

# my future choices

Issue 1 2012

For disabled young people, their families and people who support them



## What's in this issue



Powerchair football



Peter Norfolk

Boccia star  
Jacob Thomas

Off-Road  
Mountain Biking

Live with a  
Healthy Heart

Games Through  
Our Eyes

And much more!

**Transition  
Information  
Network**

The magazine of the Transition Information Network

# What's in this issue

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# Hello from TIN!

As London prepares for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games everyone at My Future Choices' head quarters is really excited! To get a closer look at what it's like participating in the Games we have interviewed not one, but two athletes who are competing in the 2012 Paralympics! On page 6 Jacob Thomas, who is competing in his first Paralympic games this summer, talks to Katie, a CDC Young Ambassador. On page 10 Peter Norfolk, four times Paralympic medallist, tells us about how he got involved in wheelchair tennis and how you can too.



The Games have also made us think about our own health and fitness. So we have dedicated this issue to finding out more about being active and healthy living. First we take a look at 'Doing Sport Differently'. A guide by Disability Rights UK which covers the benefits of sport and fitness, and how you can get involved – whether playing, watching or coaching.

We also hear from four young people about what they do to keep active and healthy. Grace tells us about all the different sport she loves playing. Dan writes about off-road mounting biking. We hear from Olivia about natural horsemanship. And Shehab tells us about playing on his school's powerchair football team.

It is also great fun to watch sports, so on page 11 Lilly Cook tells us about the 'Games Through Our Eyes' website. The website provides information and news on the sports open to people with learning disabilities in the 2012 Paralympics.

In this issue we also find out about the resources, organisations, programmes and awards which support young people to be active. Hanifa Islam reviews the 'Live with a Healthy Heart' resource for us. Ed Turner tells us about the Percey Hedley Sports Academy. Kate Adams talks about the outdoors programme 'Strive for Success'. And we hear from Mencap about their Inspire Me programme and Gateway Award.

Best wishes,

**Lettice Wigby**

## What is the Transition Information Network?

The Transition Information Network (TIN) is an alliance of organisations and individuals with the common aim of improving the experience of disabled young people's transition to adulthood. TIN aims to be a source of information and good practice standards for disabled young people, their families and people who support them. TIN is based at the Council for Disabled Children, the umbrella body for the disabled children's sector in England. [www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk)

# News from TIN

## SEND Green Paper – Progress and next steps

TIN welcomes the publication of 'Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability - Progress and next steps'. Progress and next steps says what the Government will do to improve support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

TIN wrote a response to *Progress and next steps*, to say what we think about it. You can read our response on the news page of our website.

[www.transitioninfonetwork.org.uk](http://www.transitioninfonetwork.org.uk)

### Find out more

You can read *Progress and next steps* on the Young People's section of our website. Where there is also an Easy Read version available.



[www.transitioninfonetwork.org.uk/young\\_people.aspx](http://www.transitioninfonetwork.org.uk/young_people.aspx)

## Preparing for Adulthood



Some of the Preparing for Adulthood team are based at the Council for Disabled Children, where TIN is based. Preparing for Adulthood is a two year programme funded by the Department for Education as part of the delivery support for the SEND Green Paper. TIN works closely with the Preparing for Adulthood team. We like the young people's stories and resource they have on their website. We also like reading about the work they are doing with local areas to improve the life chances for disabled young people.



### Find out more

You can visit the Preparing for Adulthood website here:  
[www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/](http://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/)

## Twitter and Facebook

TIN has joined Twitter and Facebook. We post news, events, stories and resources about transition. You can follow us here



**Twitter**

[www.twitter.com/TIN\\_Talks](http://www.twitter.com/TIN_Talks)



**Facebook**

[www.facebook.com/TransitionInformationNetwork](http://www.facebook.com/TransitionInformationNetwork)



# Doing Sport Differently

By Disability Rights UK

Doing Sport Differently is not just for the next Tanni Grey-Thompson. It's for everyone. When we talk about sport, exercise and physical activity, we're talking about things that everyone can do – disabled and non-disabled alike. It needn't be competitive, it needn't be hard work, it just needs to be fun.

## The benefit of exercise

If you want to be more physically active but don't know how, this is the guide for you. Even if you think you hate sport and don't believe that taking more exercise is beneficial or even possible for you, read on – you may be surprised.

## I can't get fit and healthy, I'm disabled

Have a read of some of the personal stories in this guide and you may feel differently. But first we need to define some terms.

**Disability** is created by the environment not by you, your impairment or health condition. If you're a wheelchair-user stuck outside a building without a ramp, what is the



barrier? The condition that makes it easier for you to use a chair or the lack of a ramp? Add a ramp and you can access the building more easily. It's the absence of the ramp that is disabling.

The same applies to sport. There's nothing stopping you rolling your

wheelchair onto the nearest

tennis court and having a go except the rules of the club or the width of the gate onto the court or the attitudes of the other players. Nothing that can't be changed.

But wheelchairs are just an example. This applies in different ways to all of us experiencing disability or a health condition. This guide is about removing barriers for everyone.

Of course, your impairment or health condition may affect what you can do. But whatever your impairment or health condition, you are you and taking some exercise will make you a fitter, healthier you.

## What is health and fitness?

**Fitness:** is largely physical. It's about your ability to deal with the environment around you. So a fitter wheelchair-user may be able to wheel him or herself further and faster.

**"If you want to be more physically active but don't know how, this is the guide for you."**



## At a glance

Doing Sport Differently is a guide about getting involved in sport and fitness.

