ideas4life

Thinking about the future

Preparing for Adulthood Guide

FOR PARENTS AND CARERS of young people with additional needs

youth connexions

Hertfordshire

Welcome

I'm a parent of two children with SEND, in Year 9 and Year 11, so the journey into adulthood for both of them is well underway. It is quite a worrying time, as we don't know what the future holds and want to make sure we shape it as well as we can. There is a focus on thinking about long-term outcomes for our children now – what would they like their life to be as adults and how can we help them get there? How can we help them to give their views and think about the future with us? I have found this Transition Guide very valuable in giving a framework and a timetable for all the things we have to think about, and it has reassured me that with good planning there is time to get things right.

Families who have already been through this experience have been very involved in making sure that the information in this guide is useful.

This is a comprehensive transition guide, covering many aspects of our children's lives. Some of it will be relevant to you, some may not. We hope it helps you to find the information that is useful to you.

Leise Cooper
Chair of Hertfordshire Parent Carer Involvement

The Guide has been developed in partnership with parents and Hertfordshire Local Authority.

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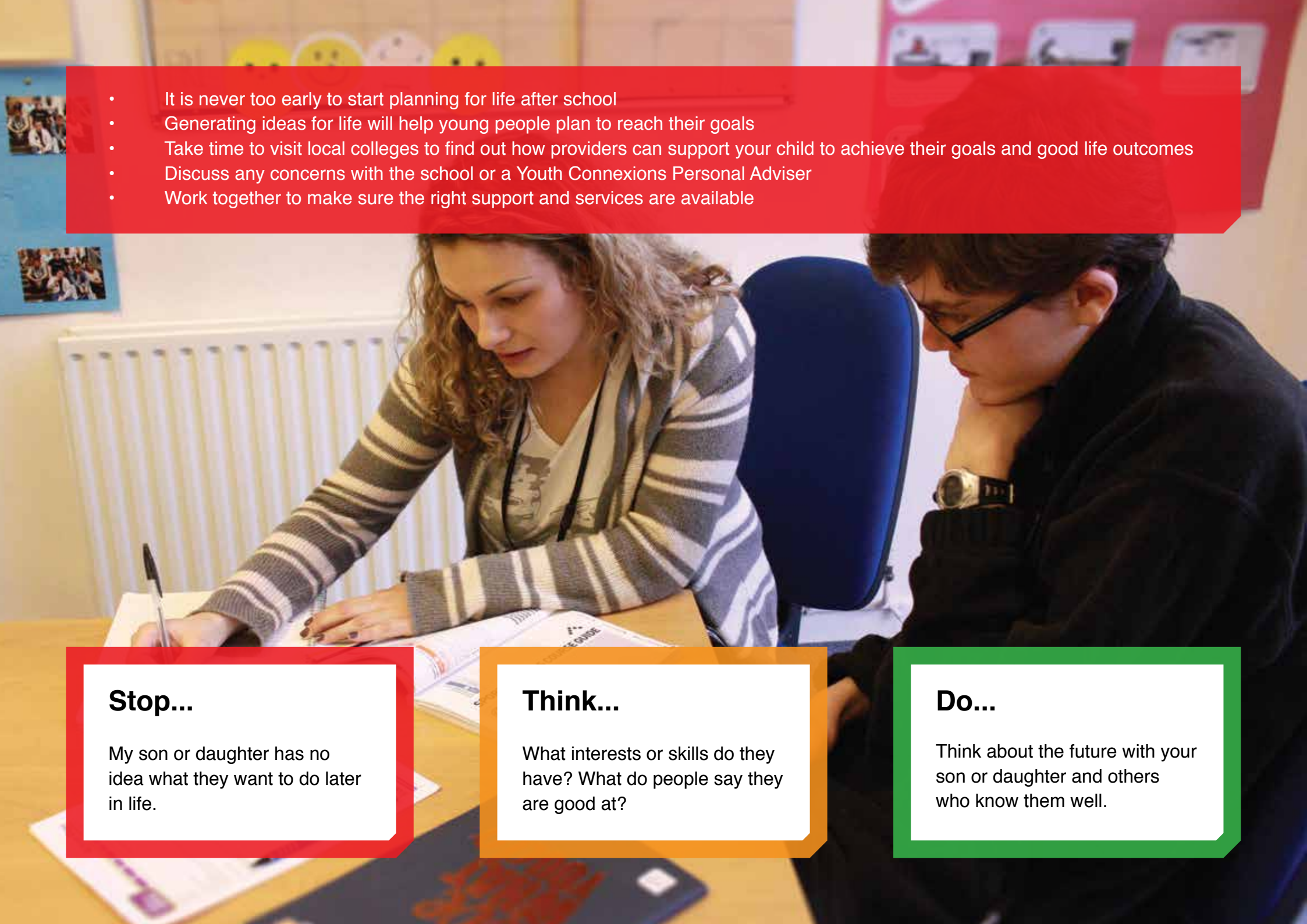


- It is never too early to start planning for life after school
- Generating ideas for life will help young people plan to reach their goals
- Take time to visit local colleges to find out how providers can support your child to achieve their goals and good life outcomes
- Discuss any concerns with the school or a Youth Connexions Personal Adviser
- Work together to make sure the right support and services are available

Stop...

My son or daughter has no idea what they want to do later in life.

Think...

What interests or skills do they have? What do people say they are good at?

Do...

Think about the future with your son or daughter and others who know them well.

Transition planning

All young people face big changes when they leave school and need to make plans for their future. The purpose of planning is to help your son or daughter to achieve their goals. The new Education, Health and Care Plan will provide the same statutory rights to access services as a Statement of Special Educational Needs in line with the new Children and Families Act 2014 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years. The importance of these Plans is that they encourage planning from childhood to adulthood; we call this transition planning. This guide explains how transition planning should happen.

A Youth Connexions Personal Adviser **(see page 15)**, working closely with the school, is there to inform you about the options available and to support your son or daughter to prepare for adulthood. National SEND reforms suggest that what young people want most is to 'get a life' and be part of their local community. There are four things to think about that help us 'get a life', these are:

- Pathways into employment
- Housing pathway
- Planning for good health
- Developing friends, relationships and community

Professionals from Education, Health and Care Services will provide detailed information about their ongoing support for your son or daughter and their future needs. In Hertfordshire Youth Connexions can offer young people from 14 plus a Preparing for Adulthood Transition Plan (PfA). This means that the transition plan can be used by education providers and employers to ensure that your son's or daughter's needs can be met.

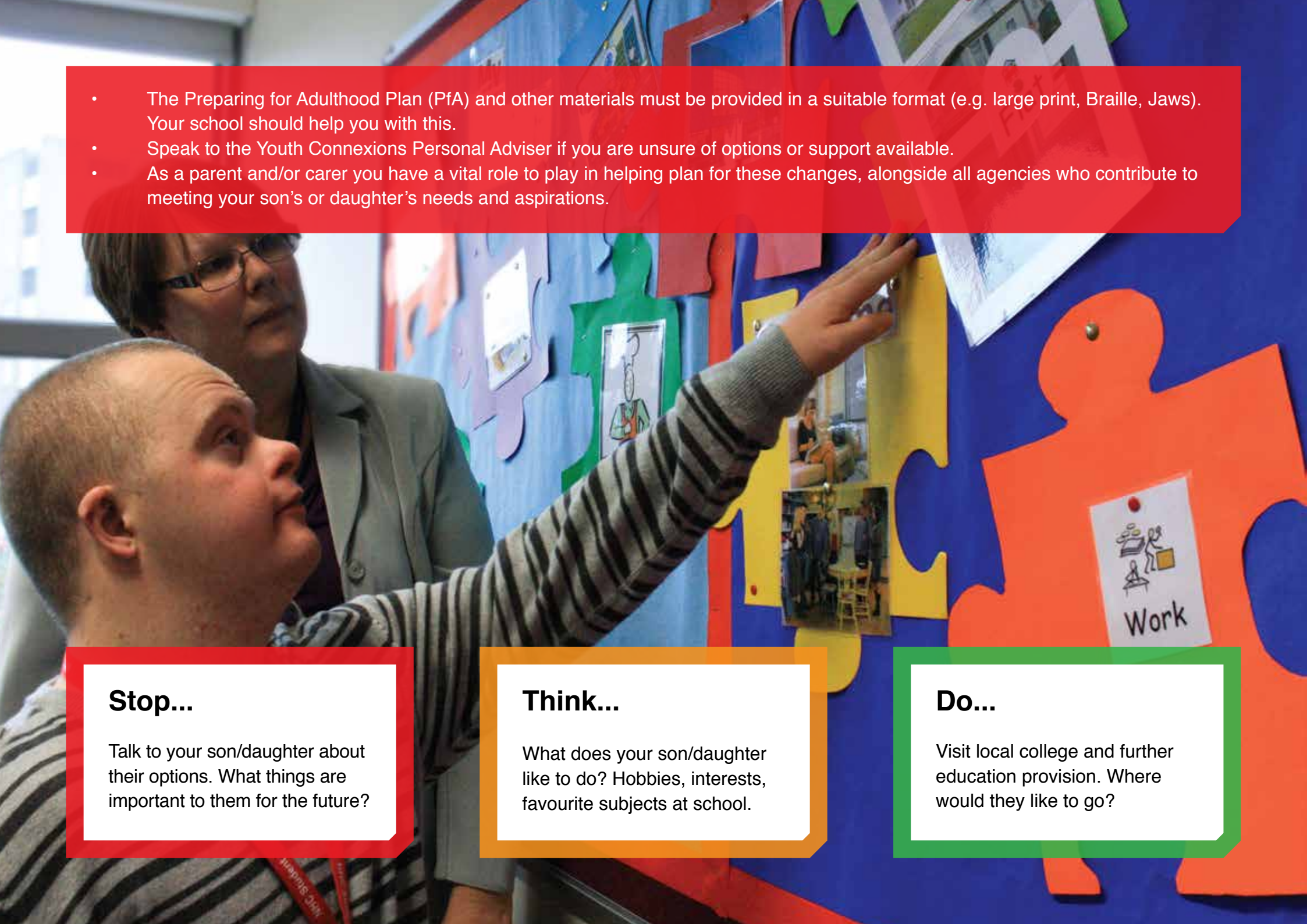
If you require more information check out: **www.hertsdirect.org/localoffer**

What is Transition?

