

# Your new best buddy

## The Netbuddy website brings together a community of carers

Although still under two years old, the Netbuddy website has already been dubbed ‘the special needs Mumsnet’ and has been recognised with an award from the Media Trust.

The site was the brainchild of its director, Deborah Gundle, whose son Zach has a learning disability. “I spent so much time and energy solving day-to-day problems, which I felt sure other people had overcome before me,” explains Deborah. Originally planned as a handbook, the idea evolved to become an online community.

The key attraction to Netbuddy is its community feel – users can find or submit tips, all helpfully categorised. From health advice, such as hospital visits and links to easy-read resources, to tips on behavioural issues, advice on holidays and guidance on family issues.

The site, which attracts around 6,000 new visitors a month, also includes downloadable information packs and an ‘ask-an-expert’ forum, with advice from a speech and language

therapist, a behavioural support practitioner and other professionals.

Further widening its remit, Netbuddy has joined forces with disability charity Scope to launch a survey and campaign ahead of Fathers’ Day in June. Their Dad and Me project hopes to lift the lid on the role that fathers take in caring for their disabled children.

 **Go to [www.netbuddy.org.uk](http://www.netbuddy.org.uk)**



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# Good healthcare for all

## A guide to help get the best from the NHS

The Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities has launched *Good healthcare for all*. It’s a new guide on what people with a learning disability should expect from the NHS.

The guide is written in an ‘easier-to-read’ format, with practical tips on how best to use the NHS, what to expect when going to see a doctor or staying in hospital and advice on legal rights under the Mental Capacity Act.

It includes real-life examples of challenges people face and how they can be overcome, as well as advice on how to get help.

“We know that people with a learning disability and family carers often lack information about how to get the best care from the NHS,” explains Alison Giraud-Saunders, consultant at the Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities. “We hope that this new resource will prove a real help.”



 **To download *Good healthcare for all*, go to [www.tinyurl.com/FPLD-healthcare](http://www.tinyurl.com/FPLD-healthcare)**