### Find out more

You can find out more about Disability Rights UK by:

**Phone:** 020 7250 322

**Website:** [www.disabilityrightsuk.org/index.htm](http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/index.htm)

**Health:** is about more than this. It includes physical, mental and social well-being.

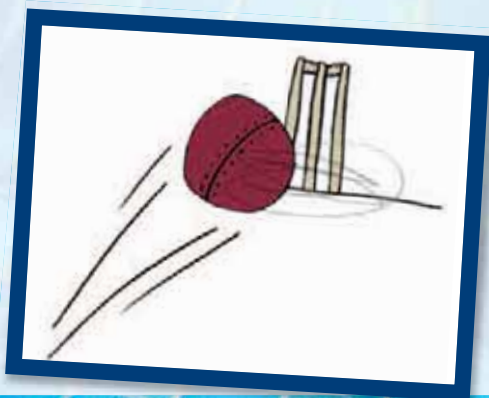
### How can the law help?

One of the things that we can change is the disabling environment of barriers and attitudes. The law is there to help us do this. Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful for service providers to treat disabled people less favourably because they are disabled. Service providers must make 'reasonable adjustments' to the way they provide their services to remove the barriers preventing disabled people from accessing them. This applies to the local gym or football stadium as much as it does to banks, pubs or cinemas.

'Reasonable' refers to the resources available for adjustments so a service provider can only avoid making them if he or she can show that it would be genuinely too impractical, too disruptive or too expensive to do so.

### So what does all this mean in practice?

It means simply this: anyone can get fitter and healthier regardless of their impairment or health condition – mental health condition, learning difficulty, physical impairment, whatever. This guide will show you how.



### What are the benefits of being fit and healthy?

According to the NHS, people who do regular physical activity have:

- up to a 35% lower risk of coronary heart disease and stroke
- up to a 50% lower risk of type 2 diabetes
- up to a 50% lower risk of colon cancer
- up to a 20% lower risk of breast cancer
- a 30% lower risk of early death
- up to an 83% lower risk of osteoarthritis
- up to a 68% lower risk of hip fracture
- a 30% lower risk of falls (among older adults)
- up to a 30% lower risk of depression
- up to a 30% lower risk of dementia

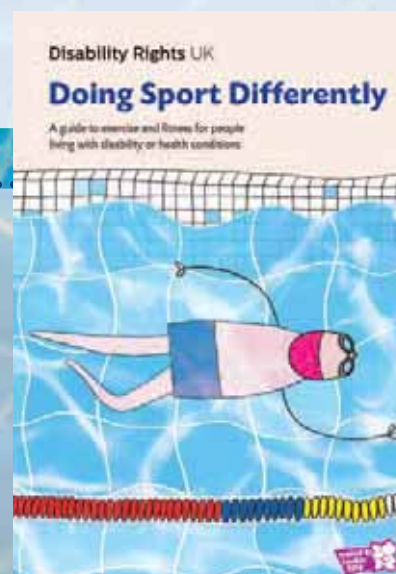
There are the social benefits too. Sport and exercise help you get out, meet people and make friends. There are also personal benefits. You'll feel better about yourself after exercise which boosts self-confidence in all areas of life.



Exercise boosts mood and energy levels and improves sleep. It is believed to help memory and brain function and to reduce stress. It's also a great time to do some thinking and problem-solving. Last, it will become fun (even if it isn't at first).

### Doing Sport Differently

The text and images in this article have been reproduced from 'Doing Sport Differently' by Disability Rights UK. To download the guide, for free, visit:  
[www.radar.org.uk/publications/doing-sport-differently/](http://www.radar.org.uk/publications/doing-sport-differently/)



# CHATTING WITH

Boccia  
star

# Jacob Thomas

## At a glance

CDC Young Ambassador  
Katie Simmonds talks to  
Boccia star Jacob Thomas.

By Katie Simmonds

Hi, my name is Katie. I'm a CDC Young Ambassador. CDC Young Ambassadors is a group of disabled young people based at the Council for Disabled Children (CDC). Here I speak to Jacob Thomas. He is competing in Boccia at the Paralympics this summer.

**What events are you taking part in at the Paralympics?** I'll be taking part in Boccia, in both the individual and pairs events.

**What will that involve?** In the individual event I'll be playing on my own against other players from different countries. In the pairs event I'll be playing with a partner.

**What is Boccia for people who don't know about the sport?** Boccia is a sport similar to indoor bowls. It is like a target sport. There are two teams. One team has 6 red balls and the other team has 6 blue balls. A white ball, called the jack, is thrown out. The aim of the game is to try and get your balls as close to the jack as possible. You can throw your balls or use a ramp. I use a ramp. You score points on how many of your balls are closer to the jack than the other team's.

**When did you take up Boccia and how did you get interest in it?** I've been playing for about 7-8 years now. I got involved in it at primary school.

My Learning Support Assistant (LSA) had a disability sports bag and Boccia was one of the sports in that. I gave it a try and I've never looked back.

**Where do you play Boccia?** Well I train in my local leisure centre 3 times a week. And I train with the other members of the GB squad at monthly training camps in Bath. And we have competitions all over the place.



**Have you got a role model?** My role model in Boccia is Grigoris Polychronidis. He is a Greek player. I hadn't played him until recently. I've played him a couple of times and I've met him a few times. He's a really good sports man.

**How did you get picked for the GB Paralympics squad?** Before I got picked for the GB squad I went to a fast track talent programme where they identified players that had potential to play. They thought I had potential. So at the end of 2010 I got picked for the GB squad. Then I've been training up until this year to try and get picked for the Paralympics. On the 10th April 2012

I was told that I was part of the Paralympic squad.

**Who coaches you?** In my category, which is BC3, my lead coach is Julie Broadhead. I also have a local coach called Sarah Noland. She coaches me when I'm not at training camp.

**Do you know where you are based for the games?**

We stay in the athletes village in the Olympic Park. The actual event takes part in the ExCeL centre.

**Between 1 to 10 how did you feel when they said you were going to games? And can you explain how you felt?** I felt 10 out of 10 really. It's a dream come true. It was like a reward for all the hard work that I've put in. I couldn't be happier.

