

Early Days: your baby & you





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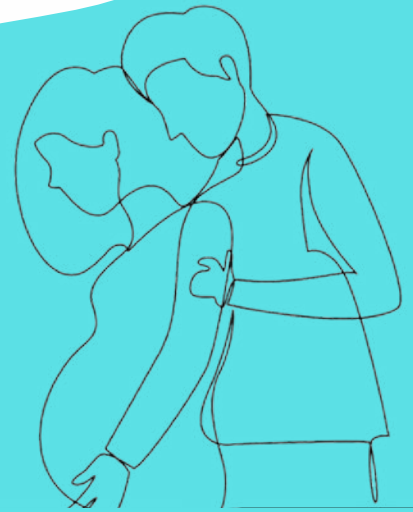
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Pregnant?

Come along to the Bump, Birth and Baby Stuff antenatal course

- All sessions are free
- Courses are available on-line or in person

Various dates throughout the year



Bedfordshire and Luton adult and children's community health services are provided in partnership by East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT) and Cambridgeshire Community Services (CCS) NHS Trust



Bump, Birth and Baby Stuff

To book onto a session please scan your local QR code below

Bedford Borough



Sandy, Biggleswade
Flitwick, Stotfold



Leighton Buzzard, Dunstable
& Houghton Regis



Luton



For lots more information to support you during your pregnancy scan the QR code.



Pregnant? Need a Refresher?

...come along to the Bump, Birth and Baby Stuff antenatal course

Are you preparing to welcome a subsequent baby into your family? Come along and refresh your knowledge of labour, feeding and caring for your baby and prepare for the changing needs of your growing family.

All sessions are free.

Plan to begin the course after you reach 32 weeks pregnant.



Various dates throughout the year.

Book online

Bedford Borough



Sandy,
Biggleswade,
Flitwick, Stotfold,
Shefford



Leighton Buzzard,
Dunstable and
Houghton Regis



bit.ly/CCSnhs

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EARLY DAYS CARE

Your baby and you

Building a relationship with your baby starts the moment you become pregnant.

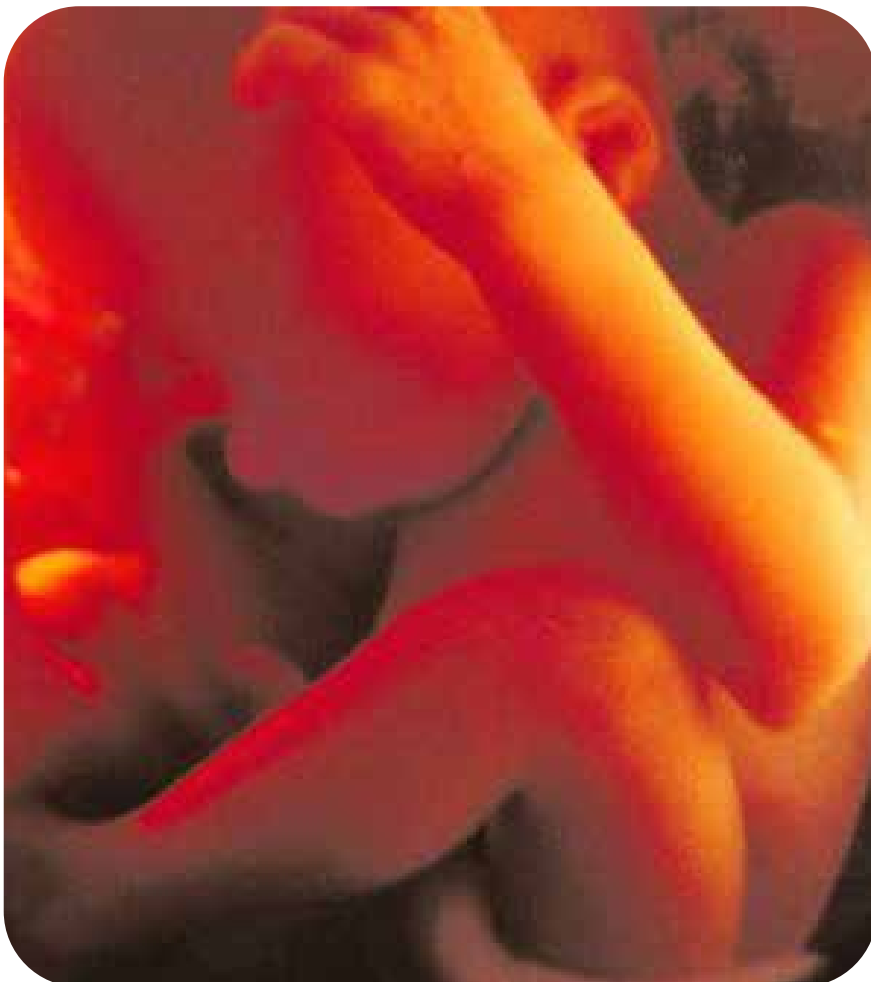
By 20 weeks your baby is more aware of some of the noises outside the womb, has eyelashes, eyebrows and fingernails. Your baby is also becoming more active.

By 24 weeks your baby has taste buds, fingerprints and footprints, can hear parents' voices, is startled by loud noises.

By 28 weeks your baby can open their eyes, sense light and dark and is beginning to make breathing type movements.