- It is the move from childhood to adulthood, keeping the young person's needs, aspirations and wishes central to the planning process.
- It is about the move from Children's to Adult Services.

The annual review plays an important role in preparing for adulthood from year 9. This guide will provide you with useful information to support your son or daughters future plans and aspirations.

- The Preparing for Adulthood Plan (PfA) and other materials must be provided in a suitable format (e.g. large print, Braille, Jaws). Your school should help you with this.
- Speak to the Youth Connexions Personal Adviser if you are unsure of options or support available.
- As a parent and/or carer you have a vital role to play in helping plan for these changes, alongside all agencies who contribute to meeting your son's or daughter's needs and aspirations.



Stop...

Talk to your son/daughter about their options. What things are important to them for the future?

Think...

What does your son/daughter like to do? Hobbies, interests, favourite subjects at school.

Do...

Visit local college and further education provision. Where would they like to go?

Creating a Preparing for Adulthood Plan (PfA)

If your son or daughter has a Statement of Educational Need or has an Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP) their planning for the future starts at the age of 13 (year 9) and you should be supported to put together a transition plan at the annual review. In Hertfordshire the document where the information for the PfA is recorded is called the 14-25 Preparing for Adulthood Transition Plan (PfA). It has sections to gather all the important information about your son or daughter and also for you to record your views. The PfA Transition Plan can be updated annually if required from year 9 to provide time to think and plan for future options. It is important to be aware that Statements are being phased out by April 2018 and Education, Health & Care Plans have been introduced from September 2014. The Local Authority has a plan in place to convert Statements to Education, Health & Care Plans.

You may have questions or concerns surrounding a number of topics, such as:

- Leaving school or starting college
- Finding a job
- Benefits and money
- Where young people live or have short breaks
- Keeping healthy and safe
- Paying for care and support
- Longer term plans
- Leisure and social activities

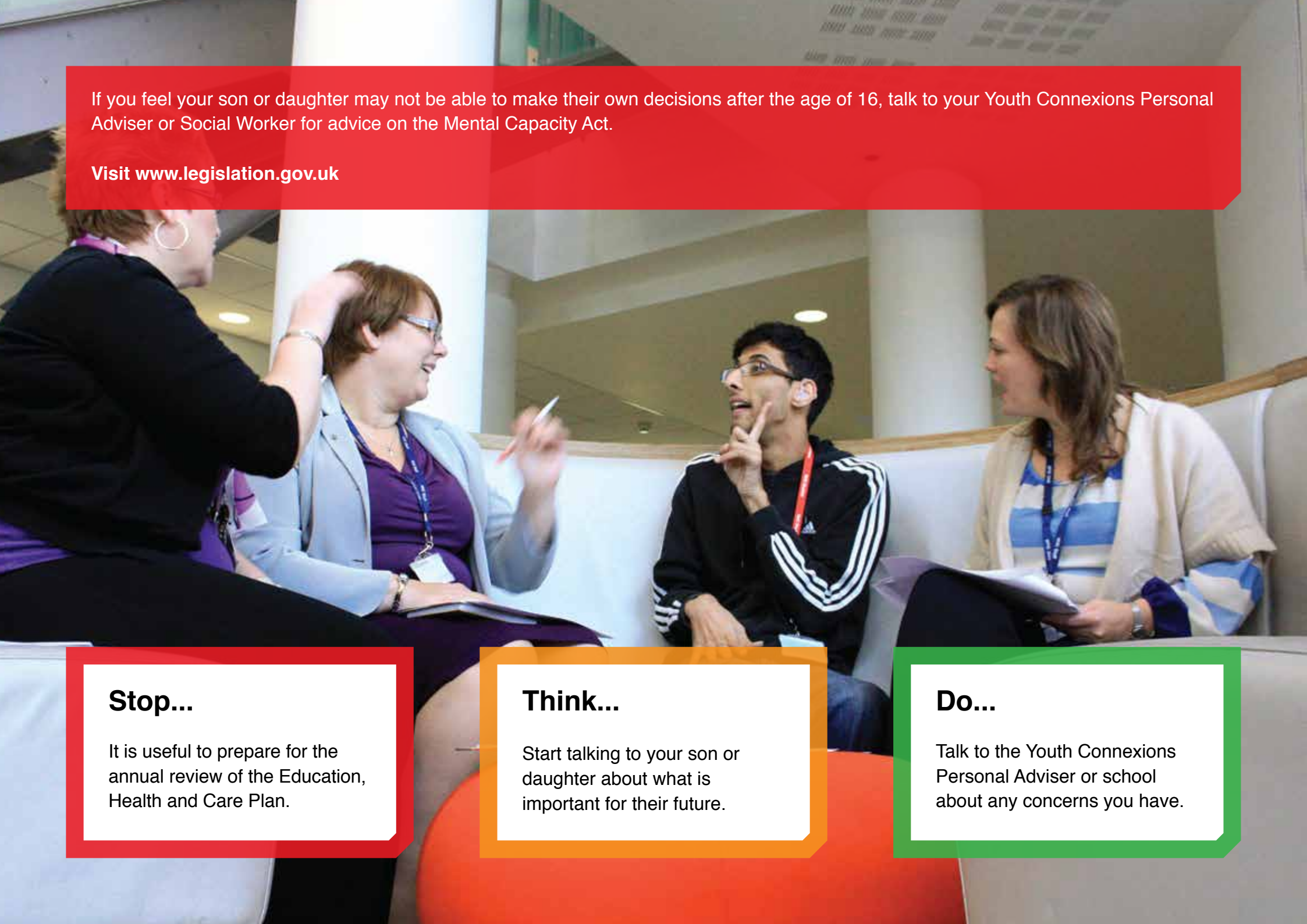
To ensure you get the most out of the year 9 annual review meeting of the Education and Health and Care Plan it is important to help your son or daughter to think about what they like and their hopes for the future before the meeting. Some young people will need more support to do this. It may also be helpful to ask others who know them well what they think. Planning the future for your son or daughter may be helped by a process called 'Person Centred Planning'. This is about making sure the plans are based on what your son or daughter likes to do, their strengths, what is important to them, now and in the future. It needs to address what is important to them, giving them choice and control to realise their goals and aspirations, access to opportunities and the support they will need to achieve their future hopes and dreams.

The Ideas for Life DVD is a good tool to help your son and daughter think about the future. It is essential that the young person is supported to participate as fully as possible and that they are at the centre of the planning process for their future.

Some young people will need more support to do this and it may be helpful to ask others who know them well to help.

Your son/daughter can be creative and use photos and videos in his/her person centred plan.

Young people may have to make many important decisions when preparing for adulthood, but this can be both exciting and challenging.



If you feel your son or daughter may not be able to make their own decisions after the age of 16, talk to your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser or Social Worker for advice on the Mental Capacity Act.

Visit www.legislation.gov.uk

Stop...

It is useful to prepare for the annual review of the Education, Health and Care Plan.

Think...

Start talking to your son or daughter about what is important for their future.

Do...

Talk to the Youth Connexions Personal Adviser or school about any concerns you have.

Please remember if you feel that your son's or daughter's annual review of the EHCP are not person centred, they and you have the right to speak up and ensure that they are at the centre of all discussions.

It is also important that your son or daughter and you choose who is going to be involved in the development of their PfA plan. A good plan will reflect their needs and will help local services and all those involved in supporting them, plan to work together over time to ensure that your son's or daughter's individual needs are met as they move from childhood to Adulthood.

At the initial meeting to create their transition plan you and your son or daughter will need to start thinking about and discussing what they would like to do after Year 11 and the choices they have. This provides a basis for the PfA but is by no means 'set in stone'.

Post 16 options to be considered:

- Some young people may benefit from staying in school after Year 11; for others going to college would be better.
- There are a number of special schools in Hertfordshire for young people with more complex needs that have Post-16 departments where young people can continue their learning until Year 14 when they reach 19 years of age.
- Applications for college should be made in the autumn term of the final year of school.
- Young people looking for work should be supported to have work experience and to think about searching for a job by the spring term of Year 11.
- It is advisable to consider all options and to have a back-up plan.

Reviewing the EHC Plan

A review of the EHCP should happen at least annually but of course there maybe a number of discussions with the school SEN officer, Youth Connexions, Health or other professional at anytime. At these meetings the plan will be reviewed to ensure that it reflects your son or daughter's aspirations and identifies their support needs. The PfA from year 9 will inform the EHC Plans outcomes for adulthood but this document does not need to be reviewed annually.

How to get the most out of review meetings

Why do I need to attend the meeting?

It is important for you as a parent or carer to be at the meeting because it is the first formal step in planning for your son's or daughter's adult life. If the date of the meeting makes it difficult for you to attend, contact the school and ask for the meeting to be rearranged for a time you can manage. If you have particular problems, such as childcare or transport, explain this to the school and see if they can help. You can request to talk to your Youth Connexions PA to plan and prepare for what to expect at your review meeting.

Who can I expect to be at the meeting?

The school should invite:

- You
- Your son or daughter - they may want to have a friend or advocate with them
- School staff who work with your son or daughter
- SEN Officer
- Your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser will endeavour to attend your review in year 9 and your final year at school.

- Representative from social services
- Anybody else who works with your son or daughter, including therapists and others who provide medical help.

The school should tell you who they have invited and you can say if there are other people you would like to attend.

Is there anything I should do before the meeting?

It is a good idea to think about the meeting beforehand and to write down any thoughts you have and questions you want to ask. It is important that all aspects of a young person's life are considered, not just the immediate concerns around schooling. Talk to your son or daughter in their own time about their ideas for the future. Write down what you know about what they like doing at school. Think about any help you feel they may need when they leave school. These are some of the things you may want to think about:

- Health care needs
- Travel training and transport
- Getting a place at college
- Getting a job
- Where to live
- Learning the skills to live independently
- Anything else that is of concern to you or your son or daughter, either now or in the future.

You should have the opportunity to discuss these points at the meeting and to ensure your comments are included in the transition plan.