**"It's a dream come true. It was like a reward for all the hard work that I've put in. I couldn't be happier."**





**What other sports/hobbies do you like?** I love sports and I watch all kinds of sport like football, rugby and tennis. Also, I go to college. I do a sports course there.

**Have you got a favourite football team?** Yes, I support Manchester United.

**Apart from Boccia what other things do you like doing?** I like seeing friends and playing video games. And I like TV series such as 24.

**What is your best achievement so far?** A couple of weeks ago we went to the London test event for Boccia. I won Bronze in the individual event and gold in the pairs with my team mate Jess. They're my best achievements. I've had lots of others but they're probably the highlight of my career so far.

**Is Boccia for all abilities? And how would you find out about getting involved in Boccia?** Boccia is the sport for people who play in a wheelchair. Most disabilities can play for example cerebral palsy and muscular dystrophy which I have. You can find out about Boccia and how to get involved by contacting your local disability sports officer.

**What advice would you give other young people who want to be a Paralympian?** Just get involved with a sport that you enjoy. And if you really enjoy that sport and want to compete at a high level it's really worth it. All the hard work you put in is worth it. You never know what can happen.

## Q&A with Katie!

**After Katie interviewed Jacob TIN asked her some questions.**

- **How did the interview go?** It went really well. I enjoyed it lots.
- **What was your favourite thing about the interview?** When he talked about his achievements and said 10 out of 10.
- **Did you know about Boccia before?** No, now I know lots more about it
- **Which sports are you looking forward to watching this summer?** Swimming and wheelchair basketball.
- **If you were to participate in the Games what sport would you do?** Dodge ball because it's fun to get your anger out on people!



## CDC Young Ambassadors

You can watch our film "Young, Disabled and In Control" online. The film is designed to challenge stereotypes of disability and show the positive difference when young disabled people are involved in decisions about their lives.

[www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/getting-involved/young-disabled-and-in-control](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/getting-involved/young-disabled-and-in-control)

# I **LOVE** sports

## At a glance

Grace tells us about the sports she plays.

Grace with her squash coach.



By Grace Beard

My name is Grace Beard. I am 13 years old. I have dyspraxia. I live in Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire. I am at Ormiston Maritime Academy and I love doing sports.

### Swimming

In 2006 I started having swimming lessons. I had a fear of water and I wanted to overcome it. I went into a group but I had to have one-to-one because I could not cope. Now 6 years later I can swim on my own without help from anyone. I now have prescription goggles to help me see underwater. I like it because I like going underwater.

### Athletics

I started to do athletics at my local club in 2009. I liked running and I liked doing the long-jump, the high-jump, and the hurdles to keep myself fit. My big sister, Autumn came with me. I liked it because I like athletic stuff and running.

### Dancing

I am a big fan of Michael Jackson and I wanted to dance like him. In 2010 I started having one-to-one dance lessons with my teacher called Jody and now we have a set weekly routine and we start a new one every other week. I like dancing because I want to show what I can do.

### Football

I am also a big fan of Manchester United and I wondered how to play football and how to do it. So in 2010 I joined a local football group and learnt football. Now I have moved to another group which helps me more. It is called

Foresight. I won the Young Ambassador of the Year in 2011 and I received a trophy and I got to meet a Grimsby Town football player.



Grace, with footballer Damian Spencer, receiving her Young Ambassador of the year award.

### Tennis

With Foresight again I started doing tennis at my local tennis club. I saw it on TV and I wanted to do it and wanted to learn how to do it. It was a new thing to do and it was on Sundays and I really liked it

### Multi-sports

Foresight has a holiday club in the school holidays. I always go to it. They do swimming, football, cricket, ice skating and multi-sports. I like doing these.

### Squash

Next I am trying out squash. I want to help my coordination and my batting skills and throwing skills. I started in a one-to-one group and now I have moved into a bigger group. I like playing squash because it is fun and it will keep me fit.

### Find out more

#### Freedom Freestyle Dance

[www.freedomfreestyledance.co.uk](http://www.freedomfreestyledance.co.uk)

#### Foresight

[www.foresight-nelincs.co.uk](http://www.foresight-nelincs.co.uk)



# Natural Horsemanship

## At a glance

Oliver tells us about learning Natural Horsemanship.



### By Olivia Faber

My name is Olivia Faber. I am 23 years old and I live on the Isle of Wight. I have Cerebral palsy. Last year I became seriously ill and had to have a stent fitted. I spent a lot of time in hospital and felt awful. I felt really low and that I could not


do anything. My mum contacted Jo and Giles Boddington who run Bodster Equine Assisted Learning Centre. It is based at Aldermoor Farm in Ryde, Isle of Wight. Bodster is part of Equine Assisted Qualifications.

I went to visit and began a course there. I am learning how to use Natural Horsemanship. I have carried out exercises such as grooming, to help a pony become relaxed, leading a pony through an obstacle course and helping a pony become brave about walking over a flappy tarpaulin. The other day I worked with Jo teaching one of the ponies to play football.

I do not ride at Bodster. I am learning about how to develop a friendship with a horse, where we work together and gain confidence. This has helped me become more aware of myself and I have become clearer in my communication and ability to listen to people and ponies.

This has then helped me become more confident when talking to people and I feel so much better in myself. It is an amazing feeling when you can have a loose pony follow you in the round pen because it wants to be with you rather than forcing it to be with you.

Since starting at Bodster in September 2011, I have completed a National Open College Network Qualification (NOCN) in Developing Confidence and Self Awareness. I was also nominated for an Adult Learners' Week Award. Although I was not selected I received a certificate of achievement in recognition of my commitment to learning. I am really enjoying going to Bodster and feel so much more confident about my future.



