



Support is not Optional is a research report about supporting disabled children or young people in education or training.

Optional means something you can choose if you want to.



The Disabled Children's Partnership did an online survey for the research.



The Disabled Children's Partnership is a group of more than 130 organisations that campaign for disabled children and their families.



They asked 1500 parents of disabled children and young people about the support their child has at nursery, school, college or training.



Why did the Disabled Children's Partnership do the research?

The government are going to tell people about changes to the way disabled children and young people get support in education or training.



Disabled children and young people sometimes need more support than other young people.



They may need support from staff or services for things like:



- equipment to move around or communicate with others



- a teaching assistant



- extra time or support from staff to do things during the school day



- physical or talking therapy



- help to take their medication.



But disabled children and young people don't always get the support they need at nursery, school, college or training.

What did the Disabled Children's Partnership find out?

Nearly half of parents do not get enough support to safely care for



their child from education, health or social care.



2 in 5 parents do not think their child gets the right amount of support to help them do their best.



Nearly half of parents do not feel their child gets support they need from staff they need. For example a speech and language therapist or a physiotherapist.



1 in 4 parents think their child is not safe at school because they do not get enough support.



3 in 5 parents think they have been lied to by the people who are in charge of making sure there is enough support for their child.



Half of parents have poor mental health because their child does not get enough support.



2 in 5 parents have poor physical health because their child does not get enough support.



2 in 5 parents have to give up their jobs because their child does not get enough support.

What do parents want to happen?



Nearly all parents think all children with Special Educational Needs and/or a Disability should have a written record of support. 98% of parents think there should be a legal guarantee that every child with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities gets the support in their written record.



Nearly all parents think the law should make sure that every child with Special Educational Needs and/or a Disability gets the support it says in their written record of support.



What do the Disabled Children's Partnership want to happen?

- changes so the law makes sure all children get the support they need.
- better support for children with Special Educational Needs and / or a Disability in mainstream schools.
- make sure nurseries, schools and colleges have staff who have had the right training to support children with Special Educational Needs.