Take any notes you have made and any questions you need to ask at the meeting. These may include:

- Are there college courses that my son or daughter can do and what support can be provided?
- What benefits is my son or daughter entitled to?
- What support is available to find work or supported employment?
- Who will help my son or daughter when he or she has left school?
- How will he or she get the therapies they need?
- What are the opportunities for independent living?
- What changes in the level of support are there between children's and adult services?

How will my son or daughter prepare for the meeting?

All young people should have the chance to prepare for their transition review meeting. Schools should provide impartial information advice and guidance to young people. Youth Connexions will offer facilitation support to Young People in year 9 and beyond with an EHC Plan. Check with the school to see who provides their impartial advice so you know who the Personal Adviser will be.

Some young people will need specific help to express their thoughts and ideas and will have been helped to create a person centred plan, using a variety of media, that they can take to their review meeting to support them. It is the young person's hopes and dreams for the future and how they maybe supported to achieve them that should form the basis of the transition plan.

Remember this is just the start of the PfA planning process and PfA plans will be updated and developed in their final year of school.

What happens at the meeting?

- A member of the school/college will chair the meeting and everyone will be asked to introduce themselves and explain what they do. Do ask if you are not sure who anyone is, or why they are there
- The meeting should provide opportunities for your son or daughter to discuss their hopes and dreams for the future and expected outcomes of the EHC Plan. Some young people may wish to present ideas that they have been working on in school or at home. This is their meeting and their opportunity to talk about what is important to them.
- Everyone will want to know what your son or daughter is interested in, what they enjoy doing and whether they have any ideas about what they want to do when they leave school. These ideas may be about going to college, getting a job or other things to do during the day, but the meeting should also consider wider topics such as leisure activities and where they might want to live when they are older.
- During the meeting you may hear things that surprise you about your son or daughter. People may know some things about your child that you haven't heard before. There will be other things that only you know about your son or daughter, such as their interests, dreams or fears, or about things they do at home. It will be helpful if you say what you know so that planning for the future can build on your knowledge as well as everybody else's.
- It is important that you talk about your own ideas, hopes and concerns for your son's or daughter's future so that their transition plan can include the help you need to support your son or daughter as they move to the next stage of their life.

Remember that you are not expected to make definite decisions at this meeting. Like your son or daughter, you may change your mind as they grow up or as things at home change. You may also need more information and time to think about what you have heard.

What happens after the meeting?

- The EHCP will be updated after the annual review reflecting the contributions from professional agencies and a copy sent to you.
- Your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser will offer your son and daughter guidance on their post 16 options as part of Preparing for Adulthood. You can request a meeting with your Youth Connexions PA to discuss post 16 options like college, training employment and independent living.

How will the EHCP Plan be updated?

The EHC Plan will be reviewed each year until your son or daughter leaves school. This will happen as part of their annual review. This review will explore whether the plan is working and whether any changes need to be made. This may be because your son or daughter aspirations for the future and educational needs might have changed. If changes or new outcomes are needed then another review will need to take place to discuss these, so that the plan can be amended.

When your son or daughter is 18 they may be eligible for Health and Community Services (HCS), you will need to make sure that they have an appropriate assessment of this need and it will be important that a Social Worker or a Transition Coordinator from the Transition Team is involved. If you are unsure about who should be contacted and do not have a Social Worker, your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser will be able to help and will give you the latest information on the HCS Transition Team and the role they may play in helping plan for the future. You can
contact the HCS Transition Team directly on **01438 844454 (East Team) or 01442 453887 (West Team).**

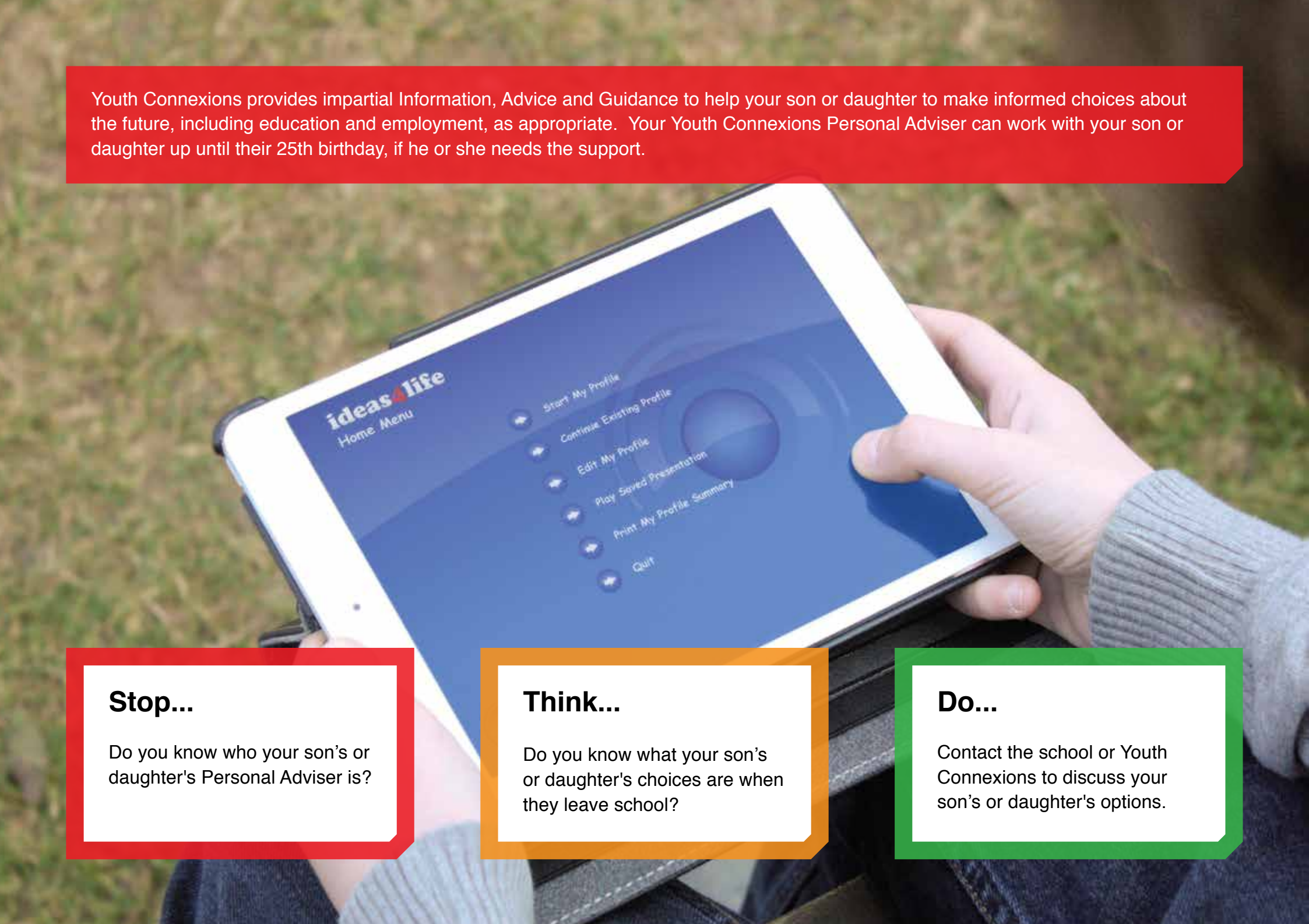
Does my child's Statement carry on after leaving school?

It is important to be aware that Statements are being phased out by April 2018 and Education, Health & Care Plans will be introduced from September 2014. The Local Authority has a plan in place to convert Statements to Education, Health & Care Plans.

A young person's need for an EHC Plan should comply with new legislation and accompanying regulations and guidance. In many cases full reassessments will not be necessary for those transferring from Statements. Young People with a Learning Difficulty Assessment will require a full reassessment to determine if an EHC Plan is required.

Oasis
Dr Pepper

Youth Connexions provides impartial Information, Advice and Guidance to help your son or daughter to make informed choices about the future, including education and employment, as appropriate. Your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser can work with your son or daughter up until their 25th birthday, if he or she needs the support.



Stop...

Do you know who your son's or daughter's Personal Adviser is?

Think...

Do you know what your son's or daughter's choices are when they leave school?

Do...

Contact the school or Youth Connexions to discuss your son's or daughter's options.

Youth Connexions

If the school is getting its impartial information advice and guidance from year 9 from Youth Connexions, the Personal Adviser will support your son or daughter when they start to make their choices for the future. They help them overcome any barriers that may stop them staying in education or moving smoothly into the right college course, training programme or work. They can arrange for your son or daughter to visit some colleges, training organisations or day opportunities to see for themselves what they are like. They may go for a short visit but some colleges run link or transition courses for school leavers, usually in the last year at school, which will give the young people the chance to find out about the opportunities available over a longer period of time.

Most young people will also have the opportunity to do some work experience, which will help them find out about the world of work and think about what they might like to do in the future. There is a growing awareness that young people of all abilities wish to undertake some kind of work in the future. Your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser will be able to tell you about some of the possible routes into work and the kind of support available.

Your Personal Adviser will work closely with others who support your son or daughter and, if they need specialist help, can contact other agencies on their behalf. If your son or daughter needs help after they are 19 because of a disability or special educational need, the Youth Connexions Personal Adviser may be able to work with them until they are 25. In Hertfordshire, the Youth Connexions Personal Adviser from the Learning Difficulty and/or Disability Team (LDD) offers an impartial information, advice and guidance support service for all young people with additional needs from the age of 14 up to their 25th birthday.

