

Children and Young People's Service

Information for families

Many conditions can affect a child or young person's appearance such as birthmarks, cleft lip and palates, craniofacial conditions, skin conditions, and scarring from burns, road traffic accidents or dog bites. Living with a face or body that looks different is not always easy. Other people's staring, comments and questions can be difficult to deal with and this may affect how you feel about yourself.

Changing Faces' Children and Young People's Service has lots of experience in supporting children, young people and their families. We can show you that it is possible to learn how to deal with these challenges and increase your self-esteem and confidence.

What can we offer?

1. Space to talk, get support and new ideas or access counselling

This can include exploring how to:

- Respond if people stare, ask questions or make comments at the supermarket, in the park or at school etc, and how to help your child respond
- Increase your child's self-confidence and self-esteem
- Talk about looking 'different' with your child and how to use books to do this
- Look at your own and your child's feelings about their appearance
- Prepare everyone in the family for hospital, operations and treatments.

Also available: E-mail counselling for 11–17 yr olds (Monday and Wednesdays) via www.iface.org.uk our young people's website.

2. Group activities and events

Group activities and events are put on each year for children, young people and parents across the UK. These focus on building confidence and developing social skills through various themes.

Taking Place in 2011:

Island of Adventure Day, Saturday 25th June 2011, London.

A day full of activities for young people in year 6 who are starting secondary school this September.

Beauty Inside and Out (BIO) Nov 2011, exact date and location to be confirmed.

A fun, pampering day for 13-17 year old young women

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3. Information and resources

- Visit our website www.changingfaces.org.uk for further information and advice (see the section called Adults and Families)
- 11-21 year olds can log on to our young people's website www.iface.org.uk and swap tips, share experiences, get advice on looking 'different' and use e-mail counselling
- Order free or download our Guides for Parents which enable you to develop your skills at each stage of your child's development
- Encourage your child's school to purchase or download our comprehensive Teachers' Guides covering early years, junior school and secondary school.
- Order a range of self-help booklets and story books for parents, children and young people.

4. Young People's Council

Changing Faces' Young People's Council (for 14-25 yr olds) exists to:

- Provide a voice for young people to help others understand their experience
- Help us develop our services for children and young people
- Enable young people to have a greater role in the organisation.

Members from across the UK meet four times a year (travel is paid for). Recent achievements include taking part in media interviews and documentaries and developing www.iface.org.uk which they now moderate. We are currently recruiting new members.

5. Work with schools across the UK

For children and young people who are starting or moving school, or who are experiencing difficulties at their current school, we can offer support, information and advice to families and school staff on:

- Handling social and emotional challenges related to looking 'different'
- Applying effective approaches to inclusion, appearance concerns and bullying.

Who are we?

Our team is made up of play therapists, counsellors, youth workers and teachers

How to contact us

For further information, advice or support you can email us at info@changingfaces.org.uk or call 0845 4500 275 and ask to speak with a member of the Children and Young People's Service.

We do not have a 'helpline' but if we can't take your call immediately we will call you back.

For further information on our activity days and events please visit our website www.changingfaces.org.uk or call / email the Children and Young People's Service.