

A-Z

Of Children and Families and Young Offenders Services



What we do and where to go for help



A-Z leaflet of Children and Families and Young Offenders Services

Welcome to the A-Z of children and families and young offenders services in Gateshead. This leaflet tells you about the services Gateshead Council provides.

We hope you find this leaflet useful.

Different formats

This leaflet is available on request in another language, in large print, Braille and on audio tape/cd/mp3, please contact the Communications Unit on **0191 433 3444**.

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A Adoption

Adoption is a legal way for children who cannot be brought up by their own parents to become a full, permanent member of a new family. Adopters are needed from all walks of life to meet the needs of a wide range of children who are waiting to be adopted. Single people, married and unmarried couples aged over 21 can adopt. Specialist support is provided throughout the process to become approved as an adopter and after a child is placed with adoptive parents.

For more information contact the adoption team on **0191 433 6388** or email adoptionandfostering@gateshead.gov.uk

Advocacy

Advocacy is about empowering children and young people to make sure their rights are respected and their views and wishes are heard at all times. It can also be about representing the views, wishes and needs of children and young people to decision makers, and helping them to navigate the system. Advocacy services provide independent and confidential information, advice, advocacy representation and support.

For more information contact the children's rights service on **0191 433 2647**.



Anti-social behaviour

Tackling anti-social behaviour is a key part of the work of Safer Gateshead Partnership with a dedicated team working across the borough. The anti-social behaviour team aims to address some of the root causes as well as offering support to victims of anti-social behaviour via a dedicated victim support worker.

Phone: **0191 433 2168**

E-mail: communitysafety@gateshead.gov.uk

Assessment

In order to understand what a family's needs are, a social worker will undertake an assessment. This is a simple process which will ensure that the services which are offered meet your needs.

To make a referral contact the duty social worker on **0191 433 2653**.

Blind or partially sighted

See sensory impairment

Child Abuse

Child abuse takes many forms including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. Discrimination, harassment and bullying are also abusive and can harm a child, both physically and emotionally.

If you are concerned about a child or young person please contact the duty social worker on **0191 433 2653** during office hours and the emergency duty team on **0191 477 0844** outside of office hours.

C Child Protection

The Children and Families and Young Offenders Service has a legal duty to look into situations where there are concerns about a child's well being or safety. Information may come from members of the public, friends or relatives, professionals, (such as teachers, doctors or social workers), or from the child or parents themselves. Enquiries relating to child protection may be carried out by two social workers or by a social worker and a police officer.

For more information contact **0191 433 2653**.

Childcare

There are a number of nurseries and day care facilities in the borough. For more information contact the Family Information Service on **0191 433 8515**. This service has information about all forms of registered daycare in the borough including crèches, nurseries, childminders, pre-school, children's centres and out of school clubs.

*See also:
sponsored day care*



Children's Centres

Children's Centres provide a wide range of services for parents-to-be and parents and carers with children aged 0-5 years. Gateshead has 16 Children's Centres, each providing a safe, supportive and healthy environment in which families and young children can learn, making it easier for families to get the advice, help and information they need all in one place, close to their homes.

Services include:

- Childcare integrated with early education
- Child and family health including antenatal services
- Family support and parenting advice
- Training and employment opportunities
- Support for local childminders

For more information contact **0191 433 8515**
or email: cis@gateshead.gov.uk

Children's Rights

Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child says that children have the right to have their say and be involved in decisions that affect them. Young people should have access to the best quality services to make sure their rights are upheld. The council has a children's rights service which ensures that looked after young people's individual and collective rights are heard, respected and protected.

For more information contact the children's rights service on **0191 433 2647**.

Community Based Services

This group covers adult social care, housing, community safety and health co-ordination.

For more information phone **0191 433 3000**.

C Complaints and compliments

If you would like to make a complaint or compliment about a council service please contact the customer services team on **0191 433 2692**.

You can also register a compliment or complaint online, please visit www.gateshead.gov.uk for further information.



Connexions

Connexions is a service for 13 to 19 year olds (and up to 25 for young people with special educational needs) which brings together a number of services, including careers and the youth service.

Connexions can offer a named personal adviser who will be around to offer guidance and support to young people whenever they need them. Connexions personal advisers can provide information and guidance on a wide range of issues including education, training, careers, employment, health and personal development. Connexions personal advisers help young people and their parents/carers make informed choices about the future.