**“This has helped me become more confident when talking to people and I feel so much better in myself.”**

### Find out more

Bodster Equine Assisted Learning Centre  
[www.eaqbodster.co.uk](http://www.eaqbodster.co.uk)

Equine Assisted Qualifications  
[www.equineassistedqualifications.com](http://www.equineassistedqualifications.com)

# Q&A with Peter Norfolk

## At a glance

Peter Norfolk is the number 1 wheelchair tennis player in the world.

by Lettice Wigby

Peter Norfolk is a four-time Paralympic medallist and has won five Grand Slam titles and 13 Super Series titles. He is competing in the London Paralympic Games this summer.

**Q What motivated you to start playing wheelchair tennis?** I saw a demonstration of wheelchair tennis in 1989 at Stoke Mandeville Hospital. I thought that's fantastic! That's what I want to do! I had tried all sorts of other sports. I had tried basketball, archery, table tennis and swimming. But tennis was the one for me.

**Q What equipment did you start playing with?** First of all I didn't have a dedicated tennis chair. It was an everyday chair slightly tuned to be able to play tennis. We didn't have any anti-tips so we were always falling out backwards or forwards. Whereas now we're playing in a titanium bespoke product.

**Q Who inspired you and helped you when you started?** No one really. I used my own determination. I used to look at all sorts of sports athletes but there wasn't anyone in the wheelchair world that I could look up to in those days. We're looking at more than 20 years ago so it was very difficult. It was more a case that I just wanted to go play tennis and you know it was a sport I could play with anyone, anywhere because the rules are the same apart from the second bounce. The size of the court is the same, the balls are the same, the racquets are the same, the nets are the same height; so you can go down your local recreation club and play.

**Q What's the best part of being a professional athlete?** I suppose for me I love the thrill of winning. There are added bonuses like the Tennis Foundation fund me to travel the world to compete in some of the best tournaments in the world like the Australian Open in Melbourne and The US Open in New York. I'm very lucky to be able to travel the world to play a sport I love and I'm funded to do that. Hopefully we can get lots of other youngsters excited about this sport.

### Find out more

British Paralympic Association  
[www.paralympics.org.uk](http://www.paralympics.org.uk)

Tennis Foundation  
[www.tennisfoundation.org.uk](http://www.tennisfoundation.org.uk)

Peter Norfolk's personal website  
[www.quadfather.co.uk](http://www.quadfather.co.uk)

**Q Is there space for more wheelchair tennis players?**

Oh gosh yeah! There's always room for more tennis players. The more the merrier. The more we have the bigger the choice, the better the competition. There's a four world NEC circuit. There's a tournament every week of the year. And it is a full professional circuit. So youngsters if they can come through the performance programme that the Tennis Foundation fund they too could get on the NEC circuit and travel the world.

**Q What advice do you have for young people who want to try wheelchair tennis?** Get out there. Contact the Tennis Foundation. Find out where the training camps are on. Go down for the weekends. Lots of the top players like myself go down when we're not competing and pass on our knowledge and teach them how to play. We show them how to get into the tennis chairs, how to strap in, how to play. It's a lovely relaxed weekend of lots of hitting and it's very social. And from there that can be a spring board to the next world champion. They're fantastic events. The TF have lots of events going on all throughout the year. And we have lots of UK tournaments as well that they can enter.

Peter won Gold in quad singles at the London 2012 test event

**"I just wanted to go play tennis and you know it was a sport I could play with anyone, anywhere"**



# Games Through Our Eyes



## The Media Team are:

- Lilly Cook
- Shalim Ali
- Dean Rodney
- Poppy Collie
- Laura Jarvis
- Nicola Holley

Article written by Lilly Cook / Photos taken by the Media Team

**Games Through Our Eyes** is a website which covers the sports open to people with Learning Disabilities in the 2012 Paralympics. The website was made by the Media Team at Heart n Soul.

We wanted to make the website because we knew that the Olympics and Paralympics are in London this year and we wanted to tell everyone about it! There are only three sports in the Paralympics that are open to athletes with learning disabilities; athletics, swimming and table tennis. Each member of the Media Team found out more about each of the three sports.

During this project we were lucky enough to be able to meet Paul Morgan the editor of Rugby World magazine. We interviewed him about his love for Rugby. After Paul's visit to us at Heart n Soul we decided we also wanted to add a page about wheelchair rugby to our website. You can read the interview on our website.

As part of our research for the website we went on some really good trips. We visited the International Paralympic Committee to talk to them about finding a name for our website. We also went on a tour of the Olympic park where we saw a close up of the Olympic stadium and all the other

venues. It was cool to see how the Olympic park was coming along. The last trip we went on was to the International Paralympic Day in Trafalgar Square. We got to interview legends like David Weir, the wheelchair athlete, and Will Bayley, the world's number 1 Paralympic table tennis player.

After working with Chris from Salt Design to make the website we launched it at Heart n Soul's Squidz Club to an audience of over 150 people. While we were at the club we interviewed people to see what they thought of the website. We are all really excited about the Olympics and Paralympics coming to London and we'll be backing everyone we interviewed and the whole Great Britain Team all the way!

## Find out more

Games Through Our Eyes  
[www.gamesthroughoureyes.com](http://www.gamesthroughoureyes.com)

Heart n Soul media team  
[www.heartnsoul.co.uk/mediateam.html](http://www.heartnsoul.co.uk/mediateam.html)

Heart n Soul  
Telephone: 020 8694 1632  
Email: [info@heartnsoul.co.uk](mailto:info@heartnsoul.co.uk)  
Website: [www.heartnsoul.co.uk](http://www.heartnsoul.co.uk)



# Live with a Healthy Heart

By Hanifa Islam

Hi, my name is Hanifa Islam. On this page I review the 'Live with a Healthy Heart' resource.



