Contents

2 Introduction to Mencap
3 The best possible start in life
5 Changing lives at every age
7 Leaving a gift in your Will
9 Different types of legacy
10 Useful forms and information

A gift in your Will could create a lifetime of possibilities

A baby born with a syndrome so rare it doesn’t even have a name. Parents struggling to cope with the shock of hearing their child has a learning disability. A teenage girl being bullied and excluded at school because she is different. A man with a learning disability who loses his home, carer and best friend when his mum passes away.

For the many thousands of people with learning disabilities in this country, every stage in life is a battle. A battle to secure the same opportunities and rights as everyone else.

For 70 years, Mencap has been the voice of people with learning disabilities. Over that time, we’ve challenged prejudice, changed unfair laws and improved vital services. Today, we provide essential support and advice to almost 80,000 people and their families.

None of this work is possible without the kindness of our supporters. And for many, the most lasting and meaningful way to help is to leave a gift to Mencap in their Wills.

More than half of everything we do is funded by these extra-special gifts. Without them, thousands of children, young people and adults with learning disabilities would have no one to support them, no one to speak up for them, no one to fight their cause.

So please, take a few moments to read through this guide to leaving a gift in your Will. It shows how these wonderful gifts can change lives – and how together we could create a lifetime of possibilities for people with learning disabilities.

200 babies are born every week with a learning disability

How we help: Mencap’s family support workers will help hundreds of families cope with the diagnosis of a learning disability, building their confidence, resilience and hope for the future.

2 out of 3 families can’t access the complex childcare they urgently need

How we help: Mencap’s early intervention workers who use specialised speech, language and physical therapies to transform young children’s lives.
For children with learning disabilities, the first few years in life are critical to their development. Without personalised support from an early age, many will struggle to reach important milestones such as feeding, sitting, talking, walking and reading.

Thanks to kind gifts left in Wills, Mencap funds specialised therapies and parental support that can stop a child falling behind. For hundreds of families like two-year-old Oisin’s, this vital early intervention can mean the difference between hope and despair.

“Oisin was born with a syndrome so rare, it has no name,” his mum Natalie explains. “We were told to say goodbye to our son and call the priest. It was devastating.”

Thankfully, Oisin survived. But Natalie and her husband soon found out that there is only limited childcare for children like Oisin – a fact that prevents many from developing to their full potential.

“For us, Mencap’s nursery is a godsend. The care Oisin gets there isn’t available anywhere else. He has dedicated physio, speech and language workers in a wonderful, stimulating environment. He’s three-and-a-half now and it’s amazing to see him play like all the other children. Without this incredible support, I wouldn’t be able to work and we simply wouldn’t cope as a family.”

Mencap is determined that more children like Oisin will get the best possible start in life. With your help, we aim to expand our early intervention services across the country, bringing advice, information and unique support to families at the point of diagnosis.

By including a gift to Mencap in your Will, you could help make this crucial work a reality in the years to come – and transform the lives of so many children.

8 out of 10 children with learning disabilities are bullied at school

How we help: Mencap runs anti-bullying projects in schools across the country, educating pupils in learning disabilities and training teachers how to spot abusive behaviour.

Thousands of families are told their child will never go to school

How we help: By funding specialised, play-based learning techniques, Mencap helps prepare hundreds of children with learning disabilities for mainstream school.
Supporting people with learning disabilities at every stage

Finding a job. Choosing somewhere to live. For most people, these are natural parts of growing up. But for teenagers and adults with learning disabilities, these can be the hardest battles of their lives. Things they long to do yet may never achieve.

At Mencap, we use the wonderful gifts that people leave in their Wills to run employment and housing programmes across the country. These provide jobs and homes to people with learning disabilities that millions take for granted.

For Vicky, her dream was to move out of her parents’ home and share a house with friends. Working with our sister charity, Golden Lane Housing, we transformed a run-down bungalow into a bright, open, fully accessible home. We even raised the back garden to make it easy for Vicky to spend time outside with her friends.

For Sharon, this vital support means they finally have the chance to get a job, a home and gain their independence.

“I was unemployed and really wanted a job,” Sharon says. “Thankfully, Mencap stepped in and supported me through college, where I got an NVQ in Health & Social Care. When the chance of a job came up at a care home, Mencap was brilliant and helped me with my interview skills. I’ve now been working there for two years and I love it!”

Less than 1 in 5 adults with learning disabilities have a job

Many school-leavers lack the training and confidence to find work

How we help: Every year, Mencap runs job-coaching workshops, CV training and Accessible Apprenticeships that help people with learning disabilities into the world of work.

How we help: Mencap has been delivering community-based specialist employment services to people with learning disabilities for over 30 years.