For more information contact Connexions Gateshead on **0191 433 6800**. The Connexions Centre in the Interchange Building is open between 9.30am - 5.30pm Monday - Friday for appointments and drop-in.

The national Connexions Direct telephone advice service can be contacted on **0808 001 3219** from 8am - 2am daily.

D Deaf or hard of hearing

See: sensory impairment

Direct Payments

Direct payments are made by Gateshead Council to families with disabled children receiving social care services, instead of the council providing the service directly. For more information you can speak to your social worker or contact **0191 433 5099**.



Disabled Children Team

The disabled children team provide emotional and practical social care support to meet the needs of children aged 0-17 years who have substantial, long-term disabilities which have a profound impact on their lives. The services that we can provide include:

- Short breaks - during the day or overnight
- Support to enable a disabled child to access community-based and leisure activities
- Support in the home with the care of a disabled child
- Support to access adaptations and special equipment

The team is one of a range of services that can support disabled children and their families. Other services are provided by health and education, as well as community resources provided through children's centres, youth services and voluntary agencies. The team works closely with other services to make sure that families get joined-up support.

A referral to the team can be made by anyone, including the parent/carer of a child or young person with a disability, a GP or a Health Visitor. The team does operate eligibility criteria, which applies to all referrals. A duty system operates Monday - Thursday, 9am to 5pm, Fri 9am to 4.30pm. For more information contact the team on **0191 433 5099**.

D Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is a problem for which there are no simple solutions. Safer Families service is a free, confidential service that offers practical and emotional support to victims and their children. Safer Families encourages victims to positively engage in the criminal justice system as well as processing security measures and facilitate access to many other services including legal advice, housing, counselling and other therapeutic interventions.

The Community Safety Team has commissioned Gateshead Probation Service to deliver a non - statutory Perpetrators Programme which looks at addressing violent and controlling behaviour, which helps to support the work of the Safer Families Team in Gateshead. For information about the service contact staff on: **0191 433 3509**.

A duty officer is available to discuss your needs Monday - Thursday 9am - 5pm and Friday 9am - 4.30pm



Drug and alcohol related problems

If you, a friend or relative need some help with drug and alcohol related problems there are two agencies that can help.

- Substance Misuse Service - Gateshead is an integrated health and social care team who assess the individual needs of referrals and co-ordinate the provision of the services they are assessed as needing. There is a specialist team for adults and one for young people. Anyone can refer to this team including parents or carers, young people, GPs etc. The team can be contacted Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm on telephone number **0191 445 5400**. There is also a freephone helpline available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The phone number is **0800 328 6728**.
- NECA - this agency provides services to meet the particular needs of adults, women and young people with drug and alcohol related problems. They also work to support the carers of drug users. The team also does some outreach and can arrange appointments out of office hours to suit individuals. The team can be contacted Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm on telephone number **0191 490 1045**. There is also a national freephone drugs helpline. The phone number is **0800 776 600**.
- Alcoholics Anonymous - meetings are held weekly in Gateshead, further information can be found at www.alcoholic-anonymous.org.uk or by calling the local helpline on **0191 521 4400**.
- NERAF (North East Regional Alcohol Forum) - NERAF is an independent peer support charity for people from or wishing to recover from alcohol misuse problems. It provides support for those suspecting they may have an alcohol misuse problem and their friends and families. Please phone **0191 514 8520**.
- SMART in Gateshead - this is a confidential service set up for young people in Gateshead providing information and support around alcohol and substance misuse issues. The team can be contacted Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm on telephone number **499 8110** or freephone **0800 694 0277**.

E Emergencies

Should you need to talk to a social worker in an emergency, contact:

- The Duty Social Worker on **0191 433 2653** (office hours) including Mon-Thurs - 8:30pm-5pm, Fri - 8:30-4:30pm
- Emergency Duty Team on **0191 477 0844** (out of office hours) - including bank holidays and weekends

F Family Group Conferencing Service

Family Group Conference (FGC) is a family meeting in which families make decisions about the future well being of their children. An Independent Coordinator will visit the family to discuss what they need and he/she will arrange the family meeting for them.

The family and the Coordinator will agree who should attend the meeting. This can include family, friends and any workers who may be supporting the family. During the FGC all worries and concerns are discussed between the family and workers. The family then privately, without workers, agrees a Family Plan.