## What is it?

It is a DVD and booklet by the British Heart Foundation. The DVD has real people telling you about how they changed the way they lived to look after their hearts. They will give you lots of ideas that you can try yourself. The booklet has information about how to keep your heart healthy. The booklet will help you to think about the changes that you could make so you can have a healthy life and a healthy heart. I suggest that you watch the DVD first and then read the booklet. You might want to discuss the DVD and booklet with your family, friends or support workers.

## What sections does it contain?

The DVD and booklet contain information on:

- Your heart and risk factors
- Healthy eating and controlling your weight
- Family history and controlling your blood pressure
- Stopping smoking
- Controlling your blood sugar and diabetes
- Exercising and having fun



## At a glance

Hanifa reviews the 'Live with a Healthy Heart' resource.



Hanifa

## What did I learn from it?

I learnt that you should eat healthy foods and include exercise into your life to look after your heart and help control your weight. I think if you do these you should keep your heart pumping nicely.

You should not smoke, not eat fatty food and not drink too much alcohol as these will clog up your arteries with fat.

## What were the really good things about it?

I think the DVD and booklet helps people to understand a lot of things about the heart in a really good way.

### British Heart Foundation

Phone: 020 7554 0000  
[www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk)

Find out more

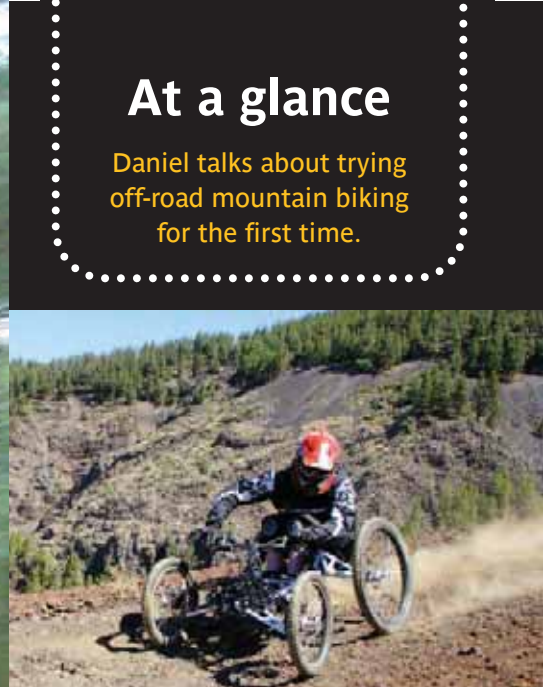
### Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities

[www.learningdisabilities.org.uk](http://www.learningdisabilities.org.uk)

### Live with a Healthy Heart

Download 'Live with a Healthy Heart' for free.  
<http://www.bhf.org.uk/publications/view-publication.aspx?ps=1000844>





## At a glance

Daniel talks about trying off-road mountain biking for the first time.

By Daniel Edwards

# Off-Road Mountain Biking



### About me

My name is Daniel Edwards. I'm 24 years old and live in Dartford Kent. I'm currently attending a YMCA fit Instructor course at Hillingdon Sports Complex. I'm studying a CYQ Level 2 Certificate in Gym Instruction.

I've always loved anything that gives me an adrenaline rush. So when I was 21 years old, I decided to do my motorbike test and buy a road bike. However, this didn't last long. After buying my bike in February 2009 I was knocked off it in June 2009. From the accident I became paralysed from the waist down and am now a wheelchair user.

I've always tried to be positive about my injury and never let it stop me seeking the adrenalin rushes I absolutely love. So now I'm involved in activities like: water skiing, sky diving, motorcycle track days (oh yes! I've been back on a bike), and hand cycling, in which I have raised funds for a charity called Back-Up.

### Rough Riderz

I first heard about Rough Riderz when searching the internet one day. I arranged to go on a Taster Day with my mate James. The Taster Day was in Whinlatter Forest in Keswick Cumbria.

I used a custom four wheel mountain bike shipped in from the USA. I also wore suitable body armour for protection. I was with Phil (who runs the Taster Days) and his Dad (who runs the shuttle service) all day, and loved every minute of it! I must admit the thrill it gives you, hurtling down the side of a mountain, on a four wheel bike was amazing and something I hadn't felt in a long

time. I was buzzing the whole day and even on the long drive home!

And, yes I must admit I did have a bit of a tumble as you can see from my photo, but to be honest that was one of my favourite parts of the day. In case you were wondering, no, I wasn't hurt in any way at all.

I was a tiny bit nervous before going down the mountain. But Phil made sure I was completely comfortable with everything and even took me on an easier run to start with. As soon as I set off on the bike I forgot my nerves and the trill and adrenalin kicked in.



If anyone were to ask me if I'd do it again, it would be a definite YES!! And if anyone is interested in an adrenaline filled, off-road mountain bike experience I would urge them to book a Taster Day. Give this sport a go! You won't regret it!

### Rough Riderz

Rough Riderz is an all-inclusive, fun-loving club which aims to promote integrated mountain biking across the UK. For more information about Rough Riderz and Taster Days visit:  
[www.roughriderz.co.uk](http://www.roughriderz.co.uk)

# Percy Hedley Sports Academy

## At a glance

The Percy Hedley Sports Academy creates sporting opportunities for disabled people.

By Ed Turner from Percy Hedley Foundation

When you think about famous sports people do you always picture David Beckham and Jessica Ennis? That's because we often think of sport as being for able bodied people. But what about Oscar Pistorius and Tanni Grey-Thomson? They are both proof that disabled people can not only DO sport but they can really excel at it.

The Percy Hedley Foundation Sports Academy is based in Newcastle upon Tyne. The Sports Academy encourages disabled children and adults to be as active as possible. We have top class sporting facilities on site and we are a pre-games training camp for athletes in the 2012 Paralympics.

The Sports Academy aims to develop sport at all levels. We believe that disabled people should be able to take part in competitive sport in their own communities. So we run grassroots and competitive clubs.

