Help on the Outside

A guide to learning and work for individuals upon release

niace
promoting adult learning

SOVA
SUPPORTING OTHERS THROUGH VOLUNTEER ACTION
Help on the Outside

Introduction

Like me, you’ve obviously been through something traumatic to get to this point. You may be feeling as if you’re starting out again on the bottom rung. You may be thinking, ‘Oh my God what do I do now?’ or ‘I have to start my life again from scratch.’ You may be unsure of yourself. You’ve got your patterns, but they’re jail patterns. These patterns have helped you survive. Now you have to turn the skills that have helped you survive into positive benefits for you. This guide is to help you get where you want to be in your life.

Not everyone knows where they want to be. But it’s only you who can decide. You need to take control. Only you can decide the direction you want to walk in.

This guide is to help and to signpost you to where you may be able to get help. It’s a toolbox. It’s not a magic cure. No one has the answer to all your problems. But it aims to take the hassle out of the next few steps either to learning, developing skills, or to work. As you’ve probably heard - the best way to beat the system is to get as much out of it as you can.

Good Luck!

David Haigh
Adult Learner of the Year 2004
This guide is for individuals who have completed a sentence. It contains advice on how to get into education, training and work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is in this guide?</th>
<th>Page number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How to use this guide</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Getting into learning or training</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Jobcentre Plus benefits and services</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Finding a job</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Voluntary work</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Self-employment</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Disclosing convictions to an employer or learning provider</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Help with other areas of life</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 1 - How to use this guide

Each section gives you the basic information you need to get started. Each section has a different coloured banner at the top of the page to help you find it easily.

You don’t have to read the guide from beginning to end. You can just dip in and read what you need.

This guide is a starting point.

There are many other places where you can find out more:
- a nextstep adviser
- the Careers Advice Service
- probation officers
- a Job centre plus adviser
- local libraries
- family and friends
- community centres

This guide contains all the contacts you may need such as the websites, addresses and phone numbers of national organisations. You can choose whether to use the internet, phone or visit to find the information you need. Many of these organisations have local offices so there might be one near you.

There are likely to be other projects and agencies working locally that provide specialist services to ex-offenders. You can ask the people listed above to give you details.

You can find the contact details for any organisation mentioned in this guide in Section 8 - ‘Help with other areas of life’
Before you start thinking about learning or training, there are a number of questions you could ask yourself:

- What do I want to do in my life?
- Who do I want to be?
- What do I need to know to be that person?

**It's not easy!** But we can help you get started. Once you've found the answers to those questions, finding work or a course to help you get the skills you need can be the most straightforward bit.

It can be difficult to discover what you really want to do. Sometimes identifying what you don't want to be can be a useful starting point.

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Some people think they are big because they have been to prison and have a tag. But being on the dole is really no great thing - all you do all day is sit and watch telly. It can be really empty. When I came out of prison I felt very down and anxious. I was feeling very low and wasn’t looking after myself. I found it hard to get out of bed in the morning. I just wish I had started learning years ago. Now I've got qualifications. I've got something to focus on. I'm training for a job I really want. I can feel proud of myself. I feel I've done something positive in my life, something which can help others. (Christine)

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Talking your ideas through with family, friends or other people you can trust can help you decide. They might not have all the information you need though.
Another positive step is to talk to a specialist adviser who can give you information and help you think through different possibilities. The Careers Advice Service and nextstep advisers are trained to do this.

**What is Careers Advice Service?**

*Careers Advice Service* is a free careers advice service. It offers independent advice over the phone, on line and by e-mail.

**What is nextstep?**

*nextstep* is an organisation that gives you free information and advice about learning and work. Centres are available throughout England. The advisers can tell you about:

- how and where to access further information
- work and learning opportunities available locally
- how to apply for jobs and how to plan a career
- where to go next for information about benefits, transport and free services for learning and work.

And they can offer you:

- verbal information through face-to-face meetings or by telephone
- printed information, such as leaflets
- audio-visual materials, such as videos
- information available on the computer

**What is the value of learning and training?**

Learning and training is a great way to get new skills. It also offers:

- new skills
- access to new jobs
- direction
- sense of purpose
- enjoyment
- knowledge
- understanding
- confidence
- new friends
Have you already started your learning?
You may already have started to identify your training needs while you were serving your sentence. You don’t need to reinvent the wheel. Use your existing plan to identify the next steps for you. If the ideas in it are still relevant, take it along with you to an adviser and use it as your starting point. Don’t worry if you don’t yet have a learning plan. You can start your plan at any time.

How do you get the learning and skills you want?
It sometimes takes confidence to ask for help. There are plenty of people and resources out there to help you find what you want. You can try:

- Careers Advice Service  www.direct.gov.uk/careersadvice
- nextstep  www.nextstep.org.uk
- your local library

What do I need to consider when looking for learning and skills?

How do I like to learn?
Do you want to learn in a small group, on your own, attend a course in the day or in the evening, learn full time or part time, use computers, work at your own pace…?

What study skills do I have?
Think about your reading, writing, communication and maths skills – do you need any help with these?

Do I need any support?
Do you need a crèche, learning aids, translation or other support?

What if I don’t know what I want to learn?
See if you can try out some short courses or “tasters” in different subjects to get a feel of what you like. You may prefer to have a go at learning with your children on a family learning course through school or Sure Start. You may want to have a go at something creative like music, drama, pottery or painting. Or you could start out with something you’ve never tried before. Any of these things can lead in unexpected directions. There’s nothing to lose by trying.

Work-related courses
You could think about going on a course that leads to a qualification. This is a good way to get the job you want. These courses are called vocational courses. They are at different levels depending on your skills and experience. There are lots of different options. nextstep or the Careers Advice Service advisers can tell you about the different choices.
Work experience
You might be eligible for the New Deal scheme. This can offer packages of learning, skills and work experience to suit your needs. You can get details from Jobcentre Plus. Also look at the voluntary work section in this guide for other ideas.

