

FACT SHEET

Support for Parents of Children with Scoliosis or Cerebral Palsy



What is peer support?

Our Peer Support Service connects you with another parent who has experience raising a child with **scoliosis or cerebral palsy** who uses orthotics (such as AFOs, KAFOs, or other braces).

Your peer supporter is a trained parent who has “been there” – someone who understands the practical and emotional parts of supporting a child who wears orthotics, including appointments, adjustments, and day-to-day life.

Peer support offers a chance to talk openly, ask questions, and learn from someone who understands your journey. Research shows that peer support can help families feel more confident, less isolated, and better prepared for what lies ahead.



Walking the journey together

Peer support can help you to:

- Feel more confident supporting your child with orthotics.
- Understand your child's experience, including comfort, body image, and confidence.
- Manage worries about your child's development, mobility, and future.
- Support your child through adjustment to wearing orthotic devices.
- Navigate appointments, changes, and expectations over time.
- Encourage your child's participation in school, play, and community life.

What are the benefits?

Parents who access peer support often report:

- Feeling less alone.
- Greater confidence in decision-making.
- Better understanding of what to expect.
- More connection with other families.
- Increased ability to support their child's wellbeing and independence.
- Feeling more comfortable asking for help when needed.

What do peer support volunteers do?

Peer support volunteers:

- Provide informal, parent-to-parent support.
- Share their own experiences of raising a child with cerebral palsy, scoliosis and orthotic use.
- Talk through challenges, questions, or concerns.

- Encourage you to seek support when needed.
- Help you connect with other useful services.

Note: Peer support volunteers are not counsellors or clinicians.

Who is a peer support volunteer?

Our peer supporters are parents who:

- Have experience raising a child with cerebral palsy and scoliosis.
- Have been selected for their ability to support others.
- Have completed training in peer support and privacy.
- Have undergone Ministry of Justice vetting.

How does peer support happen?

Support is flexible and based on what works for you. It may include:

- Meeting in a public place (e.g. café or clinic).
- Phone calls.
- Online or video conversations.



For more helpful resources, please visit our website: www.pw.co.nz/resources.

How do I access peer support?

To get started, register your details at:

www.peersupport.nz.

We'll use this information to match you with a suitable peer supporter.

They will then contact you directly.

He waka eke noa

We are all on this journey together. We work together, we aspire and achieve together.

Together we encourage and inspire each other.
Together we can raise each other up.

Contacts

Peer Support Service

☎ 0508 733 778

✉ info@peersupport.nz

Cerebral Palsy Society of New Zealand

💻 www.cerebralpalsy.org.nz

Self help information

Citizens Advice Bureau

💻 www.cab.org.nz

Work and Income – health and disability related benefits

💻 www.tinyurl.com/disabilityB

Learn more about Peke Waihanga

💻 www.pw.co.nz

www.orthoticservice.co.nz

💻 www.peersupport.nz

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June 2026, V1.0

Peke Waihanga Peer Support Service

The Peer Support Service for orthotics is brought to you by Peke Waihanga in collaboration with the Cerebral Palsy Society of New Zealand.