We encourage disabled people from across the North East to come and take part in sport no matter what their disability. Many of our visitors find that taking part in specially adapted disabled sports helps them make new friends, improves their physical fitness and boosts their confidence.

### Links

**Percy Hedley Foundation**  
[www.percyhedley.org.uk](http://www.percyhedley.org.uk)

**Percy Hedley Sports Academy**  
[www.percyhedley.org.uk/landing.asp?id=14](http://www.percyhedley.org.uk/landing.asp?id=14)



The Sports Academy offers Wheelchair Basketball, Powerchair Football, Boccia and Martial Arts. Anyone from the first time beginner to those who want to compete are welcome.

**Dan Blake** began playing powerchair football at the Sports Academy five years ago. His playing record includes representing England in the 2007 World Cup, as well as playing for Premier League team Northern Thunder.

Dan is now a volunteer coach at the Sports Academy. Dan said: "I always enjoyed watching sport but I never thought I would actually be able to take part. But after I came to a taster session at the Sports Academy I was hooked."

Dan has just completed a degree in Sport Development with Coaching at Northumbria University. Dan said: "I've got so much out of taking part in sport myself that I was determined to give those same opportunities to other disabled people. By going to University, I've learned even more skills that I can use and adapt in my work with the Sports Academy users."

Dan says that taking part in disabled sports has helped shape his future goals. He said: "I now dream of bringing even more sporting opportunities to disabled people. Disabled sport is just as skilful and competitive as able bodied sports, and more importantly just as much fun!"



# Strive for Success

By Kate Adams

**Strive for Success is a series of 6 week programmes at BF Adventure. BF Adventure is an outdoor activity centre and charity based near Falmouth, in Cornwall. BF Adventure has fully accessible equipment, including a zip wire, abseil wall, toilet/changing block and a range of accessible bikes.**

Strive for Success is aimed at young people aged 19+ years with both learning and physical disabilities who are not currently engaging in any other training, education or paid/voluntary work.

On the programme young people work in groups of up to six. With the support of a Programme Manager they build their confidence and work based skills through taking part in outdoor activities. Along with this there is the chance to gain awards in activities such as canoeing, archery and climbing.

Strive for Success will give individuals the opportunity to gain confidence in order to move towards gaining employment or going back to education or training in a supportive environment, working alongside experienced instructors and the programme manager.

## Find out more

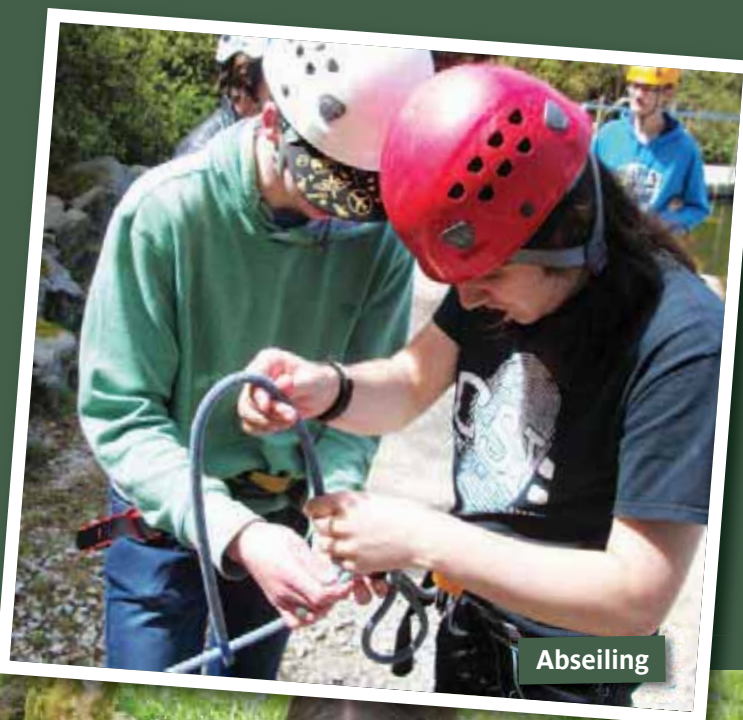
**BF Adventure** [www.bfadventure.org](http://www.bfadventure.org)

**Strive for Success:** For more information about 'Strive for Success' contact Kate Adams on [kate@bfadventure.org](mailto:kate@bfadventure.org) or 01326 341802.

## At a glance

This programme helps young people gain skills through outdoor activities.

If this pilot scheme is successful, BF Adventure hope to secure more funding in the future to enable more adults who are going through or have just left transition to engage with programmes at BF Adventure to build confidence and skills which will help them move forwards to a brighter, more fulfilling and independent future.



Abseiling



Cooking on a camp fire!

# Inspire Me

## At a glance

Inspire Me provides opportunities for young people with a learning disability.



**“Going to the gym is important for me, but I wasn’t sure about how to go to one.”**

### Find out more

You can find out more about Inspire Me by:

Telephone:

**020 7454 0454**

Email:

**[inspire.me@mencap.org.uk](mailto:inspire.me@mencap.org.uk)**

Web:

**[www.inspireme.mencap.org.uk](http://www.inspireme.mencap.org.uk)**

### By Danielle Duggan from Mencap

**Inspire Me is a new project which aims to support 20,000 young people with a learning disability across 20 locations in the UK. The project has been set up by Mencap and ENABLE Scotland and is funded by The Co-operative Charity of the Year for young people with a learning disability aged 16-25.**

### Inspire Me

Danny Cassidy is a Young Ambassador for Mencap’s Inspire Me programme. Danny is 24 years old and lives in North London. He started working with Inspire Me in the summer of 2011 when he attended a Confidence and Motivation workshop run by his youth worker in London. Danny says “It made me feel brilliant. I now feel confident to go out by myself and talk to people.”