Apprenticeships
These are available in most industries for young people. They offer the chance to get a recognised certificate at NVQ level 2 and in key skills. Advanced apprenticeships offer technical certificates at NVQ level 3 and above. Apprenticeships for Adults are available in a limited number of areas. To find out more call the “It’s In Our Hands” helpline on 0800 011 30 30 or go to www.apprenticeships.org.uk

English, Maths, Computer and Study Skills
If your English and maths aren’t as good as you would like, you can take a course to prepare you for further study or work. Or you may be able to get help for these skills as part of another course. ESOL courses are available for speakers of English as a second language to improve your language skills. A nextstep or the Careers Advice Service adviser can help you find a local course.

Will studying affect my benefits?
Attending most courses will not affect your benefits but if you are on Jobseekers Allowance:
• you are not allowed to study for more than 16 hours a week;
• you must stay available for work and be willing to attend job interviews and start work if you get a job.

Do I have to tell the learning provider about my conviction?
Not usually but there are some exceptions. See Section 7 - Disclosing convictions to an employer or learning provider on disclosure.

Can I get help with childcare?
Many colleges and learning centres have a crèche. Check with them to see if they have a place for your child. They may also be able to advise about other local childcare provision, such as nurseries, children’s centres or Sure Start. Some centres run family learning activities where you can learn together with your children. Your local library is often a good place to find out where family learning activities take place in your area. Libraries often run bookstart schemes and storytelling activities themselves.
You can also try

- Childcare Link - to find local childcare
  www.childcarelink.gov.uk
- Care to Learn - to find about help towards childcare and travel costs whilst studying
  www.dfes.gov.uk/caretolearn
- Sure Start- to find out about childcare, health or family support
  www.surestart.gov.uk

What will it cost me?
Many courses are free to people on benefits. If there are charges, you will be asked to pay the same fees as other learners.

How do I find help with fees?
You can ask:
- the college or learning provider
- a nextstep or the Careers Advice Service
- other guidance workers
- NACRO Resettlement Plus Helpline
  Email: helpline@nacro.org.uk
  Freephone (for ex-offenders and their families and friends only)
  0800 0181 259

What are Adult Learning Grants?
If you are going back to college to study for your first full Level 2 or 3 qualification, the Adult Learning Grant could pay you up to £30 a week. Over 28,000 learners have benefited from the grant so far. To find out more and see if you are eligible, visit www.direct.gov.uk/alg or you can visit Student Services at your local college.
Section 3 - Jobcentre Plus benefits and services

Jobcentre Plus has to be your starting point. Some people find going to Jobcentre Plus difficult, but it is a stepping-stone to somewhere else. The steps you need to take aren’t necessarily going to be easy, but you need to stick with it to get what you want. Keep a clear focus on what you want and the direction you are heading.

Jobcentre Plus provides help with:
- job vacancies
- looking for work
- benefits
- immediate financial help
- financial advice before accepting a job
- leaflets and guides
- New Deal training and work
- working and training in Europe
- information about training
- information about self employment.

Approach
You should find that patience and sticking with it will get a better result for you. The staff there are doing their job. Calmly explain your situation. If you lose control, security could be called and you will be further away from the result you want. If you know you are not a patient person - take someone with you who is. Let them deal with any tricky situations. Afterwards you can go through with them what has been said and agreed.

On the other hand, you may be the kind of person who finds it hard to ask for what you need. If you are, maybe you could take along someone who is more experienced. They can check you have had chance to explain what you want, and that you know what is being offered.
You can get help from an adviser, through Jobcentre Plus leaflets and from the website www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk. There are Jobcentre Plus offices in most large towns and cities. Details of local offices can be found in the phone book or from their website. Access can be more difficult if you live in a small place or rural area. You may have to travel to get advice or you may be able to do things over the phone.

### Jobcentre Plus leaflets

*The Work You Want, the Help You Need* provides a comprehensive list of benefits and services available from Jobcentre Plus and elsewhere for people of working age. You can download it from their website:

www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/stellent/groups/jcp/documents/websitecontent/dev_012324.rtf

*Just for the Record: help and advice for people with a criminal record* includes advice on disclosure and other employment-related issues. You can download it from the website:

www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/stellent/groups/jcp/documents/websitecontent/dev_012246.rtf
If you don’t want a job right now
Don’t set yourself up to fail if now is not the right time to look for a job. You may:

• want to sort your health out first
• need to sort out your housing situation
• want time to be with your children
• want to brush up or develop new skills
• want time to think about what you want to do with your life.

To get help with sorting out these issues, see section 8 for a list of organisations that could help you.

Jobcentre Plus services

If you are worried about making ends meet until your first pay packet arrives, or unsure if it is the right job, Jobcentre Plus has a number of services to help.

Better Off Calculation - You can ask for an interview with your personal adviser at Jobcentre Plus to request an estimate of how you may be better off receiving your wage rather than benefits.

Rapid Reclaim - You can use this service to claim benefits again within 12 weeks of a previous claim ending. It aims to give you confidence to start a new job if you are not sure it will last and you are worried it will be difficult to claim benefit again.

Work Trial - A chance to try out a job for up to 15 working days to test if it is the right job for you and to show employers you are the right person for the job. It is a volunteer programme and benefits are not affected. Access depends on your circumstances.

Job Grant - A non-taxable payment to those who have been receiving benefits continuously for 26 weeks or more and are moving into full time (16 hours plus) work. £100 for single people and couples without children. £250 for lone parents and couples with children.

Mortgage support - It may be possible to claim for a mortgage interest run on payment in the first weeks after starting work, if you have been receiving previous support with mortgage and house loan payments.
### Key contacts

| Looking for a job (including job vacancies) | Jobseeker Direct  
Tel: 0845 6060 234  
Textphone: 0845 6055 255  
[www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk) |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| New Deal training and work                 | New Deal Helpline  
Tel: 0845 606 2626  
Textphone: 0845 606 0680  
[www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk) |
| Confidential information about benefits    | Benefit Enquiry Line  
Tel: 0800 8822 00  
Textphone: 080024 33 55 |
| National Minimum Wage                      | Tel: 0845 6000 678  
Textphone: 0845 915 3296  
[www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) |
| Tax Credits  
Child tax credit or working tax credit  
or if you want an information pack | Tel: 0845 300 3900  
Textphone: 0845 300 3909  
[www.hmrc.gov.uk](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk) |
There are many different reasons why you could want a job. It could be:

- to develop your skills and experience
- to prove to yourself that you have the discipline to stick with a job
- to prove to an employer that you have the discipline to stick with a job
- to give you self respect by paying your own, or your family’s, bills
- to give you a wage above what you’d get on the dole
- as a stepping stone to another job
- to give you a sense of purpose
- to develop a new set of friends
- to use your skills, talents and experience
- to make you feel better.