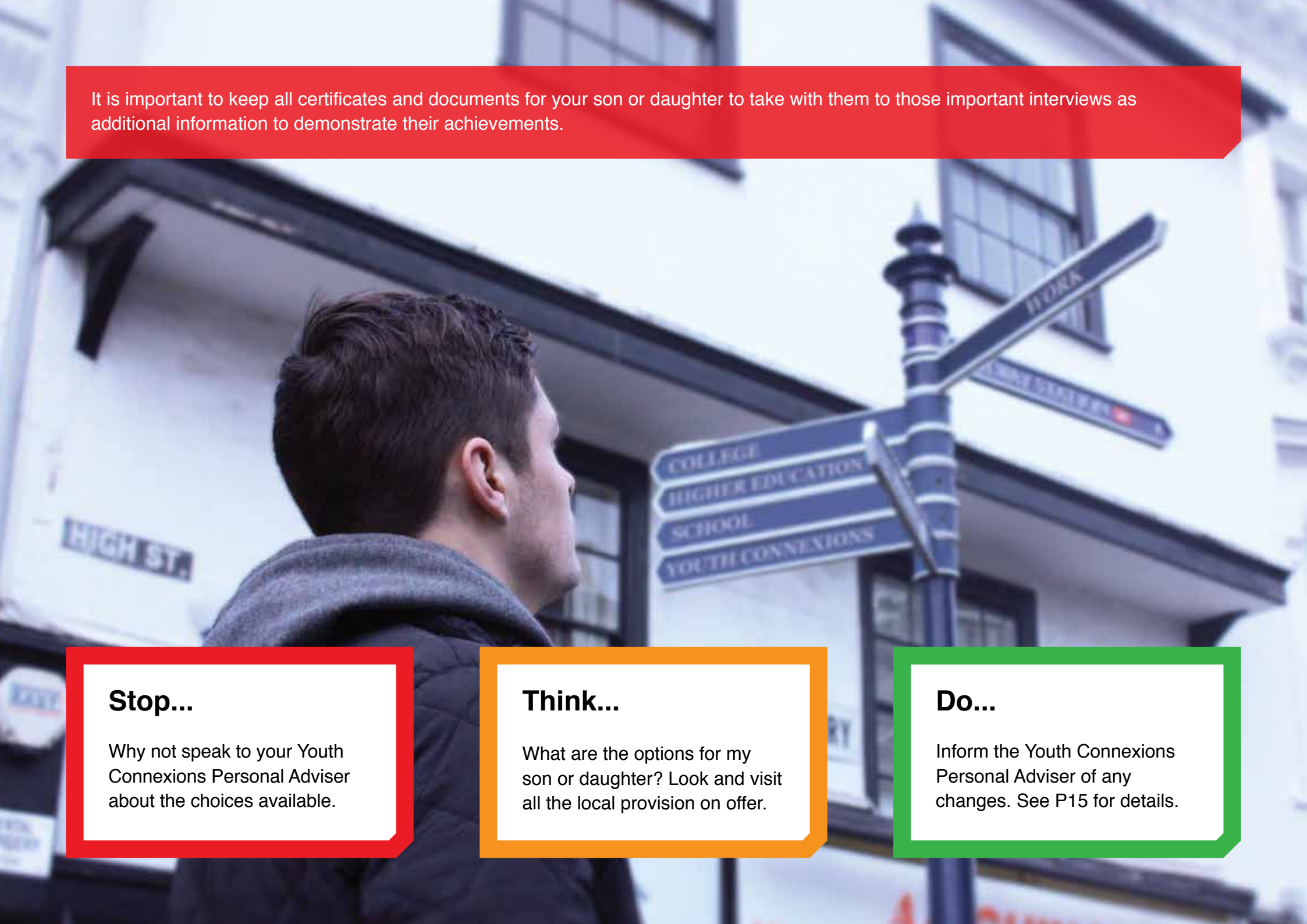
The Youth Connexions Personal Adviser:

- Will offer impartial information, advice and guidance
- Can act as an advocate for their young person and/or parent/carers
- Will support students from the year 9 annual review if they have a Statement/EHCP
- Will ensure that all young people receive the information and support they need at their subsequent annual reviews.
- Will work with young people in their education setting and work towards encouraging them to make the best choices for the future for themselves.
- Is committed to supporting young people in their personal development and provides the opportunities for your son or daughter to have a say in their development.
- Will arrange to visit students for reviews if they are in a residential school/college out of county and/or at home during holiday periods.

Who will support my son or daughter as an adult?

Youth Connexions Personal Advisers usually work with young people until they are 19. If your son or daughter continues to need extra support, they may be able to work with them up to the age of 25 if they have a learning difficulty and/or disability. They can help you get in touch with other professionals such as Social Workers and Disability Employment Advisers who may be able to provide support in the future. This can include helping to arrange planning meetings so that, where possible, any necessary ongoing support is arranged.

It is important to keep all certificates and documents for your son or daughter to take with them to those important interviews as additional information to demonstrate their achievements.



Stop...

Why not speak to your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser about the choices available.

Think...

What are the options for my son or daughter? Look and visit all the local provision on offer.

Do...

Inform the Youth Connexions Personal Adviser of any changes. See P15 for details.

Choices post-16

Most young people would benefit from further education at their local college or support to enter the world of work. The Raising of the Participation Age (RPA) means that all young people should continue in education or training until they are 18 from 2015. This change does not necessarily mean staying in school. Young people may be able to choose one of the following routes:

- Full-time education, such as school, college or home education;
- Work-based learning, such as an apprenticeship; or
- Part-time education or training, if they are employed, self-employed or volunteering for more than 20 hours a week.

Staying at school

- Some young people may benefit from staying in school after Year 11. A number of special schools in Hertfordshire have Post-16 departments where young people may continue their learning until Year 14 when they reach 19 years of age, predominantly for young people with complex needs.
- The decision would be something to discuss carefully with your son or daughter, relevant school staff, SEN Officer and their Youth Connexions Personal Adviser.

To contact your son/daughter's SEN Officer call **Children's Services** on **0300 123 4043.**

Going to a local college

Further education colleges generally offer a wide range of vocational and academic courses to meet the needs of students at all levels. They provide support for students with additional needs. This can include specialist teaching support, personal helpers, lifts/ramps or specialist equipment.

- Many students will attend mainstream courses with extra support.
- Others will choose courses better designed to support students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to meet their individual needs. For example, courses may focus on developing

Transport - you can apply for post-16 transport. The application will need to be made every year.

Please note: it will be assumed that the young person will use public transport.

Travel training is available in some schools and colleges. Please ask the school/ college for details.

independent living skills, social skills and education skills. They may also include opportunities to try out work based learning opportunities such as work experience with support, and access to activities in their local area.

Higher education

For some young people higher education is the next step on from further education. When studying at university or college, your son/daughter will work towards one of a range of qualifications, such as a degree - for example, a BA or BSc , a Foundation Degree, or a Diploma/Certificate of Higher Education. Young people can go into higher education at any age but most people enter when they are around 18 years old. There's a lot to consider if your son/daughter is planning to go into higher education, and as a disabled student your son/daughter will need to give plenty of thought to:

- Where to study
- The support he/she may need whilst studying
- Support with day-to-day living
- Money and funding

You can find out more through **www.UCAS.ac.uk/students/wheretostart/disabledstudents** or **www.direct.gov.uk**

How will my son or daughter get into training and work?

It is important to be aware that an EHC Plan will cease and not be required for support in Higher Education as this is provided via Disabled Students' Allowance. Does your son or daughter feel confident enough to start work, or would he/she benefit more from a college course or some training before looking for a job?

There are a range of courses at colleges and work based learning providers who can offer opportunities to develop work and employability skills. Your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser can tell you what is available in your area. You can also ask them about apprenticeship schemes that may offer a possible way forward for your son or daughter. If your son or daughter wants to work, they can also get help from the Youth Connexions Supported Employment Team or Work Solutions and receive help and advice at the Job Centre or Jobcentre Plus.

Make sure you know what courses and opportunities are available in your local area, and arrange visits. Speak to the Youth Connexions Personal Adviser for help.
LDD.DutyYouthConnexions@hertfordshire.gov.uk
01438 844999

You can also find more information about local colleges in Hertfordshire on their websites:
www.nhc.ac.uk
www.oaklands.ac.uk
www.westherts.ac.uk
www.hrc.ac.uk

Visit the Youth Connexions website for more information on a wide range of topics, including housing, jobs, transport, disabled people's services and much more.

www.youthconnexions.org

Stop...

My son or daughter wants to leave school and find a job!

Think...

About planning for further education and the world of work.

Do...

Speak to your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser.

Your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser can introduce them. The DEA can provide specialist support to helpdisabled people find and keep work. They can use support programmes and funding to help disabled jobseekers, employees and their employers remove barriers to employment. The law says that employers must not discriminate against their employees or people who are applying for jobs because of a disability.

Sometimes organisations such as Youth Connexions Supported Employment Team, Work Solutions (part of Hertfordshire's Health and Community Services) or voluntary organisations, such as Scope and Mencap, organise work programmes to support people to find and keep a job.

Youth Connexions are working closely with schools and colleges to develop work opportunities including volunteering, supported and paid employment.

Also, consider Youth Connexions Supported Employment Team or Work Solutions who help young people to find employment opportunities and then work with them to learn their roles before fading out the support as and when the young person is confident to do it independently.

You may also want to consider support from Health and Community Services

If your son or daughter would like a support worker to work alongside them for a while there may be a waiting list for this service. For Youth Connexions Supported Employment contact **01438 844999** or call **01438 844911 (East Team)** or **01442 4544464 (West Team)** for more information.

- Carers Assessments are there to help you.
- You will be listened to.
- Nobody will judge or criticise you.
- No benefits will be affected.
- The person you care for does not have to be in receipt of services.
- You are entitled to an assessment but not obligated - you can stop at any time.
- The outcome of the assessment may help you in your caring role.

Stop...

I am a carer - what next?

Think...

Is there any help or support out there for me?

Do...

Request a Carers Assessment. Call Health and Community Services on **0300 123 4042**

Looking after yourself

Carers look after family, partners or friends in need of help because they are ill, frail or have a disability.

The care they provide is unpaid and may include:

- Personal care, such as helping with washing and dressing.
- Help with eating or taking medicines.
- Getting about in the home or outside.
- Emotional support.

Being a carer can sometimes be confusing, bewildering and frightening; all carers need help, support and back up.

Carers Assessments

Once your son or daughter turns 18, you are considered an Adult Carer and are entitled to a Carers Assessment in your own right, or as a joint assessment with your child. Previously this may have been included with your child's assessment when family dynamics are considered. The decision over which assessment to have is not made for you; it is your choice but an independent Carers Assessment is always a positive step in helping you to recognise yourself in the role as a carer and consider how this may affect your own life and personal wellbeing.

Children under 18 years of age can also be carers themselves. Though many children will help to care for siblings willingly and without complaint, the role could still be taking its toll. If there are other children in the family who help in any way with providing care, there is support available to them.