### Mentoring

After the workshop Danny spoke to his youth worker about wanting to join a gym. Danny wanted to become fitter and feel more confident about himself. Danny was matched to a volunteer mentor called Tumu. Tumu worked with Danny to find the right gym for him. Tumu supported Danny to research the gyms in his local area. Once Danny had found one which offered what he wanted Tumu helped him to plan his journey there. “Going to the gym is important for me, but I wasn’t sure about how to go to one. I am now happy to go on my own and go a few times a week.” Danny is happy that all the training is making him fitter and it has encouraged him to cut down on crisps, chocolate and fizzy drinks to be even healthier.

### Young Ambassadors

Danny has now become a Young Ambassador for Mencap and is able to help other people with a learning disability by volunteering with different parts of the charity. He recently attended a training session for BBC staff who wanted to volunteer with Mencap. He spoke to them about his experiences of Inspire Me. All the BBC staff were very impressed by the confidence Danny showed by speaking in front of the group. It encouraged them to volunteer with Inspire Me and to become mentors to other young people. Danny is looking forward to having more opportunities as a Young Ambassador and is very grateful for all the support Tumu gave him as his mentor. “It was great. It has changed my life so much.”



# PARSONS PANTHERS

## At a glance

Shehab talks about playing on his school's powerchair football team.

By Shehab Uddin

My name is Shehab and I attend Sir Charles Parsons School in Newcastle upon Tyne. I am part of our school's powerchair football team called Parsons Panthers. The team was started in September 2011.

We have been training twice a week, on Monday's and Wednesday's, after school. Being part of the team has been really good fun and allowed me to form closer friendships with other students. It is great to be able to work together. We feel like we have achieved lots in the short time that we have been a team.

It can sometimes be a bit difficult to get involved in team games in PE. But being part of the Panthers gives me a great feeling of being in the thick of it. The best part is when I score lots of goals. I am a pretty good striker.

Each of the team members has a powerchair with extra higher speeds and special bumpers to control and hit the ball. Dan, one of my team mates, told me that his

favourite part of playing is driving his chair really fast and doing lots of tricks to get around his friends.

Our aim is to compete in a powerchair football league next year. We want to see if our training has gone well enough for us to win some matches against other teams. Mr. Gullon, one of our coaches, said that he has really enjoyed watching us trying a new sport and growing in confidence. He commented that he has been impressed with how we have improved our skills to get better at playing as a team.

It is great to know that the rest of the school are supporting us and that we will be able to represent Sir Charles Parsons by playing our favourite sport.



## At a glance

An activity award for people with a learning disability.

# Gateway Award

By Mencap

### What is the Gateway Award?

The **Gateway Award** is a way for you to do lots of different things you enjoy. It will help you

- try new things
- be more confident
- meet new people
- have fun and be healthy.

### Who can take part?

Anyone can take part. It doesn't matter how old you are or what you can do.

### How does the Gateway Award work?

There are 3 levels in the **Gateway Award**. They are Bronze, Silver and Gold. Each level of the award has 5 parts. They are

- **hobbies** – doing things you like
- **fitness** – keeping fit and taking care of your body
- **lifestyle** – staying safe and having a healthy life
- **volunteering** – helping people in your community
- **Gateway challenge** – doing the things you want to do.

### How does the Gateway Award work?

You need to do something for each of the **5 parts**. You can choose the things you want to do. It is a good idea to pick things

- you have not tried before
- that are not too easy for you
- that are fun!

You need to write down what you do for each thing.



### What sort of things you can do for the award

- Hobbies** – start a new hobby like painting or cooking.
- Fitness** – keep fit by trying things like dancing or swimming.
- Lifestyle** – learn how to eat well or look after your money.
- Volunteer** – try raising money or helping at a charity.
- Gateway challenge** – do a new thing like going on a trip.

**When you have finished each level of the award:** You will get a certificate and a badge. You will be more confident and will have new skills to help you be more independent.

### Do I need someone to support me?

You will need someone to help you get started. They can help you plan what you are going to do.

They will also look at the work you are doing and make sure it is going well. Your supporter will tell Mencap when you have finished each level of the award. You can choose anyone you like to support you. To find out more about supporters go to [www.mencap.org.uk/gatewayaward](http://www.mencap.org.uk/gatewayaward)

### How Mencap can help

When you sign up to do the award Mencap will do these things

- Give you a folder to put your work in.
- Give information to your supporter.
- Help you to use the website.
- Give you all the things you need to do the award.



Find out more

Go to [www.mencap.org.uk/gatewayaward](http://www.mencap.org.uk/gatewayaward) or email [gatewayaward@mencap.org.uk](mailto:gatewayaward@mencap.org.uk)



# News • Resources • Useful Links

## News

### Equality Matters for Children

The Children's Rights Alliance for England have launched a new website called 'Equality Matters for Children'. The website has information on children and young people's rights under equality law. The website is for children, young people and adults. [www.equalitymattersforchildren.crae.org.uk/](http://www.equalitymattersforchildren.crae.org.uk/)

**Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability - Progress and next steps** The Department for Education has published the next steps document to the SEND Green Paper. [www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/sen/a0075339/sengreenpaper](http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/sen/a0075339/sengreenpaper)

### Young, Disabled and In Control

The Council for Disabled Children's Young Ambassadors have produced a film called "Young, Disabled and In Control". This film is designed to challenge stereotypes of disability and show the positive difference when young disabled people are involved in decisions about their lives. Watch the film here [www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/getting-involved/young-disabled-and-in-control](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/getting-involved/young-disabled-and-in-control)



## Resources

### All About Feeling Down

This booklet is for young people with learning disabilities aged 14 to 25. It is about what you can do if you feel down. As you grow up, changes can feel hard to deal with. But there can be exciting times too. Everyone has ups and downs, especially about growing up. Free to download. [www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/publications](http://www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/publications)