Picking a job
Knowing why you want a job will help you think about what kind of job to start looking for. If you need more help with thinking about what job to look for, you may want to talk this through with a trained adviser such as a nextstep or the Careers Advice Service adviser. Go to www.nextstep.org.uk to find your nearest office and book an appointment, or phone the Careers Advice Service on 0800 100 900.

Getting a job
Let’s be realistic, getting a job isn’t always easy. There are some employers who will not want to know you if they hear you have a conviction. The good news is that most employers will give people with convictions a chance of employment. There is plenty of advice around. Jobcentre Plus is a good place to start 
www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk
Finding a job
Job search skills include:
• knowing the places to look for work
• researching the job
• researching the company
• filling in application forms
• writing your CV (your skills, experience and qualifications)
• interview skills – appearance, attitude, first impressions, travel to interview.

A number of organisations can offer help looking for work and fees for training.

Key contacts

- NACRO
  NACRO provides a useful guide: The sorting yourself out guide to applying for work (with a criminal record)
  www.nacro.org.uk/data/resources/nacro-2007031501.pdf
- Jobcentre Plus
  www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk
  Jobcentre Plus should be able to tell you about local schemes to help with job search skills

Getting prepared for work in construction

A lot of people want to work in construction and ask ‘How do I get a CSCS card?’
Most big employers demand a Construction Skills Certification Scheme card known as a CSCS card before they will give you work. This is proof that you have the skills and awareness of health and safety to do your job.

Where can I find out more and how do I get a CSCS card?
You can go to the website www.cscs.uk.com or ring the CSCS Helpdesk on 0870 417 8777. You can download application forms and apply for a health and safety test on the website.
SkillsDirect can help you organise a CSCS card. Ring them on 0870 850 5262.

What will it cost?
A CSCS card costs £25 and it costs £17.50 to sit the health and safety test.
What if I am asked to send a CV?

Employers usually ask you to fill in an application form but if they want a CV you could use the example on the next page as a model. If you are disclosing your conviction you could send a covering letter like the one on page 21.
Curriculum Vitae
George Henderson

Address: 25 Market Ave
Preston
Lancashire
PR1 9SZ
Telephone number: 01772 XXXXX
Mobile number: 07780 XXXXXX
Email address: gh1@gh1.org.uk

Profile

I am an active 24 year old man with. I have been working as a labourer for the past two years and am attending college in my own time to gain some qualifications. I am applying for this post as I would like to train as a gas fitter. I have a CSCS card.

Key skills and abilities

- I have good verbal communication skills
- I can think logically
- I am practical
- I work well in a team
- I am patient and methodical.

Employment details (paid and voluntary work)

Job title: Labourer
Employer's name: Western Homes
Town or city: Preston
From: February 2005 To: August 2007
Main duties:
- General labouring
- Site clearing.
Job title: Warehouse operative  
Employer’s name: Khan Knits  
Town or city: Manchester  
From: August 2001 To: January 2004  
Main duties:  
• Picking and packing  
• Loading and unloading.

Qualifications and training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>College / provider</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 2006</td>
<td>Skills for Life</td>
<td>Adult literacy level 1</td>
<td>Greengate College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2007</td>
<td>Skills for Life</td>
<td>Adult numeracy level 1</td>
<td>Greengate College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 2007</td>
<td>Football coaching</td>
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Interests

I am keen on sport and play football. I am a volunteer coach for a team of local children on Saturday and I have just started a course for a football coaching qualification. I am also interested in vehicles and repair old cars in my spare time.

References

1. Name: James Smith  
   Address: Western Homes,  
   19 Brown Street, Preston PR2 2SZ  
   Telephone: 01772 xxxxxx  
   Relationship: Employer

2. Name: Alan Barlow  
   Address: 7 West Street,  
   Preston PR4 4LZ  
   Telephone: 01772 xxxxxx  
   Relationship: Senior football coach
Can an employer refuse to employ me or sack me if my conviction is spent?
The answer is usually no but the law is complicated and there are some exceptions and some jobs you can’t do. See Section 7 - ‘When do I need to declare spent convictions?’ for the details.

Why should I disclose my criminal record to an employer?
If you are not legally required to disclose your criminal record there might seem more disadvantages than advantages of telling an employer. But there are a lot of possible benefits of telling an employer. The advantages and disadvantages are summarised in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Telling an employer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advantages</strong></td>
<td><strong>Disadvantages</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The employer will see that you are trying to make a new start, and give you a chance.</td>
<td>If you tell the employer, you may not get the job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The employer may have more respect for you if you are honest about your record.</td>
<td>It may take longer to get a job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You will not need to worry that the employer will find out at a later date and sack you for not telling.</td>
<td>You will find it difficult to tell the employer about your record.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You will not have to worry that someone else will tell the employer about your record.</td>
<td>You may be anxious that colleagues might find out about your record.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SOVA
How do you reveal you have a record?
If application forms ask about convictions or criminal records you have to disclose them. It may be best to enclose a separate letter explaining the situation, and write “see letter” on the form. In the letter you should give a short account of the offence and your attitude to it. You should seal the envelope and mark it as ‘private and confidential’.
It is better to:

• Keep discussion of the offence(s) to a minimum. You do not need to go into great detail. Mention only the type of conviction, the date and the sentence given or time served.
• Mention briefly any personal problems which contributed to the offending behaviour that you have since successfully overcome. This could include drugs, debt, or relationship difficulties. You should express regret, and explain that these issues are in the past.
• Accept responsibility for what happened. Stress that the offence was a mistake and display regret.
• Try to give reasons why the employer should discount the conviction, for example because:
  o the crime was committed some time ago
  o it is not relevant to the job being applied for
  o the crime sounds more serious than it was.
• Do not criticise the criminal justice system or suggest that you were unfairly treated.
• Emphasise real keenness to find work and a determination not to re-offend.

The important thing is to reassure employers that there is no longer a risk, and to show that you have the right skills to do the job.