“I was unemployed and really wanted a job,” Sharon says. “Thankfully, Mencap stepped in and supported me through college, where I got an NVQ in Health & Social Care. When the chance of a job came up at a care home, Mencap was brilliant and helped me with my interview skills. I’ve now been working there for two years and I love it!”

By including a gift in your Will, you could help Mencap invest in vital employment and housing programmes like these. With your help, many more people like Vicky and Sharon could find the job and home they need.

PREPARING FOR WORK

EMPLOYMENT
We’re grateful for gifts of any amount
At Mencap, we’re so thankful for every gift that supporters choose to include in their Wills. What’s more, your gift doesn’t have to be large to make a difference. Whatever you’re able to leave will help create a lifetime of possibilities for people with learning disabilities.

Making a list of your assets
A good place to start when making or amending your Will is to make a list of your assets and what they’re worth. Then, make another list of everything you owe. This will give you a good idea of what your estate is worth.

Choosing who you want to help
Next, think carefully about all of the people and causes you’d like to remember in your Will, and how you’d like to divide your estate between them. You’ll also need to choose executors, who’ll normally be friends, relatives or professional people you trust.

We’d love to hear from you
We always want to say thank you to kind supporters, so if you do decide to include a gift to Mencap in your Will, it would be wonderful if you could let us know your intentions on the form enclosed.

Our Legacies team is here to help
We know that leaving a gift in your Will is something you’ll want to think about very carefully. If you have any questions or need any help, please don’t hesitate to call us on 0207 696 6925. Of course, whatever you decide to do, you’re free to change your mind at any time. We also promise to keep whatever you tell us in strict confidence.

INDEPENDENT LIVING
1 in 2 adults with learning disabilities still rely on their families for daily care and support
How we help: Every year, Mencap’s House and Home programme gives 500 people with learning disabilities the chance to move into their own, specially adapted home – however, with your help we can do even more.

ADULT HEALTH
3 people with learning disabilities die every day from preventable causes
How we help: Mencap works with the Royal Colleges to make sure that nursing students and GPs have a greater understanding of learning disabilities and their effects.
The different types of gift you could leave

There are four main ways you can include a gift to Mencap in your Will and help our vital work for people with learning disabilities. However you choose to help, we’d be grateful for whatever type of gift you decide to leave us.

**Discretionary Trust**
This gift provides financial support for a loved one with a learning disability after your death. In the sad event of their passing, all or part of the remaining estate can be left to Mencap or other causes that are close to your heart. You can read more about this type of gift on the leaflet enclosed in the pocket opposite.

**A share of your estate**
Once you’ve provided for your loved ones, you can leave a share of whatever remains to Mencap. It can be any percentage you like, it’s up to you. And because this gift is a proportion of your estate, it keeps pace with inflation.

**Fixed sum of money**
Also known as a pecuniary gift, this is a gift of a specific amount of money. If you do decide to leave this type of gift, it’s worth reviewing from time to time as inflation can reduce its value.

**Gift of a specific item**
You can also choose to leave a particular item to Mencap, such as a piece of jewellery, an antique or even a property. A gift like this should be named in your Will.

---

**ADVANCED YEARS**

More and more people with learning disabilities are living into old age

How we help: Mencap offers home and residential care for older people with learning disabilities, as well as practical and emotional support for their families.

---

**What to do next**

The following forms contain lots more practical information about leaving a gift to Mencap in your Will. If you have any questions about gifts in Wills, or Mencap’s work in general, please don’t hesitate to get in touch with our Legacies team using the contact details below.

Thank you once again for considering this extra-special way of supporting our work.

---

Call: 0207 696 6925
Email: legacies@mencap.org.uk
Visit: www.mencap.org.uk/legacies
Write to us at: Legacies team, Mencap, 123 Golden Lane, London EC1Y 0RT

Registered charity number 222377 (England and Wales); SC041079 (Scotland)
We’d love to hear from you

Thank you for your interest in leaving a gift to Mencap in your Will. If you do intend to remember us in this way, we’d be grateful if you could let us know so that we can thank you personally.

It’s only thanks to kind, compassionate people like you that we can change the lives of children and adults with learning disabilities.

Naturally, when it comes to your Will, we understand the needs of your family and friends always come first. But if you do decide to leave a gift to Mencap, no matter what size, it can make a dramatic difference to so many lives, at every age.

If you’d like to let Mencap know of your intentions, please tick the relevant box opposite and return this form to us in the enclosed envelope or to the address below, as we would really like to thank you for your kindness.

If you have any questions about leaving a gift in your Will, or any aspect of Mencap’s work, please don’t hesitate to call Mencap’s Legacies Team in confidence on 0207 696 6925.