### How to look after your mental health

It's important to take care of yourself and get the most from life. This booklet suggests 10 practical ways to look after your mental health. This booklet is by the Mental Health Foundation and is free to download. [www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications)



### How to look after your mental health using exercise

This booklet explains why exercise is important, suggests how you can get started and how you can stay motivated. It is by the Mental Health Foundation and is free to download. [www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications)



### An Ordinary Life

This booklet is called 'An Ordinary Life' because many children and young people with complex health needs and/or who are dependent on medical technology find it difficult to do ordinary things like going to the local leisure centre. This booklet contains interviews with families of people who have complex health needs who are trying new ways of working or have ideas to make life better. [www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/publications](http://www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/publications)

### Exercise and asthma

Asthma UK have produced a factsheet on exercise and asthma in accessible format. Free to download. [www.asthma.org.uk/](http://www.asthma.org.uk/)

## Useful Links

### British Blind Sport

Aims to ensure that sport and leisure facilities are accessible to every blind or partially sighted person in the UK. Tel: 01926 424247 Email: [info@britishblindsport.org.uk](mailto:info@britishblindsport.org.uk) [www.britishblindsport.org.uk](http://www.britishblindsport.org.uk)

### British Disabled Water Ski Association

Introduces newcomers to water skiing, regardless of physical or learning disability. Tel: 01784 483664 Email: [info@bdwsa.org](mailto:info@bdwsa.org) [www.bdwsa.org](http://www.bdwsa.org)

### Disability Cricket

Disability Cricket is run by ECB. ECB is the governing body responsible for all cricket in England and Wales. Tel: 020 7432 1200 Email: [disabilitycricket@ecb.co.uk](mailto:disabilitycricket@ecb.co.uk) [www.ecb.co.uk/development/disability-cricket](http://www.ecb.co.uk/development/disability-cricket)

### Disability Football

The Football Association has different football leagues, including: Amputee, Cerebral Palsy, Deaf, Partially Sighted and Learning Disability. [www.thefa.com/TheFA/WhatWeDo/Equality/DisabilityFootball](http://www.thefa.com/TheFA/WhatWeDo/Equality/DisabilityFootball)

### English Federation of Disability Sport

The national body and charity dedicated to disabled people in sport throughout England. They improve and increase the opportunities offered, ensuring disabled people have a memorable experience of sport and physical activity. Tel: 01509 227750 [www.efds.co.uk](http://www.efds.co.uk)

### Great Britain Wheelchair Basketball Association

The governing body for wheelchair basketball in the United Kingdom. Tel: 01509 279900 [www.gbwba.org.uk](http://www.gbwba.org.uk)

### Level Playing Field

Level Playing Field is a national charity for England and Wales representing disabled fans of all sports together with their personal assistant's and advocates. Tel: 0845 230 6237 Email: [office@ukds.org.uk](mailto:office@ukds.org.uk) [www.levelplayingfield.org.uk](http://www.levelplayingfield.org.uk)

### UK Deaf Sport

Encourages Deaf people to participate, to enjoy and to excel at sport. Email: [office@ukds.org.uk](mailto:office@ukds.org.uk) [www.ukdeafsport.org.uk](http://www.ukdeafsport.org.uk)

### UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability

Encourages the development of sports provision for people with learning disability from grass roots through to International opportunities. Tel: 020 74903057 Email: [info@uksportsassociation.org](mailto:info@uksportsassociation.org) [www.uksportsassociation.org](http://www.uksportsassociation.org)

# Useful Organisations

## Organisations that make up the Transition Information Network Steering Group

Action for Children  
[www.actionforchildren.org.uk](http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk)

Ambitious about Autism  
[www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk](http://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk)

Association for Real Change (ARC)  
[www.arcuk.org.uk](http://www.arcuk.org.uk)

Contact a Family  
[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)

Council for Disabled Children  
[www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk)

Dimensions  
[www.dimensions-uk.org](http://www.dimensions-uk.org)

Foundation for People with  
Learning Disabilities  
[www.learningdisabilities.org.uk](http://www.learningdisabilities.org.uk)

Mencap  
[www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

National Autistic Society  
[www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

## These are some of the member organisations that make up the Transition Information Network

Children in Scotland  
[www.childreninscotland.org.uk](http://www.childreninscotland.org.uk)

The Children's Society  
[www.childrensociety.org.uk](http://www.childrensociety.org.uk)

Children in Wales  
[www.childreninwales.org.uk](http://www.childreninwales.org.uk)

Disability Alliance  
[www.disabilityalliance.org](http://www.disabilityalliance.org)

Home Farm Trust  
[www.hft.org.uk](http://www.hft.org.uk)

Kids  
[www.kids.org.uk](http://www.kids.org.uk)

Macintyre  
[www.macintyrecharity.org](http://www.macintyrecharity.org)

National Deaf Children's Society  
[www.ndcs.org.uk](http://www.ndcs.org.uk)

National Development Team for  
inclusion  
[www.ndti.org.uk](http://www.ndti.org.uk)

National Youth Agency  
[www.nya.org.uk](http://www.nya.org.uk)

Norah Fry Research Centre  
[www.bristol.ac.uk/norahfry](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/norahfry)

Paradigm  
[www.paradigm-uk.org](http://www.paradigm-uk.org)

Scope  
[www.scope.org.uk](http://www.scope.org.uk)

Sense  
[www.sense.org.uk](http://www.sense.org.uk)

Shaw Trust  
[www.shaw-trust.org.uk](http://www.shaw-trust.org.uk)

Voiceability  
[www.voiceability.org](http://www.voiceability.org)

Young Minds  
[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

### Statement of Association

The Transition Information Network is based at the Council for Disabled Children.  
The Council for Disabled Children is hosted by the National Children's Bureau.  
Registered Charity No 258825.