There are many different ways for carers to get a break from caring, whether it's for a week, one morning a week or just occasionally. There are even more ways of spending your time once you've got time off from being a carer.

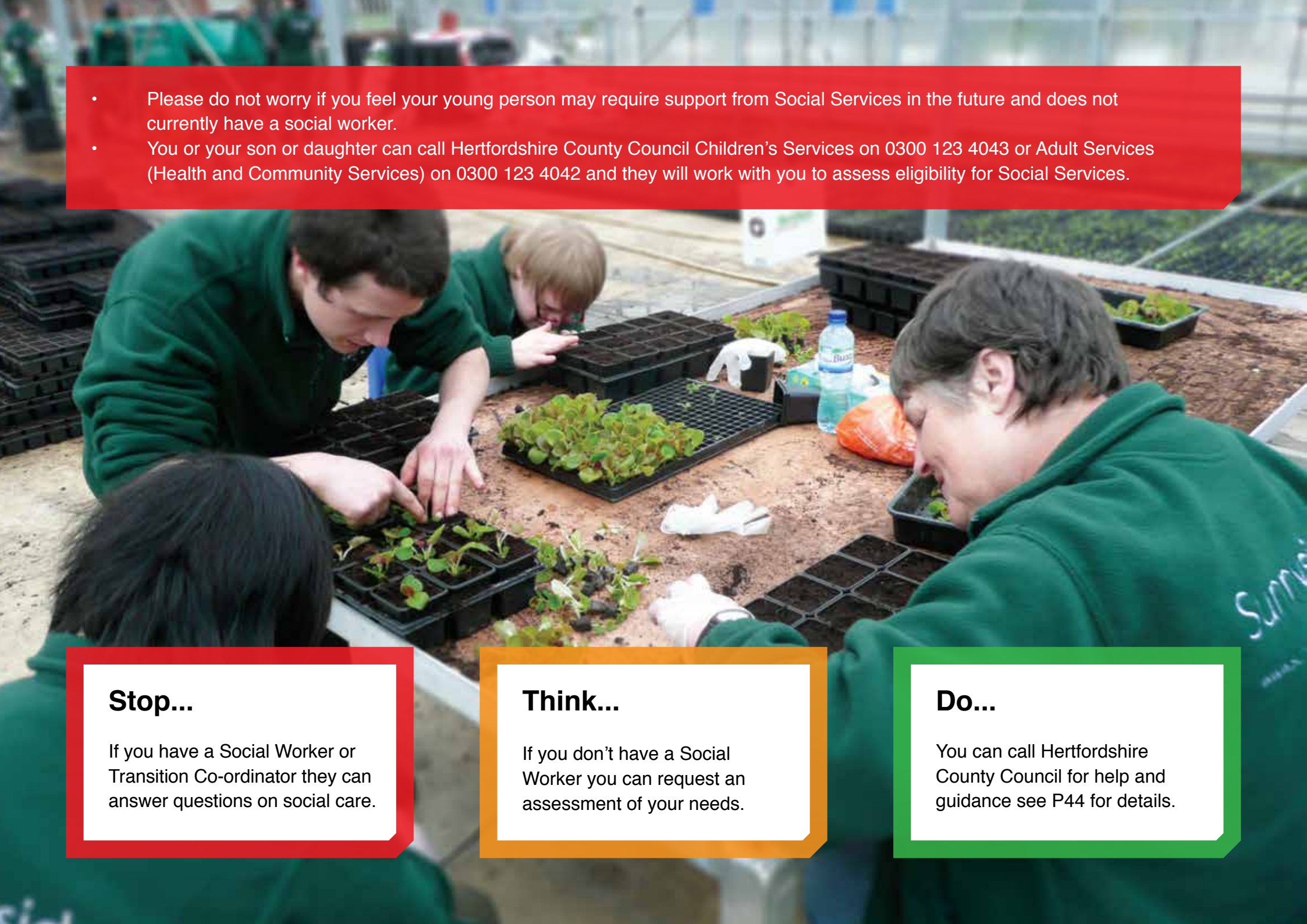
For more information see **www.carersinherts.org.uk**

For free, confidential information and advice for carers call: **Carers Direct on 0808 802 0202**

Lines are open 9am to 8pm Monday to Friday (except bank holidays), 11am to 4pm at weekends.

Calls are free from UK landlines and mobiles or you can request a free call back.

- Please do not worry if you feel your young person may require support from Social Services in the future and does not currently have a social worker.
- You or your son or daughter can call Hertfordshire County Council Children's Services on 0300 123 4043 or Adult Services (Health and Community Services) on 0300 123 4042 and they will work with you to assess eligibility for Social Services.



Stop...

If you have a Social Worker or Transition Co-ordinator they can answer questions on social care.

Think...

If you don't have a Social Worker you can request an assessment of your needs.

Do...

You can call Hertfordshire County Council for help and guidance see P44 for details.

Social care support

The years in which a young person is approaching adulthood should be full of opportunity. Things they may want to achieve such as paid employment, good health and independent living need to be taken into account so that any care and support needs are based around what matters to that person.

Young people can be referred to Health and Community Services if they are likely to have care and support needs after they turn 18. The Transition Team are there to help those young people most in need.

Young people can have an assessment, which is an opportunity to talk to someone trained in adult social care about their wellbeing and care and support needs. An assessment can be requested by young people, their families and carers or professionals. This will be done when it is of significant benefit to the young person. This means when the assessment will be completed at the most appropriate time for the young person and this will be different for each individual.

At the assessment we will tell you if the young person is eligible for support from the council and will give you the information and advice you need. We will plan with you the best way to get the help you need in the way and time you want it. This may be from local community and voluntary organisations. We will work with you to develop a care and support plan which will focus on your son or daughter's wellbeing as well as care needs. You will have an opportunity to talk about what is important to your family and what the young person wants to achieve.

We will tell you how much money your son or daughter's care will cost (their personal budget) and how much they may need to pay towards it. They can ask for the money as a direct payment, and you and your family can arrange the support they need. Direct Payments give you better choice and more control over the support you can get. Or you can ask us to arrange the care for you.

Paying for your care

The young person may have to pay towards the cost of their care.

If your young person is eligible, the Health and Community Services Transition Team will help you plan for your support needs. You may be eligible for a Personal Budget. Personal Budgets can be used alongside other funding or resources you might have available. For more information see money matters on page 32.

Not everyone is eligible for Adult Social Services and to qualify an individual's support needs must fall within the Fair Access to Care Services (FACS) criteria.

Visit www.hertsdirect.org or call 0300 1234 042 for more information on eligibility for Health and Community Services.

They will never be expected to pay more than they can afford. We will tell you more about this right from the beginning and make sure you know where to get the right advice to explore all of the ways of funding care. We can also help you look into claiming any benefits you might be able to get too.

Some young people, usually those with the most complex healthcare needs, may be entitled to Continuing Healthcare Funding. The Transition Team can tell you more about this and help you to work out if you might be eligible for NHS Continuing Healthcare.

Will I get the same support from Social Services when my child is an adult as I have had until now?

The care and support plan will reflect the persons needs and wishes which may be different as an adult.

What if I want my son or daughter to be able to live independently as an adult?

Different kinds of housing may be available, including flats, supported living and residential care. To help make the right decision you will need to think of the kind of support your son or daughter may need to live away from home. We can talk to you about the kinds of housing available in your area and help you put your son's or daughter's name on the housing waiting list held by your local district council, if appropriate.

Is there anything else I should know?

You may also want information about other things that will be important to your son or daughter as they become an adult. These may include:

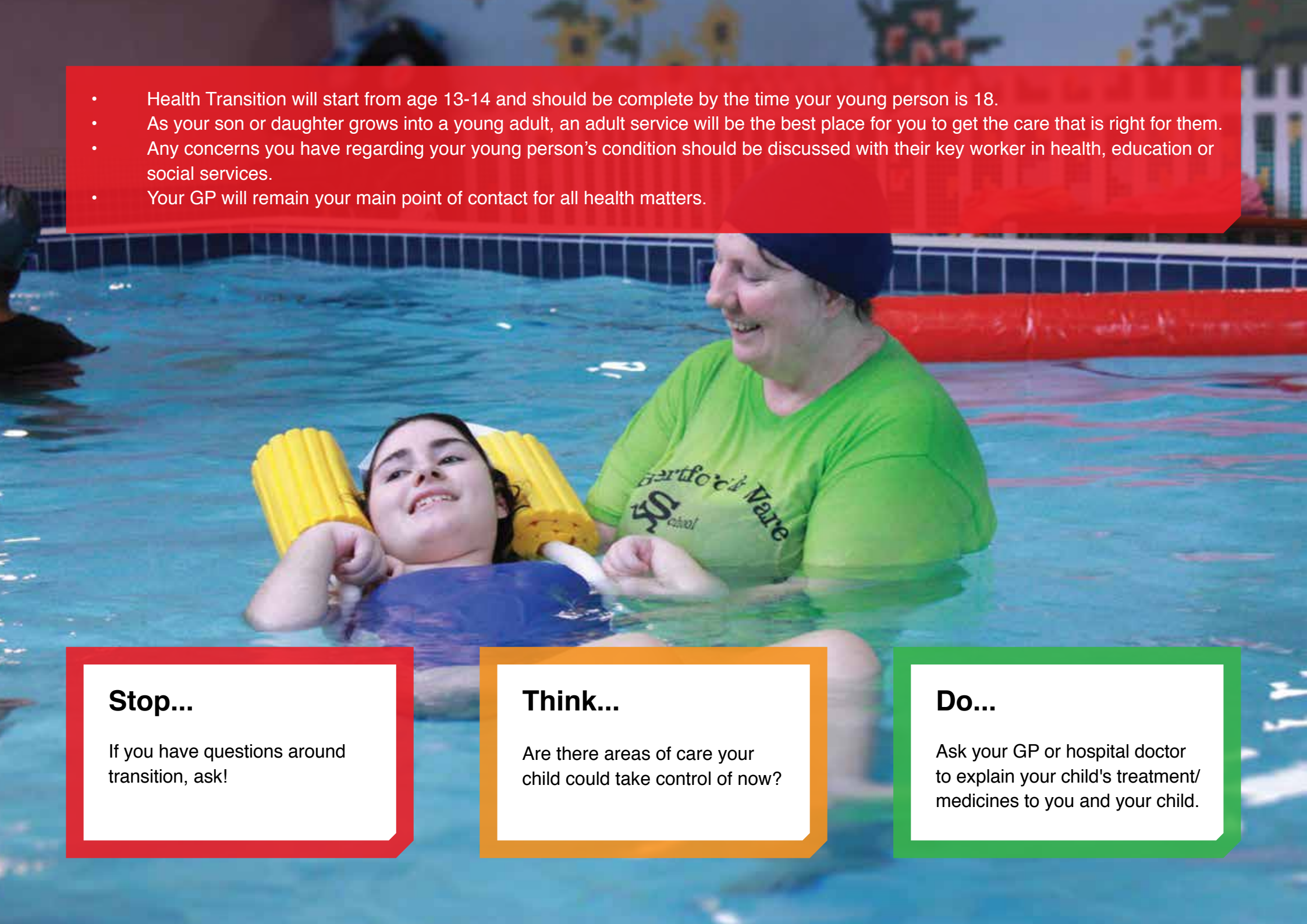
- Benefits and how they will change when your son or daughter becomes an adult
- How health and therapy needs will be met in the future
- Transport and mobility
- Respite care
- Equipment needs
- Leisure opportunities
- How your needs as a carer can be met