The family share their plan with workers making sure all issues are covered and a date is arranged to review the plan. Everyone included in the plan will work together to make it a success.

The Family Group Conference Service is available to all families in Gateshead. If you would like to know more about Family Group Conference and think it may be helpful for you and your family please telephone **0191 433 2528**.



Family Information Service

Gateshead Council's Family Information Service offers free, confidential and impartial information regarding childcare and family support services and activities and childcare career and training opportunities in the Gateshead area.

The service provides parents, carers and professionals with:

- Information on childcare availability and costs within Gateshead. We can provide general information or information tailored to your specific needs.
- A “Brokerage” service if you are experiencing difficulty in finding suitable childcare.
- An outreach service is available via Sure Start Children's Centres.
- Information on 3 & 4 year old Early Years Funding.
- Family and Child Tax Credits
- Information and signposting on a range of family support service and activities available throughout Gateshead for children and young people aged 0-19 years.
- Information and signposting on a range of training courses for people wishing to take up a career in childcare.
- Information and signposting for existing childcare providers wishing to access training.



F

- Information and signposting to local childcare job vacancies.
- Information and signposting to support those wishing to set up new childcare provision.

Enquires can be made via: Tel: **0191 433 8515**, Fax: **0191 433 5139**
Email: cis@gateshead.gov.uk. Face to face service at any Sure Start Children's Centre.

The service is available 9am - 5pm, Monday to Thursday and 9am - 4:30 Friday.

Family Intervention Project

The Gateshead Family Intervention Project is based within the Sungate Parenting Project of Barnardos North East.

This is a service for families with many complex issues with the main criteria being that the family are involved in significant anti-social behaviour alongside other issues. This may include families requiring support from a variety of agencies for example the Education Welfare Service, who are at risk of becoming involved in the care system because of their behaviour, evidence of poor parenting techniques and families who have been evicted or are at risk of becoming evicted because of their anti-social behaviour.

To make a referral to the project please contact the Safer Communities Team on **0191 433 2807**.

Family Support Services

A range of family support services are available from the Council's family centres. Services available include groups for parents/carers; parenting courses; support in the family home; play sessions and drop-in sessions.

For more information contact the Family Centre Coordinators on **0191 478 6724** (East) or **01207 549 578** (West).

Finding Solutions

Finding solutions is a preventative service for children in need and their families. It focuses on identifying solutions and strengths with families setting goals and working towards them. The service is only available for families who have identified their own need for support.

For more information contact the Finding Solutions team, Referral and Assessment, at the Civic Centre on telephone number **0191 433 2653**.

Fostering

Fostering means looking after children when they can't live at home with their own families. Fostering can be very short term, perhaps even overnight, and many children in foster care eventually return home to their parents once problems are resolved. In other cases, children are unable to return home and need long term foster care or adoption. Fostering is different from adoption in that many children in foster care still have contact with their birth parents and a foster carer does not become their legal parent.



Foster carers come from all walks of life and cultures and can be single, a married or unmarried couple, employed or unemployed.

For more information contact the fostering team on **0191 433 8333** or email adoptionandfostering@gateshead.gov.uk
web: www.gateshead.gov.uk/fostering

See also: adoption

H Hate Crime

Hate crime can take many forms from name calling and graffiti through to physical attack and include racist, religious, homophobic, transphobic and disability incidents.

Victims and witnesses can report incidents of hate crime to Gateshead ARCH which is supported by a number of agencies including Gateshead Council, Northumbria Police, The Gateshead Housing Company and Victim Support. The Gateshead ARCH hate crime reporting system aims to support victims of hate crime and take action against perpetrators.

Reports can be made in confidence to the 24 hour helpline - **0191 433 2648** or by visiting a designated reporting centre including Gateshead Council Safer Communities team / Asylum and Refugee team or any Gateshead Housing Company office.

For further information visit www.gateshead.gov.uk/safergateshead or contact the Safer Communities team on **0191 433 2701**.

Home from Home

Home from Home is a fostering short break service for disabled children.

We need more foster carers who can provide a short break for parents and children with disabled children.



For more information contact the Home from Home Fostering Service on **0191 433 8333**.