You can use the example on the next page to help you write your letter.
Dear Sir or Madam,

I am applying for a job as [insert job title] in your company. I believe I have the skills and experience for this job, and hope you will consider me for the position. However I feel obliged to let you know I have a criminal record.

I was convicted of benefit fraud in 2005.

This offence was over two years ago and I have not re-offended since. I made a bad decision at a time in my life when I was in a difficult financial situation. I am now settled and have a young baby.

I regret my record but now want to put it behind me. I hope that you will still consider me for the vacant position as I feel I have a lot to contribute to your company.

Yours faithfully,

Janice Liptrot
Some employers may think that:

- ex-offenders are high risk and untrustworthy
- ex-offenders will not stay long in employment
- other employees will feel uncomfortable working with ex-offenders
- ex-offenders are inexperienced, unskilled and unmotivated
- ex-offenders are likely to re-offend
- ex-offenders require more supervision.

Some useful facts:

- Research show that there is no real difference between the length of time people with a criminal record stay with an organisation compared to those people who do not have a criminal record.
- 1 in 5 adults have a criminal record. Most people are already working alongside an ex-offender - they just don't know it.
- Ex-offenders have the same range of skills, experiences and attitudes as the rest of the public.
- Home Office statistics show that if a person with a criminal record finds settled employment or receives training with secured employment at the end, the chances of their re-offending are overwhelmingly reduced.
- Applicants should be appointed on merit so they should not need any more support than other employees.

Advantages of looking for work with large scale employers

Many public sector and large companies have policies around fair recruitment so are less likely to discriminate. Their recruitment staff and managers are likely to be aware of the issues surrounding employing ex-offenders and so may be more sympathetic.

Advantages of looking for work with small and medium sized businesses

You may prefer working in smaller, less formal organisations.

Before accepting a job

If you are worried about making ends meet until your first pay packet arrives, or unsure if it is the right job, Jobcentre Plus has a number of services to help. These include:

- a better off calculation
- rapid Benefit Reclaim
- work trial
• job grant
• mortgage support.

See Section 3 - 'Jobcentre Plus benefits and services' for details.

If you still can’t find a job
If you still can’t find work, even with help from an adviser, it’s a good idea to re-think your options. You might want to try a different sort of job, training, or voluntary work. The rest of this guide may be able to help you.
Voluntary work is not for everyone but it can be very rewarding. It can help you find work. Also not everyone is motivated by money, and voluntary work teaches the essence of doing something because it needs doing. If nothing else it gives you extra opportunities and all it costs you is time.

What will I get out of volunteering?
- it can help you feel better about yourself and the people around you
- it can help your relationships with others - you start caring more, you treat them better, they feel better, so you feel better
- it can build up your confidence
- it can give you work experience and help you get into work.

How can voluntary work help me to get a job?
It can:
- give you insights into different types of work
- let you try a job without stopping your benefits
- let you try different skills
- give you experience to put on your CV
- show employers that you have moved on, stopped offending and are reliable;
- give you references.

Do I have to disclose my record?
Usually the answer is no. You don’t have to disclose your record unless you are asked. If you are asked, don't lie. It is a good idea to talk to the organisation you are applying to.
If you apply to work with children or vulnerable adults you will have to have a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. The CRB check will disclose your record. Section 7 has more information about disclosure.

**Will voluntary work affect my benefit claim?**
At the moment doing voluntary work doesn’t affect your benefits. Rules can change though! Always check with Jobcentre Plus before you start.

**If you are on Jobseeker’s allowance:**
- you can volunteer for as many hours as you like
- you must meet the rules on actively seeking work
- you must be able to go to an interview at 48 hours’ notice
- you must be able to start work at one week’s notice
- payment of bus fares and other expenses won’t affect your benefits
- in-kind payments such as shop vouchers can affect benefits. You should tell Jobcentre Plus about these.

**If you are on Incapacity Benefit:**
- you can volunteer for as many hours as you like, but
- you need to tell Jobcentre Plus before you start.

**If you are on New Deal:**
- voluntary work is one of the options on New Deal for 18-24 year olds
- you will get a training allowance equivalent to your Jobseekers Allowance and may also get a top-up payment of £15.38 per week.

**How do I find out about voluntary work opportunities?**
- ask people you know
- ask at your local library or community centre
- look in local newspapers
- find out if there is a volunteer information centre near you and contact them for advice and help
- use the internet - [www.do-it.org.uk](http://www.do-it.org.uk) advertises volunteering opportunities across the UK and has lots of help and advice on everything to do with volunteering.
Section 6 - Self-employment

If you have the drive and motivation to work really hard and excel at what you want to do then self-employment might be for you.

Working for yourself has great rewards. It can put you in charge of your own destiny so that you have freedom and control over your life. It can help you get working as you won’t have to explain your criminal record to an employer. You can also organise your work flexibly to fit with childcare and other arrangements.

However, it also carries risks and can be frustrating and stressful so it’s not for everyone.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of self-employment?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No need to disclose your convictions to prospective employers.</td>
<td>You need to disclose convictions to obtain insurance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No need to explain gaps in your employment history.</td>
<td>You need money to start your business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence.</td>
<td>You need to understand the legal requirements and what happens if you don’t get them right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You make the business decisions.</td>
<td>You are responsible if things go wrong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice of what to do and when and how to do it.</td>
<td>You need knowledge and skills to set up and run a business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility to work at a place and time to suit you.</td>
<td>Long working hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No boss or company hierarchy.</td>
<td>Lot of pressure and no one to help with difficult decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No office politics.</td>
<td>Lack of contact with work mates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No worries about being sacked or being made redundant.</td>
<td>New businesses are vulnerable until established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can earn good income when the business is established.</td>
<td>Low pay and insecure wage, especially during the early stages of the business.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What do I need to do to get started?**

Before you set off on this path you need to ask yourself seriously - is it for me? Do I want the responsibility? Can I handle the pressure and frustration?

Some organisations specialise in supporting ex-offenders to get ready for self-employment. See the list of organisations offering help and support on the next page.

No one knows everything when they are getting started. You will need to do a lot of research to make sure you get things right. You will need high quality advice and support to help get your business up and running and to keep it going. This is not a full list but some of the important things you need to know are how to:

- develop your business and enterprise skills
- draw up your business plan
- work out the equipment and premises you will need and what they will cost
- learn about the legal requirements
- find start-up funding
- manage the finances and keep accounts
- find customers.