The Transition Team will work alongside the Youth Connexions Personal Adviser to help answer these questions. All of the plans made can be documented in your Preparing for Adulthood Plan, which starts in Year 9.

For more information on adult care and support please visit **www.hertsdirect.org/adults** or call **0300 123 4042**.

Call **HertsHelp 0300 123 4044** to help you find local help, advice or information.

- Health Transition will start from age 13-14 and should be complete by the time your young person is 18.
- As your son or daughter grows into a young adult, an adult service will be the best place for you to get the care that is right for them.
- Any concerns you have regarding your young person's condition should be discussed with their key worker in health, education or social services.
- Your GP will remain your main point of contact for all health matters.



Stop...

If you have questions around transition, ask!

Think...

Are there areas of care your child could take control of now?

Do...

Ask your GP or hospital doctor to explain your child's treatment/ medicines to you and your child.

Health support

In health care, the word 'transition' is used to describe the planning, preparing and moving on from Children's Health Care to Adult Health Care. It's a gradual process and gives everyone time to talk about what health care your young person will need as an adult, choose which adult hospital or services are best for them and make sure you are ready for the move.

Most young people move on to an adult hospital and adult hospital services when they are between 16 and 18 years old. You can ask the consultant or clinical nurse specialist about when you will be making the move.

Will my son or daughter continue to have access to speech and language therapy or other therapies after they leave school?

If your son or daughter has had medical support or therapy while they were at school it is helpful if the person who has been working with them can be at the transition meeting. If they cannot attend they should provide the relevant information to be included in the transition plan so that appropriate referrals can be made to Adult Health Services.

It is important to note, however, that the support and services available are not likely to be at the same level as those provided by Children's Services or at school. Do ask about these possible changes so that they are fully explained.

Young people will be given a lot more independence where appropriate and will be encouraged to learn about their condition, so that they can be more involved in their care and decision-making.

As young people move into adulthood, during appointments or admissions, doctors, nurses and other staff will spend more time talking to the young person than the parents, although you will still be encouraged to attend the appointments.

If you feel your son or daughter may not be able to make their own decisions after the age of 16, talk to your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser or Social Worker for advice on Mental Capacity and the role of Deputyship in regard to health matters.

Where possible your son or daughter should be encouraged to prepare for adult care and there are tips below of how you can support this.

- Help them learn about their conditions and treatments.
- Help them to ask questions at appointments.
- Encourage them to take responsibility for their medicines if possible.
- Encourage them to make their own appointments if possible.
- Help them to store and use useful contact details on their mobile phone.
- Find out who to contact in an emergency.

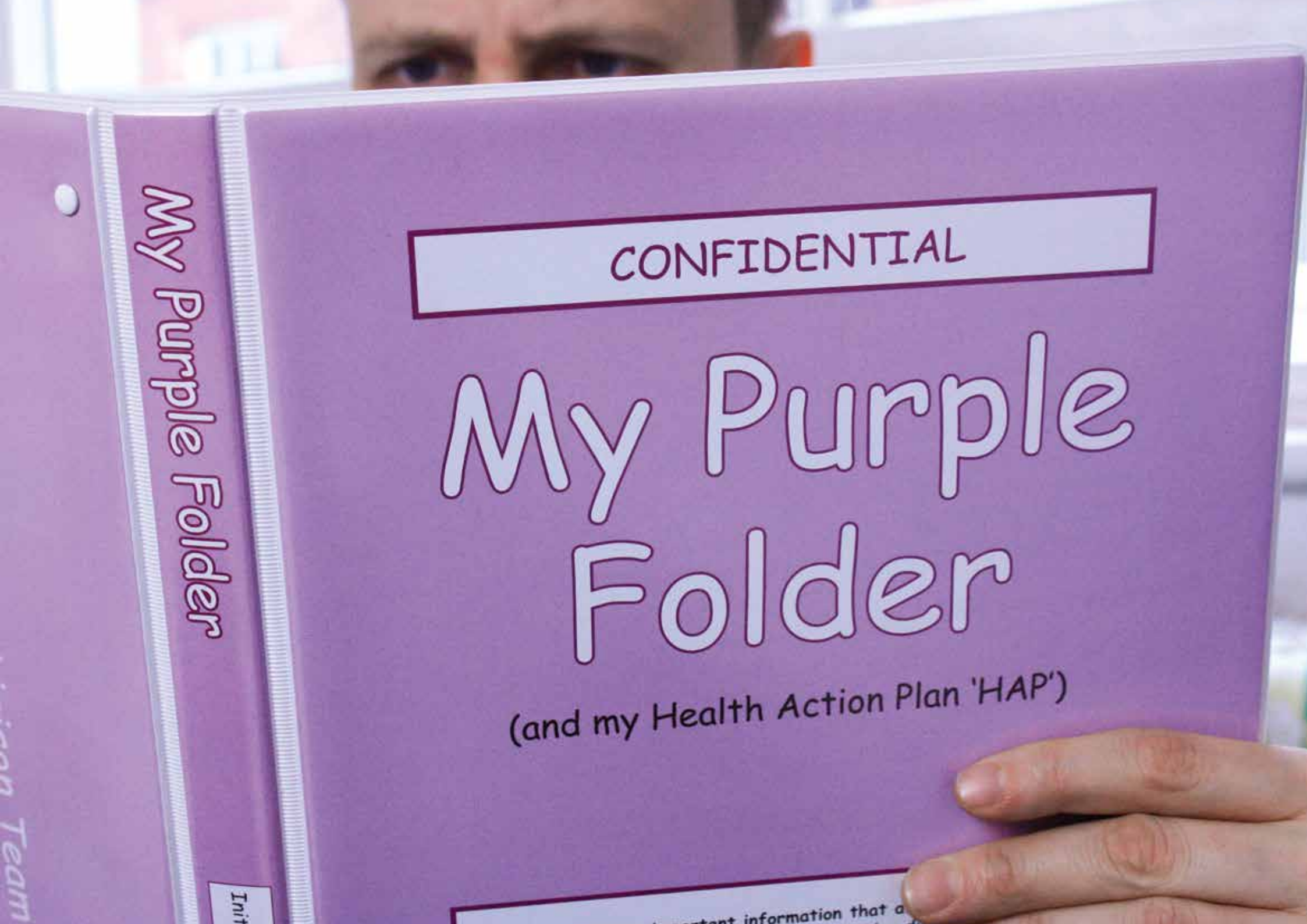
All adults with a learning difficulty in Hertfordshire can have a My Purple Folder. The My Purple Folder is to help someone get the best care and treatment from health professionals (doctors, nurses, dentists, opticians, pharmacists, chiropractors). It contains all the person's health information and the support they need to access health services.

A My Purple Folder can be requested from the Transition Team, Community Learning Disability Team, a paid carer, a health or social care worker.

Or you can telephone:
East and North Hertfordshire - **01438 843848**
South and West Hertfordshire - **01442 454541**

More information is available on HertsDirect:
www.hertsdirect.org/services/healthsoc/learningdis/acsld/mypurplefolder/

- You may find an 'alert' bracelet useful, if your child has a condition that may change suddenly.


CONFIDENTIAL
My Purple Folder
(and my Health Action Plan 'HAP')
My Purple Folder

- If your son or daughter is not able to manage their money you can request to become their appointee and act on their behalf on all Social Security matters.
- Benefits can be confusing, so seek advice as early as possible.
- If you have not qualified for support from Adult Social Services but would like information on benefits, call the CAB Hertfordshire Adviceline on **03444 111 444** or look at **www.hertfordshirecab.org.uk**.

Stop...

Money matters will change when your son or daughter turns 16.

Think...

What financial support do you need and who do you need to contact?

Do...

Seek help from your Social Worker, DWP or your local Citizens Advice Bureau.

Money matters

During transition, you will need to think about various forms of financial support and you should be aware that when your son or daughter turns 16 they can claim benefits in their own right.

If your son or daughter is eligible for Adult Social Services support, their Social Worker will be able to discuss their circumstances with the Council's Money Advice Unit which will help them and you look at the financial options available.

You can also obtain information on benefits and financial support for people with disabilities at **www.gov.uk**

16-19 bursary

Some students can apply for a 16-19 bursary fund (for learners aged 16-19 in school, training or further education).

Students in the following groups may receive a bursary of £1,200 a year:

- Young people in care
- Care leavers
- Young people claiming income support in their own name
- Disabled young people who receive both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance or PIP in their own name.

You need to enquire directly with the school, college, or training provider regarding this allowance.

So what happens to benefits when a young person reaches the age of 16?

When a young person turns 16, he/she can claim benefits in their own right such as Employment and Support Allowance, even if still in education in come cases. However this may affect some benefits that are paid to you, the parent/carer.