Intensive Intervention Project (IIP)

I

The Intensive Intervention Project is based within the Sungate Parenting Project of Barnardos North East. This is a service for families with a young person aged approximately 10 - 18 years who is, or is at risk of becoming, heavily involved with offending and/or anti-social behaviour.

To make a referral to the project please contact the Safer Communities Team on **0191 433 2807**.

Interpreting and Translation

If you require a service from Gateshead Council and you do not speak English an interpreter will be provided through The Newcastle Interpreting Service which exists to provide high quality interpreting between council officers and users of council services. All interpreters are trained and all follow a code of practice that includes the need for confidentiality.

The council officer you are dealing with will arrange this service on your behalf. Communication support is also available for people who are require a British Sign Language Interpreter.

Contact your council officer directly if you require this service.

Learning Disabilities

L

See: Disabled Children Team

Looked After

‘Looked after’ is a term used to refer to those children and young people who are cared for by the local authority, usually by living with foster carers or in residential homes.

L Looked After Children's Health Team

The role of the Looked After Children's Health Team is to work with children who are looked after to ensure that all their health needs are met. The health team are based with the looked after children's young people's team (see below).

Looked After Children Team

The Looked After Children Under 15's Team is located in the Young People's Support Centre alongside the Looked After Children Young People team. The two teams form an integrated social work service for looked after children. The children's team works with children aged 0-14 includes social workers, a support worker and social work therapists.

The social work therapists provide a therapeutic service to looked after children and support to their carers. They also provide a therapeutic service to children in adoptive placements and to children who are experiencing the impact of sexual abuse.

We are open from 8.30am to 5pm Monday to Friday. For more information please contact **0191 433 6060**.





Looked After Young People's Team

L

This team is based at the Young People's Support Centre in Gateshead and provide a service to looked after children and careleavers from 15 to 24 years. We can advise on housing, employment and training; further and higher education; benefits and how to access a volunteer. We also have various activities and facilities on offer such as a drop in, skills groups, a crèche and laundry facilities.

We are open from 8.30am to 5pm Monday to Friday. For more information please contact **0191 433 6060**.

Network of Children with Disabilities

N

The Gateshead Network of Children with Disabilities is for all disabled children and their families living in Gateshead. New members receive free leisure cards, as well as regular updates on service developments and local support.

To join phone **0191 433 5145**.

P Partners

The children and families and young offenders service works closely with partner agencies such as health and education and the voluntary sector to ensure that we provide the best possible services to children and families in Gateshead.



R REALAC Virtual School

REALAC stands for Raising the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children. The team help young people throughout their school years to enjoy and achieve in education. The REALAC Team are a multi-disciplinary team, which means they work in different areas to help and support young people's education and learning.

We:

- Promote the inclusion of looked after children and continuity of their education
- Offer advice, guidance and support for looked-after children, carers and families
- Promote and support school attendance of looked after children
- Work with and supporting schools in raising educational attainment and promote achievement in its broadest sense.
- Help looked after young people to develop skills for employment, for example, supporting the development of skills through the Teenagers to Work programme.
- Coordinate and monitor the development of personal education plans (PEPs)

For more information contact the Virtual School Head on **0191 433 8594** or the REALAC Virtual School on **0191 433 8521**.

Referral and Assessment Team

This team is a first point of contact for referrals to children's social care services for children who are in need of protection or support to live safely within their family. The social workers in referral and assessment carry out brief and more in-depth assessments of children who have been referred for services. A referral to the team can be made by anyone, including families, members of the public, or professionals such as GPs, health visitors etc. A duty system is in operation; referrers should call **0191 433 2653**.

See also: Finding Solutions

Residential Children's Homes

There are two children's homes in Gateshead which provide medium to long term residential care for young people aged 11-17. There is also a residential home to provide short breaks for disabled children.

For more information contact **0191 433 3000**.

See also: Disabled Children Team

Safeguarding and Care Planning

The two safeguarding and care planning teams work with children and families who have been assessed by the referral and assessment team as being in need of further help and support in a longer term basis.

This teams work together with families and other professionals to support children to live safely with their families and to give every child the opportunity of a happy, healthy and successful life. This includes supporting families where there are children with child protection plans and looked after children.

For more information contact **0191 433 3000**.