**What do I need to know about insurance?**

All self-employed people have to take out insurance. The type of insurance you need depends on your business.

Finding insurance is sometimes difficult if you have a criminal record. You have to declare any unspent convictions (but not spent convictions). Be aware that sometimes insurance companies will refuse cover or charge you extra.
Don’t let this tempt you to lie when you fill in the application form for insurance. Your insurance will be invalid if you don’t declare a conviction when asked. This means the insurer will not pay if you claim. You would also be breaking the law and could be prosecuted for fraud.

What about the paperwork and accounts?
Some people are good at paperwork and accounts but others find it difficult and stressful. You will have to do it though or you will find your business is in serious trouble. Consider paying an agency to do it for you. It can be relatively cheap and can save you a lot of time and money by avoiding mistakes.

Where can I go for advice and support on becoming self-employed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Contacts</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BEAT (Business, Enterprise, Advice and Training)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tel:</strong> 0207 7934294</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This initiative helps prisoners in a number of establishments to develop business plans and provides advice and ongoing support during the first two years of trading.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Business Link**   |                             |
| **Tel:** 0845 600 9006 |                             |
| **Website:** [www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk) |                             |
| Check the website for local offices. |                             |
| Business advice and a range of other services are available to help people who want to set up their own business. Business Link also helps small businesses that have recently started up. Advisers can offer in-depth help with business planning. It operates through a network of local offices. |                             |

| **Citizen’s Advice Bureau** |                             |
| **Website:** [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk) |                             |
| The CAB’s online advice resource, Advice guide, provides a comprehensive checklist for people considering self-employment. |                             |
| Check the website for local offices. |                             |
Advice is available for people wanting to start up their own business. Business start-up grants of between £20 and £90 a week for between 26 and 66 weeks may be available. Some programmes offer a three-stage training course, delivered by specialists in self-employment.

Financial support and a range of business support services are available to unemployed people aged between 18 and 30. This includes ongoing advice and support from a volunteer business broker for three years from start-up. The Trust will also put you through the Duke of Edinburgh Award which give you a brilliant experience as well as lots of useful skills.

Business support, advice and training as well as financial support are available to help people aged 50 and over to set up their own business.

Advice and support are offered through a network of local offices to people aged 16 to 30 wanting to set up their own business.
Applying for a job or a training course can be hard going although worth the effort. Worrying about what to say about your criminal record can stress you out even more. You should get advice about your personal situation from the Probation Service.

The law on disclosure of criminal records is complicated, and most employers and college staff don’t know about it. You may need to advise them.

This section tells you what you do and don’t have to disclose. The information is accurate under current legislation.

Remember - the law can change and if you are not sure about anything it is better to check.

Do I have to disclose my convictions every time I apply for a job or a course?

- If you are not asked about your criminal convictions, you do not have to tell most employers or colleges on application forms or at interviews. The law says you always have to disclose if the job is excepted from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA). You can read more about this on page 34.
- You must disclose all convictions that are not 'spent', in other words forgotten, if an employer, or learning provider, asks whether you have a criminal record.

What are spent and unspent convictions?

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA), many convictions become ‘spent’. This means they are disregarded after a specified period of time. This is known as the ‘rehabilitation period’.

Once your conviction has become spent, you do not have to reveal it in most circumstances. This includes applying for a job or course.
Can an employer refuse to employ me or sack me if my conviction is spent?
The answer is usually no but there are some exceptions. Certain occupations are excluded from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. These are often known as ‘excepted occupations’. You need to declare spent convictions when applying for work in these jobs (see page 33 ‘When do I need to declare spent convictions?’).

What happens if I do not declare my criminal record when asked?
There can be serious consequences:
- you can be sacked
- you can be prosecuted for fraud.

How long does it take for a conviction to become spent?
This varies and depends on:
- your age when you were convicted
- the sentence you were given
- convictions during the rehabilitation period.

If you are not sure ask a probation officer.

What are the rehabilitation periods?
The main sentences carry the following rehabilitation periods:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Rehabilitation period</th>
<th>Rehabilitation period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>For people aged 17 or under when convicted</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prison sentence of 6 months or less</td>
<td>3 1/2 years</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prison sentence (including suspended sentence) of more than 6 months but less than 2 1/2 years</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prison sentence (including suspended sentence) of more than 2 1/2 years</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fines, compensation, probation / community rehabilitation order, community service / community punishment order, combination / community punishment and rehabilitation order, action plan, drug treatment and testing, and reparation order  | 2½ years  | 5 years  
Borstal (abolished 1983)  | 7 years  | 7 years  
Detention centres (abolished 1988)  | 3 years  | 3 years  


The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 introduced a new custodial sentence for young people called a detention and training order which has different rehabilitation periods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Rehabilitation period</th>
<th>Rehabilitation period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detention and training order of 6 months or less</td>
<td>1 year after the order expires</td>
<td>3½ years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detention and training order of more than 6 months</td>
<td>1 year after the order expires</td>
<td>3½ years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The rehabilitation period for some sentences varies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Rehabilitation period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Probation (where convicted before 3 February 1995), supervision, care order, conditional discharge and bind-over</td>
<td>1 year or until the order expires (whichever is the longer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure training (abolished in 2000) and attendance centre orders</td>
<td>1 year after the order expires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital order (with or without a restriction order)</td>
<td>5 years or 2 years after the order expires (whichever is the longer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral order</td>
<td>Once the order expires</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Are cautions counted as criminal convictions?
Not usually. Cautions, reprimands and final warnings are not covered by the ROA so are regarded as instantly spent. However, they do form part of a criminal record and will be shown on a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check.

Are Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) classed as a conviction?
No. An ASBO is a civil order not a criminal penalty. This means you do not have to disclose it. It is not on your criminal record and will not show up on a CRB check.

When do I need to declare spent convictions?
Some jobs are excepted from the ROA. This means the rules are different. In these cases, potential employers are entitled to ask you for details of your convictions and by law you must declare both spent and unspent convictions. You will have to have a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check to provide proof of your record.