A Mental Capacity Assessment may also be undertaken to identify how best to support a young person in managing their finances. Visit www.legislation.gov.uk

You can also find support and information from Citizens Advice Bureau's www.adviceguide.org.uk

Disabled Students' Allowance (Higher Education)

If your son or daughter has a disability and is entering higher education, he/she may be entitled to extra financial help towards the costs of the following:

- Specialist equipment
- Non-medical helpers
- Extra travel costs
- Other extra course-related costs due to your disability

Disabilities covered include long-term illnesses, mental-health conditions or specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia. If your son or daughter qualifies for Disabled Students' Allowances, they're paid on top of any standard student support they get. They are not affected by your household income, and you don't have to pay them back.

For further information visit **www.gov.uk**

Youth Connexions has One Stop Shops throughout Hertfordshire for young people with LDD aged 13-25.

Information and signposting is available on some benefit/money issues for young people.

Useful links:

Volunteering:
www.dofe.org
www.do-it.org.uk
www.princes-trust.org.uk
www.vinspired.com

Sports:
www.sportscoachuk.org

Music, dance, art & drama
www.zincarts.org.uk

Stop...

Have leisure time, hobbies and interests been included in your plans for the future?

Think...

Leisure time is important and should be part of the transition plan.

Do...

To find out what is available in your local area visit:
www.mogolistings.org

Leisure time

Becoming an adult is a very exciting time and for most young people it's the time they gain their independence and enjoy a more active social life. This gives us all a greater sense of wellbeing, helps us become part of the community and enables us to make new friends.

When preparing for your son's or daughter's transition review, discuss with them their hobbies, activities and interests; you can then build this in to the transition plan.

Across Hertfordshire, there are a range of leisure pursuits from music, dance, art and drama to an array of sporting activities. Contact your local council or visit: **www.hertsdirect.org** or **www.mogolistings.org** for more information.

Volunteering is another great way for your son or daughter to spend their free time. Volunteering can help your son's or daughter's personal development, it can provide a chance to meet new people, learn new skills and gain life and work experience.

If your young person moves into Adult Social Care, they can use part of their Personal Budget for leisure pursuits, so make sure, if your son or daughter has a passion for leisure activities, that they are part of their support plan.

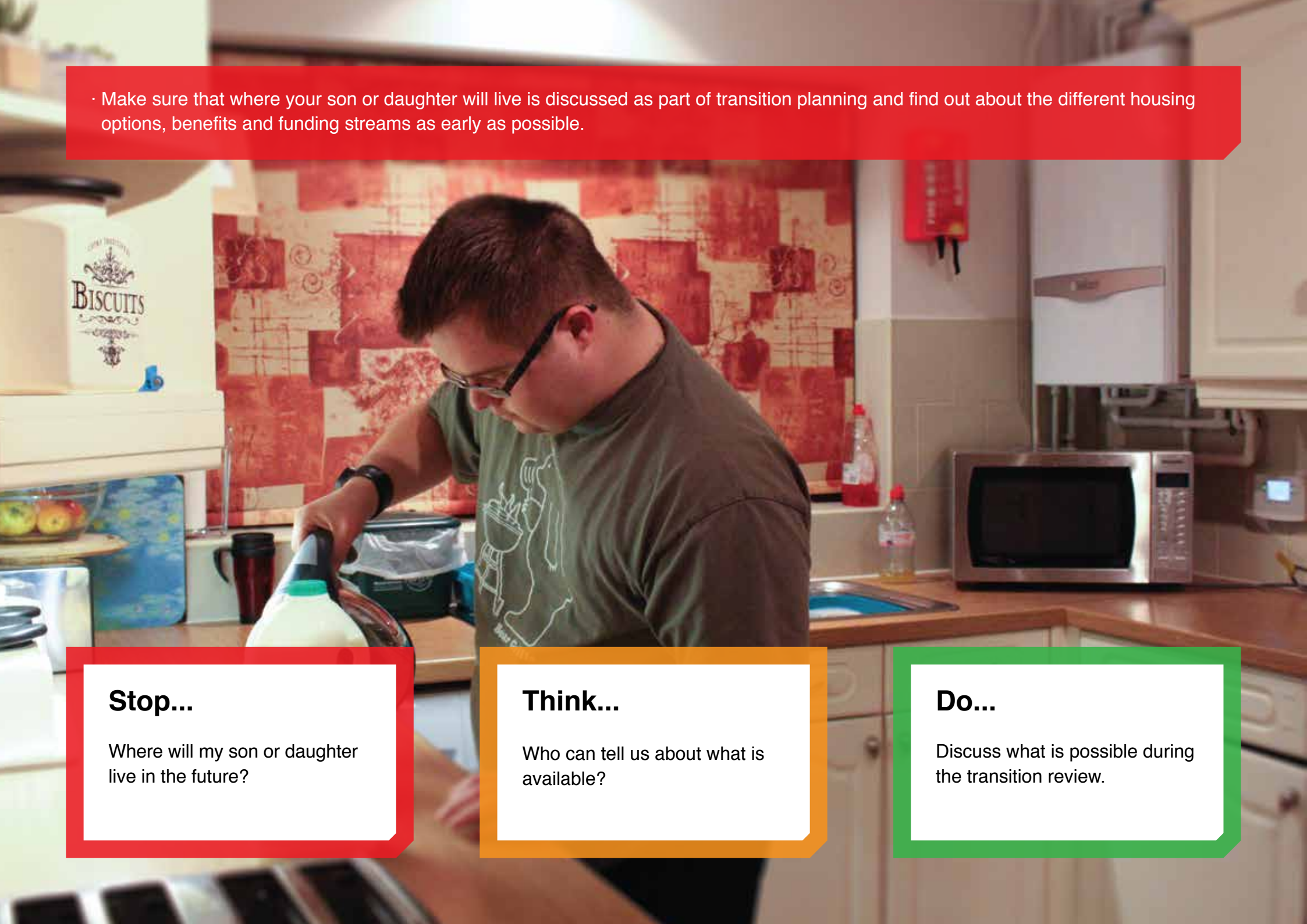
Transport to and from leisure activities will also need consideration. There are a number of options available including travel training, which aims to give people the confidence to travel independently. Speak to your son's or daughter's school or college to see if they have a travel training scheme.

You are not alone in planning for future leisure activities. Leisure will form part of transition planning and your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser will be on hand to point you in the right direction.

Alternatively, there are a range of clubs and activities advertised on the internet and in local papers.

Don't forget to check out your local sports centres or talk to your school or other parents - they may be able to recommend a local club.

· Make sure that where your son or daughter will live is discussed as part of transition planning and find out about the different housing options, benefits and funding streams as early as possible.



Stop...

Where will my son or daughter live in the future?

Think...

Who can tell us about what is available?

Do...

Discuss what is possible during the transition review.

Independent living

Where we live and who we live with is really important. Most young people live with their family until their late teens or early twenties, when they begin the journey to independent living. It is important that young people are encouraged to think about where they might live in the future as part of their transition planning to ensure they know what is possible and available. Some young people might want to live with friends, others may want to live alone (with support if needed). If a young person wants to apply to be on the local housing register, this is usually possible from the age of 16 - it can take many years to be offered a home.

Possible housing options are:

- Adult placements and supported lodgings
- Buying your own home/shared ownership with a housing association
- Residential care
- Supported housing
- Renting privately
- Renting from a council or housing association

How to pay for where you live:

- Housing Benefit may pay for the rent in most rented situations if you receive ESA or Income Support or you are on a low income. It will also pay the rented part of shared ownership.
- From wages, your own money - if you work, you may have to pay some or all of your rent or mortgage. It is important to get advice about your specific situation.
- Social Services or the NHS will pay for your housing and care if you are in registered or nursing care; these services usually expect you to make a financial contribution.

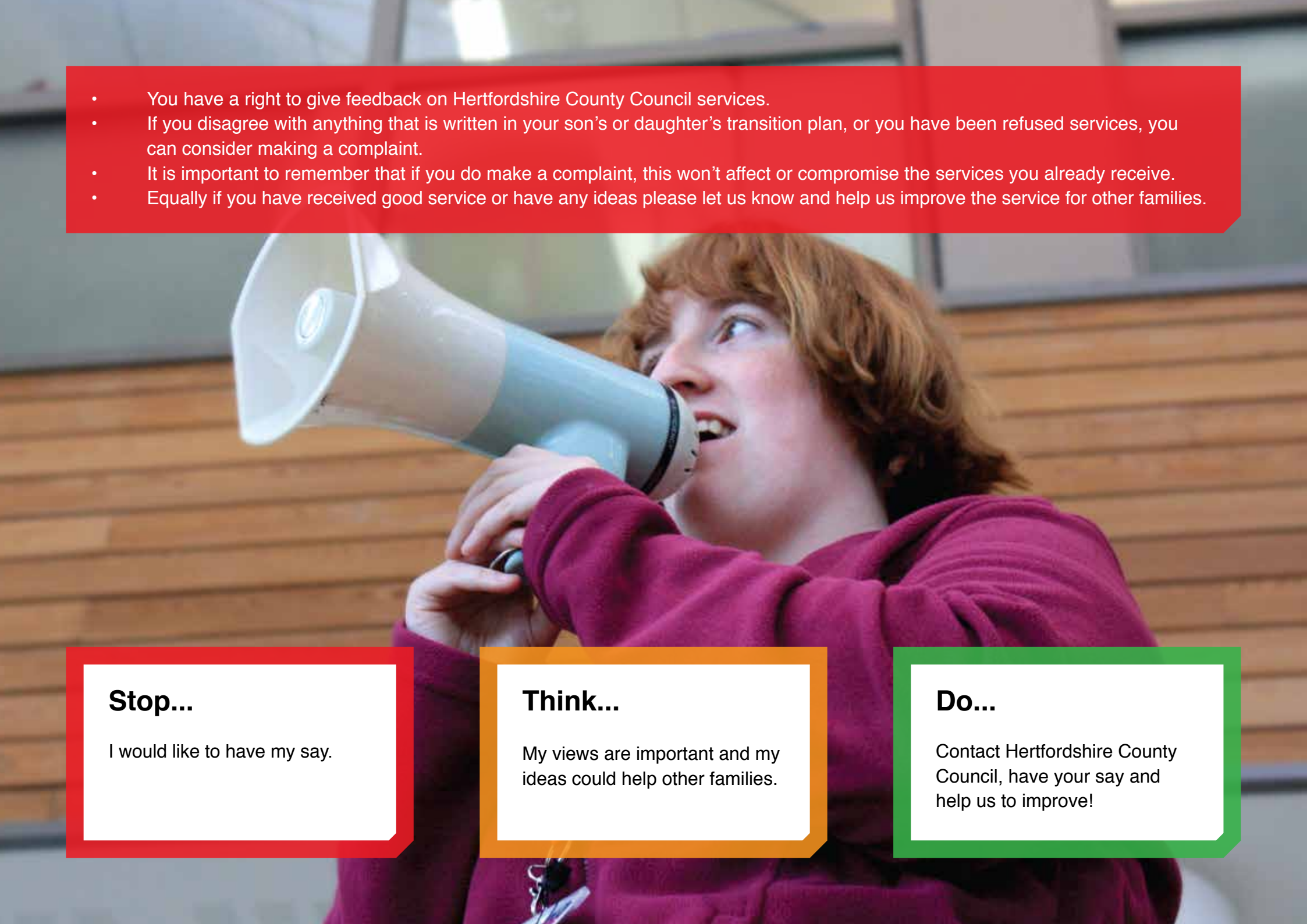
In order to live independently and to get the right support, you will need information about welfare benefits, housing benefits and funding streams that are available. Information can be found at: **www.hertsdirect.org** and **www.housingoptions.org.uk**