S Safeguarding Children Unit

The Safeguarding Children Unit works with social workers and professionals to manage the conference and reviewing service. The team ensures secure accommodation reviews, foster carer reviews, private fostering placements and strategy meetings.

The team is linked closely with the Local Children's Safeguarding Board (LSCB) whose job it is to make sure that children in Gateshead are safe and protected. For more details visit the LSCB website: www.gateshead.gov.uk/LSCB

For more information contact **0191 433 8030**, Monday - Thursday 8.45am-5pm and Friday 8.45am - 4.30pm.

Sensory impairment

This team supports people with sight difficulties or hearing impairment. The sensory support team offers advice and support to people of all ages with sight difficulties and hearing impairments. For information contact Adult Social Care Direct on **0191 433 7033**.

See also: Disabled children team

Sexual Abuse

See also: child abuse

Short breaks

Short breaks give disabled children and young people the chance to spend time with friends, experience exciting and fun activities, and develop new skills and independence. They also give parents and carers a break from their caring role and time to recharge their batteries. This used to be called 'respite'.

For more information or to make a referral please contact the Disabled Children Team on **0191 433 5099**.

See also: Home from Home

Social Worker

Children's social workers can offer support, advice and counselling to you and your family. With your help, they will assess what kind of help or support young and/or your child might need and work towards getting this for you.

For more information contact - **0191 433 2653**.

Special Educational Needs

Our special needs support service provides assessment and support to individual pupils in schools including children with hearing and visual impairments, dyslexia, speech and language difficulties, autism and pre-school children.

Phone: **0191 433 8530**, Minicom: **0191 482 0160**
or email



customerservices@gateshead.gov.uk

Sponsored Childcare

Subsidised child care places can be provided for those children who

S have been assessed as ‘children in need’. Places can be funded with registered childminders; out of school clubs; private and voluntary nurseries; pre-school and holiday play schemes.

These services can be provided to children where an assessment has been carried out and support has been agreed.

For more information contact the Family Centre Coordinators on **0191 433 8200** (East) or **01207 549 578** (West).

Springboard Treatment Foster Care

T Springboard Treatment Foster Care is one of the range of services offered by the fostering team. It is an intensive fostering scheme for young people aged 8 to 16. It offers children and young people in our care the intensive support and help they need to turn their lives around. This support is offered by a multidisciplinary team and it aims to bring positive change to a young person’s life, which is achieved through an individually tailored programme.

For more information contact **0191 433 8333**.

V

Transition Team

There is a dedicated transition team for disabled young people aged 18 to help them move into adult services and prepare for adult life. For further information please contact Adult Social Care Direct on 0191 433 7033 **0191 433 7033**.

Y

Volunteers

The Children, Families and Young Offenders service needs volunteers for the Home from Home scheme and leaving care volunteer mentor scheme. See relevant entries for more details.

Youth Crime Action Plan (YCAP) Family Intervention Project



The Youth Crime Action Plan (YCAP) Family Intervention Project is based within the Sungate Parenting Project of Barnardos North East.

Y

This is an early intervention service for families that have at least one child between the ages of 5 - 10 years who is at risk of becoming involved in offending and/or anti-social behaviour.

To make a referral to the project please contact the Safer Communities Team on **0191 433 2807**.

Youth Offending Team

The Youth Offending Team in Gateshead brings together staff from police, probation, education, health, housing, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and social care to tackle youth crime.

They tackle offending by young people aged between 10 and 18, by working with them to reduce and prevent offending, intervening early and helping young offenders make amends for their behaviour through a range of community-based reparation projects.

Useful contacts

Childline

This is a free 24-hour confidential helpline for children and young people in trouble or danger. Phone: **0800 1111**.

NSPCC

The NSPCC provide 24-hour child protection helpline for anyone concerned about a child or who needs help or advice with their own children. Phone: **0808 800 5000**.

Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB)

Gives free, confidential, impartial and independent advice on debt, benefits, housing, legal matters, employment, immigration and consumer issues.

The CAB is based at **5 Regent Terrace, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear, NE8 1LU**. Phone: **0191 478 5100**.

Gateshead Council Customer Services

Gateshead Council's customer services team try to answer all your questions from bin collections to the bizarre. For training and quality purposes all calls to Gateshead Council will be recorded in order to improve our service to the public.

Call: **0191 433 3000** or email customerservices@gateshead.gov.uk





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