This excepted work broadly relates to:
- work with children (note that people with certain convictions are barred by law from working with children);
- work with vulnerable adults, such as the infirm, elderly or mentally ill;
- work concerned with the administration of justice, such as police officers and lawyers;
- professions that have legal protection, such as doctors, dentists, vets, nurses and pharmacists;
- senior managers in banking and financial institutions;
- work involving matters of national security.

Will I have to pay for a CRB check?
An employer often pays when they ask you to apply. If not, the cost is £31 or £36. If you are on New Deal and can’t afford to pay, Jobcentre Plus will give you a voucher. CRB checks are free for volunteers.

Will having a criminal record stop me from working in an excepted occupation?
Not necessarily. An employer has to show that your offences are relevant to the job you are applying for if they refuse to employ you.
Further information

The publication *I Can’t Do That, Can I?* contains comprehensive information on the relevance of criminal convictions to different occupational areas. You can search it and download a copy at: [www.connexions.gov.uk/partnerships/IcantdothatcanI/cover.htm](http://www.connexions.gov.uk/partnerships/IcantdothatcanI/cover.htm)

Full details of the process for undertaking **CRB checks**, including guidance for applicants, can be obtained from the Criminal Records Bureau.

**Criminal Records Bureau**
**Tel:** 0870 90 90 811
**Website:** [www.crb.gov.uk](http://www.crb.gov.uk).

What is the law in relation to sex offenders?
Under the *Sex Offenders Act 1997*, anyone convicted or cautioned in respect of sexual offences is required to notify their local police of their name, address, date of birth, national insurance number, and any change of address or qualifying periods of a stay away from home. The length of time for which the requirement to notify remains dependent upon the sentence received.

For those convicted of certain serious sexual offences, the police can apply for a community protection order. The order will last for a minimum of five years, and can bar an individual from areas frequented by children.

If you are subject to a community protection order you will not be able to attend where under-16s are likely to be present.

Further information

Details of the notification periods for people who are registered sex offenders can be found at:
or [www.yourrights.org.uk](http://www.yourrights.org.uk) then follow the links to sex offenders register.

Do I have to disclose if I want to start a course at college or an adult learning centre?
- the above rules on disclosure apply
- you don’t have to disclose if you are not asked but be careful about applying for courses leading to employment you will not be allowed to do
• if you are subject to a community protection order you will not be able to attend where under-16s are likely to be present. This includes:
  • colleges and adult learning premises that have crèche facilities
  • colleges and adult learning centres where young people under 16 attend courses.

Do I have to disclose if I want to apply for a course in higher education (HE)?
• The Universities and Colleges Application System (UCAS) form includes a question about criminal records. The above rules on disclosure apply.
• People are not allowed to study on courses leading to jobs in which they would not be able to be employed, such as teaching, health care and social work. If you apply for these courses you must declare all spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings.

Further information
You can find further guidance on the UCAS form and in the UCAS booklet “How to Apply”.

UCAS
Rosehill, New Barn Lane, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL52 3LZ
Tel: 0870 1122211
Email: menquiries@ucas.ac.uk
Website: www.ucas.ac.uk.

In summary
• If you are not asked about your convictions, you do not have to disclose.
• If your convictions are spent under the ROA you can answer 'no' if you are asked about previous convictions on an application form or during an interview. This does NOT apply if you are applying for a job that is excepted.
• Spent convictions alone are not sufficient grounds for refusing to employ someone or for sacking them in most areas of work.
  If you apply for work that is exempted from the terms of the ROA you will be legally required to undertake a CRB check. This will disclose your criminal record, including spent and unspent convictions and cautions.
If you get a job but have failed to disclose unspent convictions on an application form or at interview when asked, you could be dismissed or prosecuted if you are found out.

### Further information

You can get further information about the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, when convictions become spent, and guidance on disclosing convictions from NACRO and Apex Trust.

### Key Contacts

**NACRO**
169 Clapham Road
London, SW9 0PU
**Tel:** 0800 0181 259
**Email:** [helpline@nacro.org.uk](mailto:helpline@nacro.org.uk)
**Website:** [www.nacro.org.uk](http://www.nacro.org.uk)

**Apex Trust**
St Alphage House, Wingate Annexe,
2 Fore Street,
London, EC2Y 5DA
**Tel:** 020 7638 5931
**E-mail:** [jobcheck@apextrust.com](mailto:jobcheck@apextrust.com)
**Website:** [www.apextrust.com](http://www.apextrust.com)
Section 8 - Help with other areas of life

This guide is mainly about how to use the system to take the first steps to getting into the work or training you want. Sometimes you need support in other areas of life. This section will direct you to sources of advice, information and help.

You are in charge of your life and you can solve these problems. You can get help from other people but they won't do it for you. What you have to do is go and tell them how to help you get there. Don't see asking for help as a weakness, see it as giving yourself the best chance. Approach these advisers and organisations with the attitude, 'I heard you were here to help. How can we work together?'

This directory covers the following topics:

- general help for people leaving prison or who have a criminal record
- housing and homelessness
- money and debt
- health
- mental health difficulties
- drug and alcohol misuse
- specific learning difficulties and disabilities
- issues facing women
- childcare and benefits
- issues facing young people and families
- information regarding the Criminal Justice System.
### General help for people leaving prison or who have a criminal record

**Apex Charitable Trust Ltd**  
St Alphage House, Wingate Annexe, 2 Fore Street, London, EC2Y 5DA  
Tel: 020 7638 5931  
E-mail: [jobcheck@apextrust.com](mailto:jobcheck@apextrust.com)  
Website: [www.apextrust.com](http://www.apextrust.com)

Provides employment advice, guidance and training courses to ex-offenders.

**Bridging the Gap**  
Bridging The Gap, PO Box 783, Croydon, CR9 1BT  
Tel: 0870 027 3091 / 0870 027 3092 / 0707 781 0056  
Email: [info@btguk.org](mailto:info@btguk.org)  
Website: [www.btguk.org](http://www.btguk.org)

Bridging the Gap aims to help reduce re-offending by helping discharged prisoners settle into their communities after release. It can provide help with form-filling, explaining changes to the benefit system, pursuing accommodation options, finding free training opportunities, identifying employers who take on ex-offenders, preparing a good CV and developing interview skills.

**Citizens Advice Bureau**  
Website: [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk)  
The website provides a directory of local offices with contact details.