You can also email legacies@mencap.org.uk or write to: Legacies Team, Mencap, 123 Golden Lane, London EC1Y 0RT.

Registered charity number 222377 (England and Wales); SC041079 (Scotland)

We will always keep your data safe and will never share your details. If you wish to change any of your contact preferences, please contact Mencap’s Supporter Care Team on 0845 077 0777 or email supportercare@mencap.org.uk. By submitting your personal details you consent to the terms and conditions of our Privacy Policy available at www.mencap.org.uk/privacy
Your questions answered

There can be a lot to think about when it comes to making or adapting your Will. Here are answers to some of the questions you might have.

Do I have to make a Will?
Making a Will is the only way to make sure your family and friends are provided for in the way that you want. Otherwise, your exact wishes may not be carried out after you die. It’s also important to make a Will to protect your loved ones from an unwelcome tax bill.

Do I need a solicitor?
No, but we’d always recommend that you use a solicitor. It’s extremely important that your Will contains the correct legal wording.

Can you recommend a solicitor?
We can’t, but the Law Society can help you find a suitable solicitor in your area. For more details, visit www.lawsociety.org.uk or call 0207 242 1222.

Can I change my existing Will to include a gift?
Yes, simply ask your solicitor to add a codicil to your Will. It’s also a good idea to regularly review your Will to make sure it’s up-to-date with your circumstances. For example, there may have been births, deaths, marriages or divorce in your family since you last looked at your Will.

How will my gift be used?
Mencap will use your kind gift to create opportunities at every age for people with learning disabilities, whether through supporting children or helping adults to find work and housing.

What if I can only leave a small gift?
Every gift we receive, large or small, can help transform the lives of people with learning disabilities, so we’re extremely grateful for whatever you can spare.

Do I need to think about inheritance tax?
There’s no tax payable on a gift left to charity in your Will. What’s more, it could reduce the total amount of your estate that may be liable for inheritance tax.
Our services

Every day, Mencap provides a wide range of essential services to thousands of people with learning disabilities, their families and carers. For more information on any of these services, please get in touch with our Helpline on 0808 808 1111.

Support
Mencap provides specialist learning disability family support services both at home and in the community. We work with families and people with learning disabilities on their journey from the point of diagnosis, through early detection, key life transitions and on to independent living wherever possible.

Mencap Direct/Helpline
At Mencap, we know the importance of having your voice heard. That’s why we help people develop the skills, confidence and knowledge they need to speak out about the things that matter to them. Each year, Mencap responds to over 39,000 emails and calls to our helpline. Many of the parents who call are at the point of crisis, and now risk suffering further hardship due to the ongoing cuts to health and social care.

For more information, contact Mencap Direct on 0808 808 1111 or email help@mencap.org.uk

Housing
Through our sister charity, Golden Lane Housing, we offer a specialised housing service, enabling people with a learning disability to find a secure home that meets their needs, deal with housing benefit agencies and other organisations, and finally begin to live the life they choose. For more information, contact Golden Lane Housing on 0300 003 7007 or email enquiries@glh.org.uk

Employment
People with learning disabilities want to have a job and live meaningful lives. Indeed, 66% can and want to work – but of these people only 7% are currently in paid employment. At Mencap, we provide opportunities for personal development, access to further education, training, work trials and employment.

For more information, contact Mencap Direct on 0808 808 1111 or email help@mencap.org.uk

Sport and Leisure
It’s a sad fact that one in four people with a learning disability spend less than an hour a day outside their homes. Mencap provides accessible social and leisure activities to people with a learning disability, helping them to enjoy themselves and become part of the community. We also help people develop social skills, increase their independence and become more involved in their local communities. Mencap is a National Disability Sport Organisation and works to increase participation in sport at all levels.

For more information, contact Mencap Direct on 0808 808 1111 or email help@mencap.org.uk
Discretionary Trusts

Mencap offers free, impartial advice and information on writing a Will and setting up a Discretionary Trust for the benefit of someone with a learning disability.

Many families worry about how a loved one with a learning disability will manage financially when their parents are no longer around. For example, if a person with a learning disability directly inherits a lump sum of money, they could lose their benefits. Many parents also fear that their loved one could be open to financial abuse.

Through our unique Wills and Trust Service, Mencap can help families make the right decisions about their child’s financial future. We offer comprehensive advice about making a Will and setting up a Discretionary Trust: a special gift that provides financial support for a loved one with a learning disability after your death. We also run seminars on this important subject across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, which we invite you to attend.

For a free information pack about our Wills and Trust Service, or to enquire about one of our seminars, please call 0207 696 6925 or email willsandtrusts@mencap.org.uk