

## **#SENDABetterMessage Digital Campaigning – Record a video for social media: share your experiences of disabled children’s services with politicians**

*If you have any questions about the #SENDABetterMessage campaign or this guide, please email [disabledchildrens.partnership@mencap.org.uk](mailto:disabledchildrens.partnership@mencap.org.uk)*

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### **1. What is the DCP?**

The DCP is a coalition of 100 organisations, supported by a network of thousands of parent carers, young people and supporters, who campaign for improved health and social care for disabled children, young people and their families.

We believe that disabled children, young people and their families have a right to access the services and support they need to live a good quality of life and have the same opportunities as any other family.

A key part of our work is to provide a platform for the experiences of disabled young people and family members so their voices are heard by those in power, and wider society.

### **2. What is the #SENDABetterMessage campaign?**

#SENDABetterMessage calls on the government to use its SEND reform programme to create a more just, fairer system of support for disabled children and families – one that is easier to navigate and gets them the services they’re entitled without having to fight for them.

The government has recently published a ‘green paper’ on disabled children’s services.

- In a nutshell, a green paper is an opportunity for the public and organisations to feed in their views on an area of the government’s work – in this case how support for disabled children and families work.
- We recognise and agree with a lot of the description of the problems in disabled children’s services in the Green Paper.
- However, we are very concerned that some of the proposals will restrict families with disabled children from getting services and create extra barriers in an already burdensome system.
- Find out more about the campaign.

### **3. What are the videos for?**

**Digital campaigning on social media is a really important way to get the attention of those in power. We know by posting videos of people with lived experience of disabled children's services online, we can make politicians listen.**

As part of the campaign, we are looking to post as many videos on social media from parent carers, young people and anyone else with experience navigating services to put pressure on politicians to drop the worrying proposals, and to highlight the experiences of as many people as we can.

If you would like to get involved, all you need to do is record a video with the help of this guide sharing your experiences and send it to us. We'll then edit it, add subtitles, check you are happy and upload it to our website and social media.

We'll also collate all the videos we have gathered and send them to the government as further evidence for the green paper.

#### **4. What should the videos look like? What should I say?**

##### **Format**

The videos can be in any format you like. You could talk directly to the camera of your phone or laptop and just talk about your experiences, you could film yourself with your family showing your day-to-day life, or you could do anything else in-between.

Here are a few similar videos that some brilliant campaigners published in 2021, sharing their experiences:

- [Rick](#)
- [Bev](#)
- [Linda](#)
- [Maureen](#)
- [Emma](#)

##### **Length**

It would be great if you could **keep your video to under 10 minutes long** if possible. You don't need to worry about editing anything, just send it to us as it is and we can get it ready for social media into smaller clips (we'll check you're happy with everything before we upload anything).

##### **What should I say?**

*Below are just suggestions for what questions to answer in your video, please do get creative and use other ideas as well!*

##### **Intro**

- Regardless of what you focus on in your video, it could be useful to introduce yourself briefly at the beginning, saying who you are, roughly where you are from, and who is in your family.

**What have been some of the big problems in navigating support for you and your family? What are the key problems you'd want those in power, and the general public, to know about?**

- This could be everything from:
  - Getting assessments for things like EHCPs
  - Schools not providing the right support
  - Accessing certain types of support like respite or therapies
  - Having to tell your story multiple times
  - Services not talking to each other
  - Having to fight to get services, or anything in-between.

**When your family has been able to access the right support, what difference has it made?**

- For example, when you get the right school placement, therapies, respite care, or other services. What positive changes have you seen in your life?

**What impact has the fighting for support, and not getting it for so long, had on you and the rest of your family?**

- For example, you could talk about the impacts on your mental health from having to fight long battles with service providers to get the support you're entitled to, or financial costs.

**What would you like to see change in the system of support for disabled children and families?**

- For example, changes to the process of getting support, less blame on parent carers and disabled young people, service providers talking to each other better.

**In the government's Green Paper some of the proposals could further restrict disabled children and carers receiving support, and create extra barriers in the system. Why is it important that we stop the government doing this?**

- You can read more about these proposals [on our website](#).

## **5. Top tips for recording your video**

When you record your video, all you need is a laptop, phone, or tablet. Below are some tips on how to make the video look as good as it can!

**Clean your camera!**



Give the glass of your phone, laptop, or iPad camera a wipe before you start so it's not got smears on it. Use something like a clean t-shirt, or even a glasses cleaning cloth if you have one. Don't use soap and water!

### **How to hold your device**



If you need to, ask some to film you. Always make sure the camera is on its side, this will make the film look as professional as possible.

### **Lighting**

If you are outside make sure you are in the sun and have light on your face.

If you are inside, try to get some the light from the window. Don't sit with your back to any windows if you can avoid it! Natural light, rather than artificial light from a lightbulb, is always best.

### **Position of the camera**



If you want to do a selfie video, make sure you get your head, and a little bit of your shoulders in the picture – try and hold the camera at the same height as your eye

If someone else is filming you, try to make sure they get as much of you in the shot as possible.

When filming you should try to look into the actual camera lens itself.

### **Background noise**

If possible, it would be good to reduce background noise – such as cars, crowds, TVs or planes – possibly by shutting windows, or finding a quiet place to record wherever possible. Of course, we understand that it's not possible for all noise to be shut out all the time – so don't worry too much. Some noise from children is of course fine!

### **6. How to send your video to us**

The easiest way to send your video to us is probably by sending it via WhatsApp directly to Aidan Smith, the DCP Campaign Officer, on 07811 821716

Alternatively, you could send a video through Dropbox.

Dropbox have made a whole guide to this on their website: <https://help.dropbox.com/files-folders/share/dropbox-transfer>

**Thank you so much for your support for the campaign. Together we will make the government listen to disabled children and families.**