



Learner Support Service Childcare News e-bulletin, October 2009

Welcome to the LSC Learner Support Directorate's Childcare News October e-bulletin.

In this edition we give you Care to Learn take-up data for 2008/09, clarify some information on programmes of learning for Care to Learn and ask for your help with case studies for maximum funding rates. We also let you know about marketing activity and conferences for Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work and let you know about new materials that are available.

If you have any feedback on this publication please email us at Childcare-news@lsc.gov.uk. If you would like to be added to the distribution list, please fill in our new [registration form](#).

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Care to Learn

1. Care to Learn take-up in 2008/09

Some of you have expressed interest in receiving some data on the number of young parents in receipt of Care to Learn. This month, we have provided you with information of young mothers who benefited from the scheme in 2008/09.

In the 2008/09 academic year just over 8,000 young parents benefited from Care to Learn. To give you some context to the take-up of this scheme, the table below shows, from left to right: The total estimated number of mothers under 20 in England (the potential eligible cohort for Care to Learn); The numbers of young parents supported by Care to Learn (by type of learning provision); Care to Learn take-up as a percentage of the potential eligible cohort.

Est. Mothers under 20 (England)	C2L Take-Up						% < 20
	FE College	Work based learning	6 th Form	School	Other	Total	
49,565	5,260	829	463	548	922	8,022	16.18

If you would like more specific information on the number of learners in your area, please contact your local LSC Partnership Adviser.

2. Care to Learn and young parents approaching/turning age 20

We have received several queries about the treatment of young parents who turn 20 while receiving support from Care to Learn and so we would like to clarify some issues for you.

Care to Learn is payable to young parents under the age of 20 when they start their course or programme of learning*, and it will be paid up to the end of that course or programme of learning. Should the young parent decide to

start a new course after the age of 20, she or he is considered an adult and so will need to apply for adult Learner Support from:

- Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work
- Sixth Form College Childcare
- Discretionary Learner Support (20+ Childcare).

More information on these Learner Support schemes is available through this e-bulletin or from the Money to Learn website.

*A 'Programme of Learning' for Care to Learn means learning such as short courses, taster sessions and Activity Agreements. It does not mean a 'programme of courses', for example English GCSE followed by English A' Level. Different levels of the same subject are different courses. A young parent turning 20 while studying for English GCSE would be supported to the end of the GCSE by Care to Learn, but would have to apply to one of the other adult schemes if they needed childcare support to continue learning at the next level.

Please also be aware that the way an applicant's course is described on the Care to Learn application form will affect what is approved for funding. For example, A' Levels are now considered two distinct courses (AS and A2). If a 19-year-old applicant puts on the application form that they are studying AS levels, and then turns 20 during the AS level course, Care to Learn can only be paid to the end of the AS level. If the young parent intends to study both the AS **and** A2, the form needs to state "A Levels". The same applies to modular courses such as e2e; the whole course should be stated on the application form not just the first module. Any timetable changes can be applied for on a Change of Circumstances form, which is available from the Learner Support Service. Learners can contact the Learner Support Service by calling **0800 121 8989**.

3. Care to Learn maximum funding rates: template for case studies

As you will be aware, owing to budget restrictions the maximum rates for Care to Learn have not been increased this year. A number of you have told us that this is causing problems in your area and we have asked for case studies to help inform our understanding of the situation.

If you would like to send examples, please email these to C2Lsurvey@lsc.gov.uk. To better help us, the information that we need to know for these case studies is as follows:

- Age of learner

- Subject
- Level
- Qualification
- Type of Learning Provider – school, FE college, general college, community based etc
- Length of course overall – e.g. 6 months, 1 year, 2 year to complete
- Hours and days attendance required at Learning Provider per week e.g. 4 hours on Monday, 6 hours on Tuesday etc. *Does Care to Learn cover all or part of this? If part, how much?*
- Hours and days spent travelling between Learning Provider and childcare setting per week e.g. 2 hours on Monday, 2 hours on Tuesday etc. *Does Care to Learn cover all or part of this? If part, how much?*
- Hours and days spent private study per week e.g. 4 hours on Monday, 7 hours on Wednesday etc. *Does Care to Learn cover all or part of this? If part, how much?*
- Any unpaid alternative childcare arrangements the young parent may have access to e.g. family or friends

We also need to know whether any of the options outlined below have been considered and why these are not considered suitable:

- Are the hours and days that are planned for learning and childcare the most cost effective, given the maximum amount payable for Care to Learn? For example, could the young parent study the same course part-time, requiring less childcare?
- Is the amount of childcare that is being considered the most cost effective for the learning, or could the young parent manage with less? For example, sufficient childcare allowance for attendance at learning is necessary, but does the young parent need as much private study time, can alternative arrangements be made e.g. studying while the baby sleeps?
- Perhaps another Childcare Provider is more affordable? For example if nurseries are more expensive than childminders, has the learner considered using a childminder?

Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work

1. Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work Application Form Resource Pack

We mentioned in last month's e-bulletin that we were producing an **Application Form Resource Pack** to help you to give support to learners filling in their application form. We are pleased to let you know that this is **now** available to download from the [Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work website](#).

This resource pack gives the key information that you need in order to help learners complete the application form and also outlines the most common mistakes that are made on the form. This resource pack has been produced to complement the application form guidance notes that are contained within the application pack.

