

AU (Activities Unlimited) Spending Guidelines

Your AU funding is provided by the government to meet the Short Break Needs of families with disabled children and to help families to take part in fun inclusive activities. As this is government funding the Council must make sure it is being spent in the right way and we do this by monitoring. This guidance document should help you decide the best way to spend your AU Offer.

What I CANNOT spend my AU Offer on?

- X Clothing (other than specific clothing needed for an activity, i.e. horse-riding clothes, dance shoes etc)
- X Household bills including Gas, Electric, Council Tax etc.
- X Everyday household expenses and items, such as maintenance costs, furniture and electrical appliances.
- X Parking fines or penalties of any sort.
- X Activities that take place during school hours, including school activities during term time.
- X Private Education tuition.
- X Treatments/therapies, medication that the NHS would not normally fund.
- X Medical or OT equipment.
- X Restricted items that could cause harm, such as knives, weapons and chemicals.
- X Body modifications or cosmetic adjustments.
- X Grocery Shopping.
- X To pay a family member living with the child or young person for childcare/personal assistants.
- X Anything that is illegal.
- X Gambling, debt repayment, alcohol, tobacco;
- X Emergency, acute, and most primary healthcare services which are already provided on the NHS;
- X Purchasing services directly from Suffolk County Council or other statutory agencies.
- X Permanent residential care;
- X As a substitute for Disabled Facilities Grants;

There may be some exceptions to the above, so it is important to call us if you are unsure.

What CAN I spend my AU Offer on?

Below is a list of Short Break Outcomes that families have told us are important to them and the government have agreed the funding can be spent on.

For Parent/Carers to –

- ✓ Have a break from their caring responsibilities.
- ✓ Feel less stressed and better able to cope.
- ✓ Have more quality time with other children in the family.
- ✓ Have more time for a social life or “time for me.”
- ✓ Have improved health and wellbeing.
- ✓ Find time for pursuing, education, personal hobbies and/or interests.

For Children/Young People to –

- ✓ Feel more confident to access activities. Be able to fully join in with activities.
- ✓ Be able to learn new skills and be more independent.
- ✓ Have the opportunity to make new friends.
- ✓ Find a new hobby/interest.
- ✓ Get along better with brothers/sisters
- ✓ Have improved health and wellbeing.

For Families to –

- ✓ Have less tension within the family
- ✓ Enjoy outings and activities as a family.
- ✓ See improved behaviour of the children within the family.
- ✓ Take part in everyday community activities

Some Examples of things families spend their AU Offers on are:

- ✓ Fun activities/hobbies for the child/young person to attend. Please see the AU website for further information, www.activities-unlimited.co.uk.
- ✓ Play and sensory equipment that will engage the child/young person giving the parent/carer a break.
- ✓ A day trip or activity for the whole family to take part in together.
- ✓ Travel expenses to and from an activity. (including fuel)
- ✓ Specialist clothing/equipment so the child/young person can take part in a hobby. ✓
A contribution towards a family holiday.
- ✓ A family meal as part of a family day out.

If you need further advice?... Please contact the team on 01473 260026 or email info@activities-unlimited.co.uk.

You can also visit our Facebook page.