### **What is a Short Break Carer?**

Short Break Carers offer care in their own home to a child or young person with disabilities; sharing the care with and supporting the family to remain together. Short Break care aims to relieve the pressure on families by offering the child/young person with a disability new experiences and opportunities to make new friends and form new relationships, helping to increase self-esteem and independence, whilst allowing the family time-out, have a break and if applicable spend time with their other children

### **What type of Person is a Short Break Carer?**

Short Break Carers come from different backgrounds but share one thing in that they all care about Children and Young people with disabilities. We need Carers for children and Young people of all ages. Short break care can suit people who are not in a position to offer full time care.

### **What qualities do I need to be a Short Break Carer?**

You need time, patience, tolerance, and energy. You must be able to share your home and life with others and have a spare bedroom.

### **What might prevent me from becoming a Short Break Carer?**

You can't be a Short Break Carer if you have a criminal record for offences against children. Having previous convictions doesn't mean that you cannot be a Short Break Carer, but we have to consider whether this may affect your ability to provide appropriate care.

### **What are the Rewards?**

Short Break care isn't all about giving; you too can get so much out of the experience. You will be making a difference to a child's life, seeing their confidence and self esteem grow. As a Short Break Carer you also help to keep families together by providing time- out for parents and siblings, helping them recharge their batteries.

### **What is Short Break care really like?**

Short Break Care involves working together with a team of people to care for a child/young person with a disability. It is not something that can be done in isolation, it affects your family and close friends. If you have children of your own think carefully about how they will cope with sharing you, their home and their possessions. If you have a partner, Short Breaks is something you must both want.

### **Can I be A Short Break Carer?**

Carmarthenshire welcomes applicants regardless of personal circumstances recognising equality and diversity

### **What support will I get as a Short Break Carer?**

You will be supported with regular visits and training, the Child's Social Worker will visit regularly too. You will have Support Group Meetings and the added support of a mentor with responsibility for supporting Carers who work with children and young people with disabilities.



**If you feel you could make a difference and are interested in finding out more please contact:**

**0800 0933699**

or e-mail [ShortBreaksServices@carmarthenshire.gov.uk](mailto:ShortBreaksServices@carmarthenshire.gov.uk) / [www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/fostering](http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/fostering)

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### **Financial Help**

We will give you an allowance to cover the day to day expenses of caring for a child, further details will be available when we visit you at your home

### **What are the different types of Short Breaks?**

Short Break Carers offer care to a range of children and young people with disabilities 0-18 years for a minimum of 4 overnights per month. This may be just one overnight at a time or two consecutive nights at a time or more depending on the care plan for the individual child.

Short Break Carers can be linked to a small number of children/young people. Short Break Carers provide care for children and young people with disabilities and additional needs, those who have more challenging behaviours or medical and/or physical needs.

### **Initial Home Visit**

If you decide that you would like to be a Short break carer, or you would like more information, we will arrange to meet you at your home. We will also ask you questions about your background, skills and experience and your reasons for wanting to become a Short Break Carer.

### **Preparation**

Following our visit, we'll decide together whether you are in a position to go ahead with a short break carer application. If you are, we will invite you to preparation training, these sessions will give you a chance to learn more about Short breaks with other people who, like you, are hoping to become Short break Carers. It should give you enough information to decide whether to proceed with your application.

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## Home Study Assessment Report

After you have attended preparation training a Social Worker will visit you and your family regularly over a three to four month period, in order to help prepare you for short breaks and complete an assessment report. This time will help you think about how short breaks will affect you, your family and friends. You will be asked to have a medical examination with your G.P. but we also require at least two personal references and a health and safety check of your home. We will carry out checks with the police, and other areas where you have lived. As intimidating as this may sound, it's important to remember that our first responsibility is to ensure that the children in our care are safe. The Social Worker will then write a report recommending whether or not you should be approved as a Short Break Carer. You will have the opportunity to read the report and say whether you agree with it.

## The Short Breaks Panel

You will be invited to attend panel which is made up of people who have expertise in this field. They will decide whether to approve you as a Short Break carer and what ages and number of children and young people you can care for. The decision will be sent to you in writing.

## O.K, I'm approved as a Short Break Carer, What now?

The Short Breaks Team will ensure that you receive information about policy and procedures, education and everything else to equip you to become a Carer. We will arrange for you to start caring for a child via a process of introductions and planning.

## Will I receive any training or support?

You won't be left on your own. You will have a Supervising Social Worker to guide and support you. All Short Break Carers undertake regular training to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of children and young people in their care. You will be invited to participate in various training events and sessions to equip you with the required skills. There are regular support groups for you to keep in touch with other Short Break Carers. The 24 hour Standby Service is available out of hours. You will also be invited to events throughout the year, which is a great way to network and meet others.

## What happens now?

If you have found this information useful and want to be considered as a Short Break Carer you can contact us with any questions on **0800 0933699** or **ShortBreaksServices@carmarthenshire.gov.uk**

my short  
breaks carer



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