

Get Wise to communicating with families



Parents as partners – Making a difference together

The BHTA have worked with the **Don't Call Me Mum** campaign initiative to produce this leaflet. We want to help professionals and companies working with carers and families of adults and children with additional needs, to demonstrate their respect of parents as partners in the assessment process.

When you enter a family's house, it is also their home, their place of comfort and safe space. Whilst keeping this in mind, professionals should understand the potential anxieties and fears families may have around outsiders entering their home and the decisions that may be made. Working with parents/carers and involving them at every stage of a meeting/assessment will help gain their respect and trust.

Partnership

Companies, professionals and parents are all the experts in their own right. Bringing together everyone's skills, knowledge and resources creates the best outcome because when parents are partners; everyone, especially the person with the disability, wins.

Perspective

Every family has a story. Every interaction is part of an on going journey littered with complications, emotions and challenges.

Priorities

Every person has a different set of priorities and expectations. When each party openly communicates their agenda and priorities, progress can be made.

Overleaf, we have established some top tips to help when working with families.



PHOTO: NICOLA PARRY

- ✓ **Look parents/carers in the eye, shake their hand, smile, introduce yourself and ask their name.**
- ✓ **When introduced to a family, talk directly to the child or adult with a disability even though they may not be able to respond and where possible find out how they communicate.**
- ✓ **Listen.**
- ✓ **Give clear, honest and accessible information.**
- ✓ **Ensure parents/carers and the person with a disability are involved in the decision-making process and know what outcomes to expect.**
- ✓ **Give the opportunity to ask questions.**
- ✗ **Don't call parents Mum or Dad.**
- ✗ **Don't assume you can see a disability.**
- ✗ **Don't minimise parent's concerns.**
- ✗ **Don't underestimate the extent of a parent's workload.**
- ✗ **Don't underestimate a person's ability to understand, communicate and contribute.**

It is important to observe and respect cultural differences like shaking hands, removing shoes when entering a home and taking photographs without permission. If in doubt always ask and agree.

The BHTA is one of the UK's oldest and largest healthcare trades association. To find out more about the BHTA and see other useful Get Wise leaflets please visit www.bhta.com



To become a supporter of 'Don't Call Me Mum' and show that your company, department or school acknowledges the essential contribution parents make, order your supporters pack at www.bornattherighttime.com/product/dont-call-me-mum-support-package/



To add our logo to your website, email us at: info@dontcallmemum.com or visit www.dontcallmemum.com

With thanks to www.bornattherighttime.com for bringing a family's perspective to professional practice and pioneer of the Don't Call Me Mum initiative.



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The BHTA represents almost 500 companies, all of whom commit to the BHTA Code of Practice, the only one in this industry to be approved by The Chartered Trading Standards Institute. BHTA member companies operate to higher standards of customer protection than the law requires.

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