

# Short Breaks



## What are Short Breaks?

Short breaks was previously known as the 'shared care scheme' and in 2016 it became known as the short breaks scheme. The scheme was established to provide short breaks, within a family setting, for children & young people with disabilities, where it has been assessed that their parents/carers require a break from their caring responsibilities. Short Breaks can be anything from a few hours a day once a month to overnight stays in the short break carers home.

### Did you know?

- ☺ We currently have over 20 carers and just over 30 children waiting to avail of a short break in the Southern Trust



### Did you know?

- ☺ Our carers go through the same assessment process as a foster carer and are approved at a fostering panel to provide short breaks for children with disabilities

Our current short break carers are people from a variety of backgrounds who are compassionate, caring & willing to open their homes to provide short breaks to children and young people with a disability. Find out more about some of our carers on the next page!

Our current waiting list consists of children who urgently require short breaks but we do not have enough carers to meet this need. To become a short breaks carer you do not need any specific skills or qualifications just the willingness to make a positive difference to a child's life. The Trust will provide ongoing support and specific training, based on the needs of the child alongside the allocation of a dedicated link worker and the opportunity to avail of the support through a Carers Support Group.

We URGENTLY require short break carers (with allowances paid) & also fee-paid carers who can be paid on a part-time, full-time or bespoke basis with fees ranging from £9k-£27k. These carers will provide a service for children or young people identified with more complex needs.



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## Meet our children waiting on a short break service

### Charlotte (9, Dungannon)

Charlotte is 9 years old and has Global Developmental Delay and Autism. She is a cheerful child who responds well to a good routine and calm environment.



Charlotte requires supervision to ensure her safety and also help with personal care and supervision while eating. Charlotte has a Statement of Special Educational Needs and enjoys school though sometimes her concentration wavers and she can struggle with her communication however she continues to make progress.

Charlotte enjoys taking part in sensory activities and likes matching and sorting activities. Sometimes Charlotte can become unsettled in noisy or chaotic environments and would be best suited in a quieter family setting.

Charlotte would greatly benefit from a day short break initially with carers who are able to ensure her safety and provide her with social opportunities to maximise her chances of reaching her full potential.

### Dylan (5, Newry)

Dylan is 5 years old and from the Newry area and has a diagnosis of Autism and Global Developmental Delay. Dylan enjoys sensory play with bubbles and kinetic sand. As Dylan sometimes puts objects in his mouth he requires a high level of supervision as he has little awareness of danger.

Dylan likes to ride his trike bike and play with his Spiderman toys and enjoys watching 'SpongeBob Squarepants.' Dylan needs help with personal care and while he enjoys baths he doesn't enjoy getting his hair washed. Dylan has no speech but can still make his needs known; he dislikes noisy and chaotic environments and enjoys solitary play.

As Dylan has 3 other siblings, all of whom have additional needs, it can be a struggle for his parents to give Dylan unlimited attention.

Dylan requires 1 overnight short break per week which would allow his mum to have some much needed time for herself and time to spend with her other children. Through a short break Dylan could have the chance to increase his independence and social skills while having 1:1 support to meet his needs and maximise his potential.



## How short breaks help parents

*"My daughter looks forward to each visit with great enthusiasm as she gets to do activities which are difficult at home"*

*"For me it is a welcome break to restore my energy and relieve some of the stress"*

*"We would be lost without it"*



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# Meet our short break carers!

## Patsy & Mickey, Co. Tyrone

Patsy & Mickey were one of our first carers and they have over 25 years of experience providing care to children from a variety of backgrounds. One young person who started coming to them when he was five years old, still comes to them for respite and is now in his twenties. They currently have one young person who comes to them for one overnight a month. Their own children, all enjoyed the respite foster children coming to them over the years.



*"We get a lot out of looking after the children with disabilities - it's brilliant!"*

**Patsy & Mickey, Short Break Carers**

## Kirsty & Sean, Ballynahinch



*"My wife Kirsty has been involved with working with children with disabilities for many years and has been passionate about it.*

*We came to understand that we could be helping families who have children with a range of different disabilities. These parents need some respite even it is only for a night or a weekend. We felt we could provide this support at the weekend due to working all week.*

*It's been a long process to get to where we are today with months of assessments and training but it has all been worth it."*

*"I am moved by the amazing experiences these children can bring to our lives"*

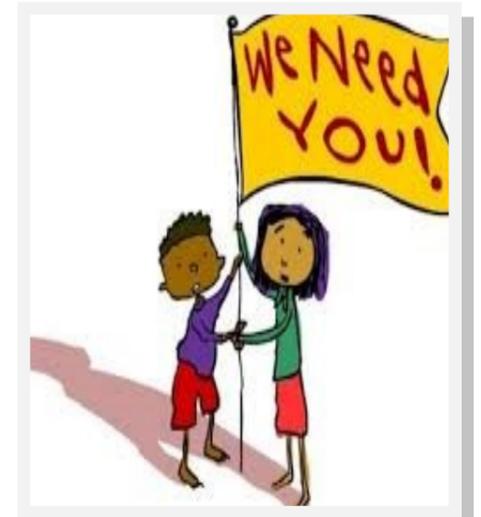
**Sean, Short Breaks Carer**

## Ana Costa de Oliveria, Craigavon

Ana is originally from Brazil and now works as a nurse in Craigavon Area Hospital. Ana and her family wanted to provide care for children living with a disability, and went to an open night in the Seagoe Hotel to find out more. Ana says, "it's very important for my kids to learn to share and care, to help others and give back, we have so much and we feel it's important to help out where we can."



# Could YOU be a Short Breaks carer?



Caring for a child with a disability is a big commitment yet one that offers innumerable rewards. We offer allowances, training, dedicated support and flexibility around your schedule. Carers may be married, cohabiting or single. They may own or rent their home, work or receive benefits and may or may not have children of their own.

With the current COVID-19 pandemic we URGENTLY require more carers than ever before given the pressures that parents are currently facing.

We welcome all enquiries, particularly from those living in the Newry and Dungannon areas. If you would like further information please contact a member of the short breaks team today!

## CAN YOU HELP?

**“YOU DON'T NEED TO HAVE A LOT OF MONEY, A BIG HOUSE, OR HIGHER EDUCATION. ALL YOU NEED IS ... PLENTY OF LOVE AND COMPASSION.**

### Short Breaks Team Contact Details:

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