

## What is Circles Network?

- ☀ Circles network is a national voluntary organisation formed in 1994 with an educational objective to build inclusive communities.
- ☀ All of our work is based upon the values of inclusion, and our projects support people according to individual need.
- ☀ Our projects work directly with disabled people and others at risk of social exclusion.
- ☀ We have an extensive range of workshops and learning opportunities leading towards inspiring inclusion.

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Family Empowerment Project

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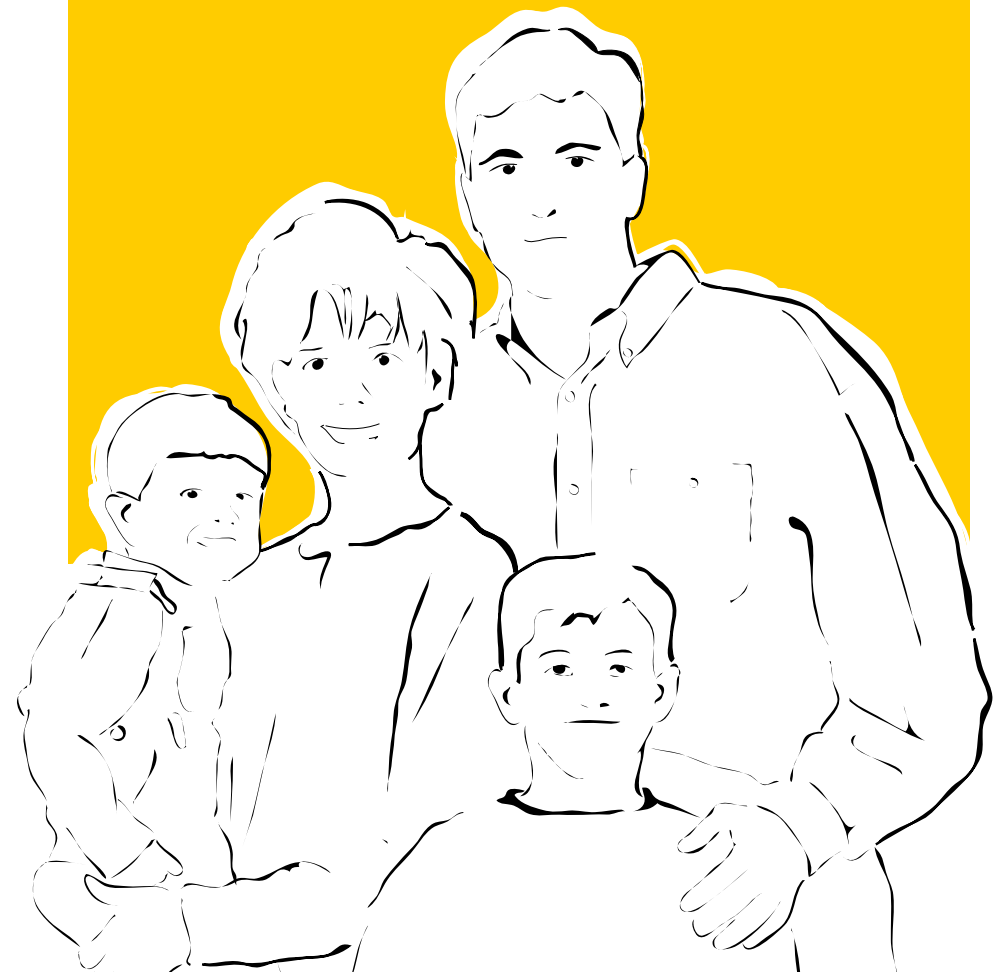


[www.circlesnetwork.org.uk](http://www.circlesnetwork.org.uk)



**Circles Network**  
building inclusive communities

Providing a range of support  
for disabled parents



## The Family Empowerment Project

The Project works with families headed by disabled parents, including parents with physical and sensory impairments, learning difficulties or mental health and emotional differences.

The project was founded on the realisation that too many disabled parents were losing custody when, with the right kind of support,

they could provide safe, loving homes to happy and well-adjusted children. Research shows that

**"disabled parents commonly face assumptions that their impairment or illness is placing their children at increased risk of deprivation, potential harm or abuse."**

Task force for Supporting Disabled Adults in their Role as Parents, 2003

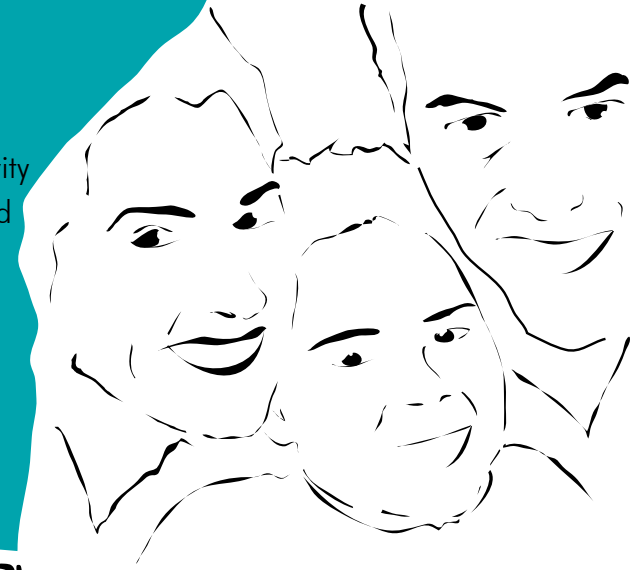
The Family Empowerment Project is committed to the principles of person centred planning and the social model of disability. In all our work, we strive to:

- ✿ Recognise that solutions that do not take into account the views of the focus people are not likely to be sustainable
- ✿ Use methods and tools that reflect individual needs
- ✿ Raise parents' confidence and self esteem
- ✿ Provide parents with honest, constructive feedback

Circles Network aims to help families stay together, provided this can be achieved without putting children at risk. We work in two ways to achieve this:

### Independent Parenting Assessments

Our assessments take place in the family home and local community whenever possible. Without compromising objectivity or independence, we work hard to create non-threatening, respectful relationships where parents have the best opportunities to demonstrate their parenting skills in safe environments.



### Individual Support Plans

We tailor individual support plans to the needs of each family. These can include support packages, learning events and courses, supervised contact sessions and counselling. Support plans can be put in place prior to or following court proceedings.

In line with the Children Act 1989, our views and actions support the principle that the welfare of the child is paramount.

### Purchasing our services:

Individuals, professionals and solicitors can contact us directly. We offer competitive prices in line with other locally based organisations.