Contact your local district council housing department to ensure you have all the information you need about housing and welfare benefits and what housing options are available. If your son or daughter is eligible for Health Community Services, the Transition Team can support you. You can contact the Transition Team on **0300 123 4042** to find out more.

Find out if there is information in accessible formats about benefits and housing opportunities.

If you want to find out more about housing options for your son or daughter, talk to your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser or Social Worker in Children's or Adult Services (HCS Transition Team)

- You have a right to give feedback on Hertfordshire County Council services.
- If you disagree with anything that is written in your son's or daughter's transition plan, or you have been refused services, you can consider making a complaint.
- It is important to remember that if you do make a complaint, this won't affect or compromise the services you already receive.
- Equally if you have received good service or have any ideas please let us know and help us improve the service for other families.



Stop...

I would like to have my say.

Think...

My views are important and my ideas could help other families.

Do...

Contact Hertfordshire County Council, have your say and help us to improve!

Having your say

The only way for a service to improve is by obtaining feedback from the people that really matter, and for us the people that really count are young people and their parents and carers!

Your feedback is important to us. We would like you to tell us when you are pleased with the services provided by Hertfordshire County Council. We also need to know when things could be improved, so we can learn and make improvements.

We will always investigate your complaint fairly and impartially with no effect on your entitlement to services or the standard we provide.

You can get in touch by phone, email, letter or online at **www.hertsdirect.org**

If you are not satisfied with a service you may find it easier to contact the team responsible as most complaints can be resolved quickly and amicably by our front line staff.

Complaints are dealt with by each department directly. You can call the Customer Services Teams on **0300 123 4042** (Adult Services) or **0300 123 4043** (Children's Services) to request a copy of the leaflet 'Have Your Say' which will guide you through making a complaint.

If you remain dissatisfied after taking your complaint through the council's process you can then take the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman who can be contacted on **0300 061 0614** or **www.lgo.org.uk**

You can contact us in the following ways:

Health and Community Services (formerly Adult Social Care) Complaints Team:

Tel: **01992 556685**
e-mail: **hcs.complaints@hertfordshire.gov.uk**

Children's Social Care:
Write to:
Tim Hood
Children's Services
Complaints Manager
Hertfordshire County Council
County Hall
Pegs Lane
Hertford
Hertfordshire
SG13 8DQ

Or you can register your complaint online at **www.hertsdirect.org**

Who can help you?

In Hertfordshire there are many different professionals and organisations who can offer you help. Some of these are listed in the contacts section in the back of this guide. Some of the emergency numbers you may need are listed opposite. You can also add your own contact details.

Don't be afraid to ask for help or advice. We are here to help you.

Youth Connexions Personal Adviser

Make the most of your Youth Connexions Personal Adviser. They are here to help and support you through transition.

Telephone number of your Personal Adviser:
LDD Team Duty Line
01438 844999
LDD.DutyYouthConnexions@hertfordshire.gov.uk

School

Your school will be responsible for organising the transition reviews. They also play an important part in your young person's life so will be able to give you ideas about the future.

Telephone number of your school:

…….....

Social Care

The Transition Team is on hand to support you through transition and, if necessary, ongoing Adult Social Services.

Social Care contact details:

Children's Social Care
0300 123 4043
Transition Team and Health and Community Services
0300 123 4042

Doctor/GP

You will need to register with a local doctor, who will advise and give you the medicines you need and point you in the right direction.

Telephone number of your GP:

…….....

Integrated Services for Learning (ISL)

Special Educational Needs Officers are responsible for issuing and reviewing the Statement of Special Educational Needs.

For more information please call:
0300 123 4043

Useful contacts

Action on Hearing Loss (formerly RNID - Royal National Institute for Deaf People)
Tel: 0808 808 0123
www.actionhearingloss.org.uk

AFASIC (Unlocking Speech and Language)
Helpline: 0300 666 9410
www.afasicengland.org.uk

CAB Hertfordshire Adviceline
Tel: 03444 111 444
www.hertfordshirecab.org.uk

British Dyslexia Association
Helpline: 0333 405 4567
www.bdadyslexia.org.uk

Carers UK
Helpline: 0808 808 7777
www.carersuk.org

Childline
Tel: 0800 1111 · www.childline.org.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau
www.adviceguide.org.uk

Children's Services Hertfordshire
Tel: 0300 123 4043

Contact a Family
Helpline: 0808 808 3555
www.cafamily.org.uk

Disability Rights UK
0207 250 8181 · www.disabilityrightsuk.org

Down's Syndrome Association
Helpline: 0333 1212 300
www.downs-syndrome.org.uk

Epilepsy Action
Helpline: 0808 800 5050
www.epilepsy.org.uk

Getting a Life
www.gettingalife.org.uk

Herts Help
0300 123 4044
www.hertsdirect.org/hertshelp

Carers in Herts
01992 586969
www.carersinherts.org.uk

Further education colleges

Hertford Regional College
Tel: 01992 411411 · www.hrc.ac.uk

North Hertfordshire College
Tel: 01462 424242 · www.nhc.ac.uk

Oaklands College, St Albans
Tel: 01727 737000 · www.oaklands.ac.uk

West Herts College
Tel: 01923 812345 · www.westherts.ac.uk

Health and Community Services (HCS) (formerly Adult Care Services)
Tel: 0300 123 4042 - General Enquiries
transition.team@hertfordshire.gov.uk
or call East Team 01438 844454
or West Team 01442 453887

Hertfordshire Additional Needs Database (HAND)
The database provides a contact list for information about services and new developments, which can be sent directly to families see www.hertsdirect.org/hand or http://handnews.hertfordshire.gov.uk or call the Additional Needs Information Officer on 01992 556984 or email her Claudia.houghton@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Hertfordshire County Council
Helpline: 0300 123 4040 or 01992 555555
www.hertsdirect.org

Hertfordshire Parent Carer Involvement
07840 360 245
www.hertsparentcarers.org.uk

I CAN
Tel: 0845 225 4071 · www.ican.org.uk

In Control
Tel: 01564 821650 · www.in-control.org.uk

IPSEA (Independent Parental Special Education Advice)
Helpline: 0800 018 4016 · www.ipsea.org.uk

Jobcentre Plus/Jobseeker Direct
Helpline: 0345 606 0234
www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

Mencap
Helpline/Minicom: 0808 808 1111
www.mencap.org.uk

Mental Capacity Act
www.justice.gov.uk / www.mind.org.uk
0300 123 3393

National Autistic Society
Helpline: 0808 800 4104
www.autism.org.uk

National Deaf Children's Society
Helpline: 0808 800 8880 · www.ndcs.org.uk

SENDiass (formerly Parent Partnership)
Karen Edwards - Watford, Three Rivers, Hertsmere - 01442 453316
karen.edwards@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Central team - 01992 555 847

Helena Marks - St Albans, Dacorum
01442 217143
helena.marks@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Dawn Owen - East Herts, Broxbourne, Welwyn/Hatfield - 01920 411152
dawn.owen@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Preparing for Adulthood
Helpline: 020 7843 6348
www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk

PHAB
(inclusive clubs for disabled and able bodied adults) Helpline: 020 8667 9443
www.phab.org.uk

Progress Magazine
Tel: 01223 207770
www.progressmagazine.co.uk

Royal National Institute of Blind People
Helpline: 0303 123 9999 · www.rnib.org.uk

Scope
Helpline: 0808 800 3333 · www.scope.org.uk

Sense
Tel: 0300 330 9256 or 0207 520 0972
www.sense.org.uk

SHINE (formerly known as ASBAH Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus)
Helpline: 01733 555988
www.shinecharity.org.uk

The Children's Legal Centre
Tel: 0207 636 8505
www.childrenslegalcentre.com

The Local Government Ombudsman
Helpline: 0300 061 0614 · www.lgo.org.uk

Youth Connexions LDD Team
Tel: 01438 844999 · fax 01438 843341
LDD.dutyyouthconnexions@hertfordshire.gov.uk

www.hertsdirect.org (Hertfordshire County Council website)

www.youthconnexions.org (Youth Connexions Website)

www.channelmogo.org (the portal for all young people in Hertfordshire)

www.mogolistings.org (Activities and events for young people in Hertfordshire)

Notes

Notes

ideas4life

This booklet is issued by:
Hertfordshire County Council, Services for Young People.
You can contact us in the following ways:

By post:
Youth Connexions LDD Team, Postpoint 105, Farnham House, Six Hills Way,
Stevenage, Herts, SG1 2FQ

By telephone:
Duty phone number: 01438 844999

By email:
Duty email: LDD.DutyYouthConnexions@hertfordshire.gov.uk

or visit our website:
www.youthconnexions.org

The information contained in this booklet can be translated and/or made available in alternative formats, on request.

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