Citizens Advice Bureau provide free, confidential and independent advice to help people resolve their debt, benefits, housing, legal, discrimination, employment, immigration, consumer and other problems.

**Jobcheck**  
Jobcheck helpline: 0870 608 4567  
Email: [jobcheck@apextrust.com](mailto:jobcheck@apextrust.com)

Provides confidential information and advice on a variety of issues that affect ex-offenders, for example, when a conviction becomes spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and the Criminal Records Bureau. It also advises companies about employing ex-offenders.
| **Inside Out Trust**  
| Hilton House,  
| 55-57a High Street,  
| Hurstpierpoint,  
| Sussex, BN6 9TT  
| **Tel:** 01273 833050  
| **Email:** info@iotrust.plus.com  
| **Website:** www.inside-out.org.uk |

Activities for offenders and ex-offenders to help them integrate into the community.

| **Careers Advice Service**  
| **Tel:** 0800 100 900  
| **Website:** www.direct.gov.uk/careersadvice |

Online information on nearly 1 million courses and training classes nationwide.

| **National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO)**  
| 169 Clapham Road  
| London, SW9 0PU  
| **Tel:** 020 7840 6464 (Resettlement Helpline)  
| **Tel:** 0800 0181 259 (freephone for ex-offenders and families)  
| **Email:** helpline@nacro.org.uk  
| **Website:** www.nacro.org.uk |

A national organisation providing an information and advice service that covers all aspects of rehabilitation and resettlement for prisoners, ex-offenders and people working with them.

| **New Bridge Foundation**  
| 27A Medway Street,  
| London, SW1P 2BD  
| **Tel:** 020 7976 0779  
| **Email:** info@newbridgefoundation.org.uk  
| **Website:** www.newbridgefoundation.org.uk |

Supports, advises and mentors people in prisons, assists ex-offenders in finding employment, training and education and encourages the integration of ex-offenders into the community. Produces the newspaper 'Inside Time', the national newspaper for prisoners.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prisoner Education Trust</td>
<td>Ground Floor - Wandle House, Riverside Drive, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 4BU</td>
<td>Tel: 020 8648 7760</td>
<td>Research and information about distance learning for offenders and ex-offenders - how to enrol, how to stay motivated, support, handing in coursework, continuation of learning from custody to community by distance learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Giles Trust</td>
<td>64-68 Camberwell Church Street, Camberwell, London, SE5 8JB</td>
<td>Tel: 020 7703 7000</td>
<td>St Giles' mission is to prevent offending and improve community safety by enabling disadvantaged offenders and homeless people to build independent and successful lives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Prince's Trust</td>
<td>18 Park Square East, London, NW1 4LH</td>
<td>Tel: 020 7543 1234</td>
<td>UK charity that helps young people, including ex-offenders, overcome barriers and get their lives working through practical support including training, mentoring and financial assistance. Offices throughout the UK.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlock – The National Association of Ex-Offenders</td>
<td>34a High Street, Snodled, Kent, ME6 5AG</td>
<td>Tel: 01634 247350</td>
<td>Supports ex-offenders and serving prisoners to overcome social and financial exclusion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Women in Prison**  
1a Aberdeen Studios,  
22 Highbury Grove,  
London, N5 2EA  
Tel: 020 7226 5879  
Website: [www.womeninprison.org.uk](http://www.womeninprison.org.uk)

Women in Prison (WIP) is a charity working with women at risk of going to prison, in prison and after release to promote their resettlement, personal development, education and training.

**nextstep**  
Website: [www.nextstep.org.uk](http://www.nextstep.org.uk)

Provides information and advice about learning and work to adults over 20. Check website for details of local offices.

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**Housing and homelessness**

**Addaction**  
Addaction Central Office,  
67-69 Cowcross Street, EC1M 6PU  
Tel: 0207 251 5860  
Email: info@addaction.org.uk  
Website: [www.addaction.org.uk](http://www.addaction.org.uk)

National charity offering help and support to people affected by drug and alcohol misuse. Offers services to homeless drug users.

**Shelter**  
88 Old Street,  
London, EC1V 9H (Regional Offices)  
Tel: 0808 800 4444.  
Email: info@shelter.org.uk  
Website: [england.shelter.org.uk](http://england.shelter.org.uk)

Help and support for housing and homelessness. Offices throughout the UK.
**Women's Link**

Rooms 417-419,
London Fruit and Wool Exchange,
Brushfield Street,
London, E1 6SL

Tel: 020 7248 1200 or 020 72475325 (ex-offenders)
Website: [www.womenslink.org.uk](http://www.womenslink.org.uk)

Housing advice service run by women for single women without children. Advice and referrals, for women prisoners and ex-offenders on accommodation. Produces a range of leaflets and booklets on accommodation and hostels.

**Housing Register**

A housing register is a list of all families and people wanting to be housed by the council or housing association. You need to go to the local council housing offices to register. Details of local council offices can be found through:

Website: [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

---

### Money and debt

**Citizens Advice Bureau**

Website: [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk)

Can provide advice and support on financial matters. Check website for local offices.

**Jobcentre Plus**

Tel: 0845 6060234
Website: [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)

Benefits advice - check website for local offices.

**National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO)**

Tel: 020 7840 6464 (Resettlement Helpline)
Tel: 0800 0181 259 (freephone for ex-offenders and families)
Email: helpline@nacro.org.uk
Website: [www.nacro.org.uk](http://www.nacro.org.uk)
### Mental health difficulties

**Mind**  
15-19 Broadway,  
Stratford,  
London, E15 4BQ  
**Tel:** 020 8519 2122  
**Email:** info@mind.org.uk  
**Website:** www.mind.org.uk

Mind is the leading mental health charity in the UK.

### Health Advice

*Call NHS Direct 0845 4647 (freephone) or visit their website ([www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)) to:*

- find your local doctor, dentist, optician or late night pharmacy
- get advice about common health problems
- get information about self help or other support organisations.