Please ensure that you download a copy of the Resource Pack and use this when filling in, or supporting a learner to fill in, the Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work application form 2009/10. We are aware that those who receive support from their Provider to complete the form are more likely to complete it fully and accurately and therefore receive a decision about eligibility quicker than those who send an incomplete form.

If you have a query on Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work after reading both the guidance notes and the resource pack, you should refer to the [Provider Guidance](#) (details later in this e-bulletin) and you can also ring the helpline on **0845 600 7979**, who will be able to help.

2. Conferences in the next month

At the beginning of this month the Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work team attended the NAEGA conference to provide adult guidance and careers advisers with information on the scheme to help them better promote the scheme to eligible parents.

This event was attended by around 150 delegates and the team received positive feedback on the scheme from those attending.

During November, the team will attend two more conferences to give information to key stakeholders: the Institute of Career Guidance (ICG) conference, which will take place in Blackpool on 5th and 6th; and the Daycare Trust national conference, which will take place in Westminster, on the 17th.

3. Update on marketing activity and promoting the scheme

We mentioned last month that we recorded some radio clips with Suzanne Shaw talking about the benefits of the scheme. In addition to this radio activity, we have produced a short promotional video in order to raise awareness and to promote the scheme.

The video features Suzanne Shaw and a learner who has benefited from the scheme; both women talk about how Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work can help out of work parents get back into learning or training to enhance their skills.

We will target this video on parenting and lifestyle websites in order to reach a wide audience and to raise awareness of the scheme amongst their key target group. We will let you know more information about where you can view this video in next month's e-bulletin.

We will also make this video clip available for you to download from the [Campaign Resources](#) website (CRS) during November; you will then be able to use this feature in your own marketing campaigns for the scheme and feature this on your organisation's website. Please check the CRS during November to download the video.

4. Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work leaflet distribution

There are a number of Local Authority areas that have a high proportion of people who would be eligible for support from the Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work scheme. To raise awareness of the scheme and to encourage these parents to apply for support from the scheme to return to learning or training, we are carrying out a leaflet drop campaign.

From the 26th October, we will be distributing Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work leaflets to all households in these Local Authority areas. This will take place over three weeks.

Please be aware that this activity is happening and that you may receive some queries about the scheme. Please encourage eligible parents to apply for support.

5. Funding Eligibility Checker – Skills Accounts

A new Learner Support funding eligibility checker is being developed as part of the ongoing roll-out of Skills Accounts. The eligibility checker will be an online tool that will give an indication of a learner's eligibility for funding from the Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work scheme and the Adult Learning Grant scheme. We will provide you with further updates on the availability of this tool in future editions of this e-bulletin. In the meantime, further information about Skills Accounts can be found on the [LSC website](#). Please note that this is different from the eligibility checker that can be found on the [directgov website](#).

General information

1. Guidance for Providers

We would like to remind you that Guidance documents for all of the Learner Support childcare schemes are available from the [Money to Learn website](#).

These Guidance documents give further information on the eligibility criteria for the schemes, and information on how best to administer the scheme within your organisation including some examples of best practice.

Please ensure that you download a copy of these documents for reference to help answer any queries you may on the scheme and its administration.

2. What Does Learner Support Do? Big Picture

We reminded you in last month's e-bulletin that printed copies of the [Childcare Big Picture](#) are still available to order. To complement this resource, you can also order copies of our updated [What Does Learner Support Do? Big Picture](#).

This resource takes the form of a folded poster: one side of the poster outlines all the Learner Support schemes that are available and their key eligibility criteria; on the other side of the poster is the eligibility checker, which is also available on directgov, that outlines what Learner Support schemes a learner may be eligible to receive based on their age and whether they have dependent children.

You can use this as a desk aid with learners to identify if they are eligible for support from any of the other Learner Support schemes as well as any childcare support they may be in receipt of.

The Big Picture is available for you to view on the [Learner Support Service website](#). You can also order copies of this from LSC Publications by calling **0845 602 2260** or emailing lsc@prolog.uk.com quoting the reference number **LSC-P-NAT-090139**.

Actions you may need to take

A reminder of the actions to be taken over the next few weeks. Please:

- Ensure you outline the full course a learner is studying on the Care to Learn application form to make sure they are paid to the end of that course, not a specific module.
- Send us your case studies for maximum rates for Care to Learn using the template of information provided in this e-bulletin.
- Download a copy of the Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work Application Form Resource Pack and use this to help learners to complete their application form.
- Keep an eye out for the promotional video for Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work being posted on the Campaign Resources website.
- Watch out for leaflets being distributed in your area and encourage potential eligible learners to apply for Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work.
- Download a copy of the Guidance documents to use for reference.
- Order a copy of the updated Big Picture, What Does Learner Support Do?

How to find out more

Learning and Childcare Providers

Learning Providers and Childcare Providers can find out more information about each of these three childcare schemes on the websites:

- [Care to Learn](#)
- [Sixth Form College Childcare](#)
- [Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work](#)

You can also call us on **0845 600 7979**; please select option 3 for Care to Learn and option 4 for Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work and Sixth Form College Childcare.

Learners

Learners can find out more information about the schemes by visiting www.direct.gov.uk and searching for the relevant scheme.

They can also call the learner helpline on **0800 121 8989**. This is a freephone number, which can also be used to access advice about other Learner Support schemes managed by the LSC, including Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and Adult Learning Grant (ALG).