### Confidential Advice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional support</td>
<td>Samaritans</td>
<td>08457 909090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs</td>
<td>Frank (freephone)</td>
<td>0800 77 66 00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families</td>
<td>Parentline Plus</td>
<td>0808 800 2222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Drug and alcohol misuse</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Addaction</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Addaction Central Office,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67-69 Cowcross Street, EC1M 6PU</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel: 0207 251 5860</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:info@addaction.org.uk">info@addaction.org.uk</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.addaction.org.uk">www.addaction.org.uk</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National charity offering help and support to people affected by drug and alcohol misuse; offers services to homeless drug users.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adfam</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>25 Corsham Street,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London, N1 6DR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel: 020 7553 7640</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.adfam.org.uk">www.adfam.org.uk</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National charity for family and friends of people with drug and alcohol addiction.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alcohol Concern</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First floor, 8 Shelton St,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London, WC2H 9JR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel: 020 7395 4000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax: 0202 7395 4005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:contact@alcoholconcern.org.uk">contact@alcoholconcern.org.uk</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk">www.alcoholconcern.org.uk</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National charity providing information for local services.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Specific learning difficulties and disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult Dyslexia Organisation</td>
<td>Ground Floor, Sector House, Minet Rd, Loughborough Estate, London, SW9 7TP</td>
<td>020 7924 9559 (helpline)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mdyslexia.hq@dial.pipex.co">mdyslexia.hq@dial.pipex.co</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.adult-dyslexia.org">www.adult-dyslexia.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Work relates to adults with dyslexia (including in employment). Runs support groups and provides a helpline, provides training and tuition.

| British Dyslexia Association | 98 London Road, Reading, RG1 5AU | 0118 966 8271 | helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk | [www.bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk) |

Runs a helpline on dyslexia and has information on local associations.

| British Institute for Learning Disabilities | Campion House, Green Street, Kidderminster, Worcestershire, DY10 1JL | 01562 723 010 | enquiries@bild.org.uk | [www.bild.org.uk](http://www.bild.org.uk) |

Information on training and other services especially for people with learning disabilities in the UK.

| Care | 9 Weir Road, Kibworth, Leicester, LE8 0LQ (Central office.) | 0116 2793225 | info@care-ltd.co.uk | [www.care-ltd.co.uk](http://www.care-ltd.co.uk) |

Support for people with learning disabilities in their daily lives. Check website for local offices.
**Dyslexia Action**  
Park House,  
Wick Road, Egham,  
Surrey, TW20 0HH  
Tel: 01784 222300  
Email: info@dyslexiaaction.org.uk  
Website: [www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk](http://www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk)

National charity providing services and support for people with dyslexia and literacy difficulties. Services are available from 26 local centres.

**Mencap**  
123 Golden Lane,  
London, EC1Y 0RT  
Tel: 020 7454 0454  
Email: information@mencap.org.uk  
Website: [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

Mencap is a learning disability charity working with people with a learning disability and their families and carers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues facing women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Women's Aid Federation of England**  
Head Office, PO BOX 391,  
Bristol, BS99 7WS  
Tel: 0117 944 44 11 (general enquiries only)  
0808 2000 247 (helpline service)  
Email: helpline@womensaid.org.uk  
Website: [www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)

National charity providing nationwide network of over 500 services to support women and children facing domestic violence.

**Women in Prison**  
1a Aberdeen Studios,  
22 Highbury Grove,  
London, N5 2EA  
Tel: 020 7226 5879  
Website: [www.womeninprison.org.uk](http://www.womeninprison.org.uk)

Women in Prison (WIP) is a charity working with women at risk of going to prison, in
prison and after release to promote their resettlement, personal development, education and training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women’s Link</th>
<th>Rooms 417-419, London Fruit and Wool Exchange, Brushfield Street, London, E1 6SL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tel: 020 7248 1200 or 020 72475325 (ex-offenders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.womenslink.org.uk">www.womenslink.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Housing advice service run by women for single women without children. Advice and referrals on finding accommodation, for women prisoners and ex-offenders on accommodation. Produces a range of leaflets and booklets on accommodation and hostels.

### Childcare and benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Care to Learn</th>
<th>Tel: 0845 6002809</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Website:</td>
<td><a href="http://www.dfes.gov.uk/caretolearn">www.dfes.gov.uk/caretolearn</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To find help towards childcare and travel costs whilst studying

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Childcare Link</th>
<th>Tel: 0800 096 0296</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Website:</td>
<td><a href="http://www.childcarelink.gov.uk">www.childcarelink.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For information about local childcare.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child Tax credit</th>
<th>Website: <a href="http://www.direct.gov.uk">www.direct.gov.uk</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

To find out if you are eligible for child tax credit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sure Start</th>
<th>Website: <a href="http://www.surestart.gov.uk">www.surestart.gov.uk</a></th>
</tr>
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</table>

Sure Start is the government programme to deliver the best start in life for every child. It is about early education, childcare, health and family support. The website also gives details of local services.
### Issues facing young people and families.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Contact Details</th>
<th>Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Childline** | Tel: 0800 1111  
Website: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk) | National free helpline for children and young people in danger or distress. |
| **Family Rights Groups** | The Print House,  
18 Ashwin Street,  
London, E8 3DL  
Tel: 0800 731 1696  
Email: [office@frg.org.uk](mailto:office@frg.org.uk)  
Website: [www.frg.org.uk](http://www.frg.org.uk) | Advice and support for families whose children are involved with social services. |
| **YMCA England** | 640 Forest Road,  
London, E17 3DZ  
Email: [mail@raineronline.org](mailto:mail@raineronline.org)  
Website: [www.ymca.org.uk](http://www.ymca.org.uk) | A Christian charity that has projects supporting young people in prison and after release. Check website for regional offices. |
| **Rainer** | Rectory Lodge,  
High Street Brasted,  
Kent, TN16 1JF  
Tel: 01959 578 200  
Email: [mail@raineronline.org](mailto:mail@raineronline.org)  
Website: [www.raineronline.org](http://www.raineronline.org) | Rainer offers a range of services to under-supported young people. |
SOVA
SOVA Head Office (contact for projects in London & South East Region, South West and for national enquiries)
1st Floor, Chichester House,
37 Brixton Road,
London, SW9 6DZ
Tel: 020 7793 0404
Email: mail@sova.org.uk

SOVA Regional Office (contact for projects in West Midlands, Yorkshire & Humberside, North West)
St. Silas House, 18 Moore Street,
Sheffield, S3 7UW
Tel: 0114 270 3700
Email: sheffield@sova.org.uk
Website: www.sova.org.uk

Runs a range of national projects providing advice and support to young people.