By 29-32 weeks your baby is making sucking movements.

By 36-37 weeks the sucking reflex is developing and the digestive system is prepared to deal with breast milk.



Making the connections

Talk to your baby and be aware of how they are growing. Take time out of every day to stroke your bump and think about your baby. Notice the times when your baby moves and the changes when you talk, sing, stroke or touch your bump. All these will help you understand and get to know your baby.

Get your partner and other family members to share in this, to start building their relationships with the baby as well. Building these relationships while you are pregnant will help with your baby's brain development, and you will be able to continue growing and building relationships together after baby is born.

Your baby's amazing brain

Your baby's brain starts to grow and develop in pregnancy. When you talk and sing to them they will begin to feel relaxed and calm as they learn to recognise your voice.

Communicating with your baby in utero helps them to develop vital skills in preparation for when they are born.



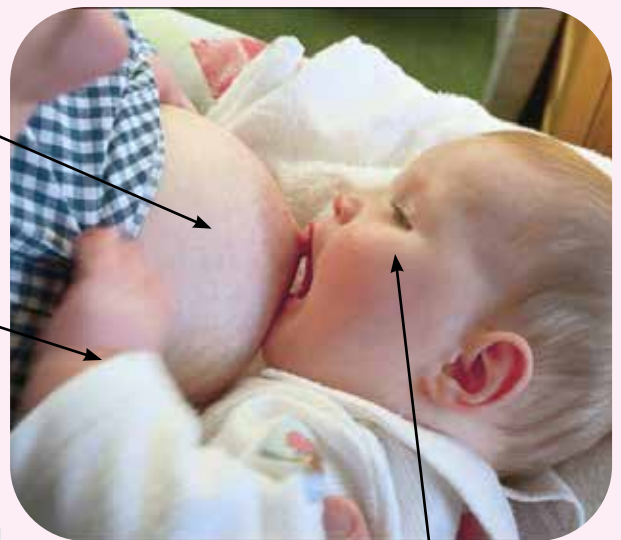
After birth you will be able to support your baby's brain development by providing comfort, closeness and food, and by responding to their needs. Doing these things will make them feel secure, loved and safe.



Some examples of the sensations that wire the brain

Smells
milk

Touch



Take time to
relax

Eye
contact



Encourage partners
and family to sing
to your baby

Meeting baby for the first time



SKIN TO SKIN TIME

REGULATES TEMPERATURE

TRIGGERS HORMONAL RELEASE

STIMULATES FEEDING BEHAVIOUR

CALMS & RELAXES MOTHER & BABY

REGULATES HEART BEAT & BREATHING

MICROBIOME - TRIGGERS IMMUNE SYSTEM

Baby's Instinctive Behaviour

Birth

Cry

Relaxation

Awakening

Crawling

Resting

Familiarisation

Suckling

Sleeping

After your baby is born, you should be supported, when possible, to hold your baby in skin to skin contact for at least the first hour after birth (The Magic Hour) or until baby has had their first feed. This will calm and keep baby warm, and give you the chance to rest. Your baby will go through their initial instinctive behaviours (pre-feeding behaviour).

Remember: skin to skin contact is for all babies. You can breastfeed your baby in skin to skin contact, and if you are not breastfeeding you can bottle feed your baby while holding them skin to skin. If you are not available because you are unwell, then skin to skin with your birth partner, or other family member, is very important so that your baby feels calm, warm and safe.

Things to do to comfort and respond to your baby



- Keep baby close
- Frequent skin to skin contact
- Carry baby in a sling
- Pick up and soothe if baby cries
- Smile, talk and sing to your baby
- Take time to pause and listen for baby to copy you
- Feed baby promptly, as often and for as long as they require

The Power of Oxytocin

Every time you cuddle your baby, touch and hold them, listen and talk calmly with them, and feed them promptly, they have a surge of **OXYTOCIN**, a **hormone** which helps their brain to grow. Research shows that responding to your baby's needs will help them grow into a secure and confident toddler and child, who is better able to deal with being away from their parents temporarily, rather than becoming clingy. This may also make it less stressful for you when the time comes for you to be apart.

OXYTOCIN is a feel-good hormone which is released in you and your baby when you cuddle, talk or hold baby in skin to skin contact. You will not "spoil" a baby by giving them your attention. Leaving them to cry is stressful for both of you and may affect their health and development.

New babies have a strong need to be close to their parents as this helps them feel loved and secure.

Having a new baby can be a challenge. Responding to your baby helps you understand their needs. As your baby grows and you begin to know each other better, you become the expert in their care. You, as parents, and other close family and friends, become the people your baby most loves to spend time with. You are the most important carers, teachers and role models your baby will have. Despite the pressure to buy expensive equipment and toys, it's really not necessary. What matters most to your baby and their future development is having parents who love and care for them.



Responsive breastfeeding

“Breastfeeding provides food, comfort and protection”

Breastfeeding is a skill that takes time to learn. Lots of parents wonder if their baby is feeding well and getting enough - especially in the first few days. But once you've mastered it, you'll probably find it's the easiest and most satisfying way to feed your baby.

Breast milk is tailor-made for your baby, contains vitamins and minerals and is always available, it also offers protection from certain infections and helps improve your baby's long-term health.

Breastfeeding reduces the risk of obesity, childhood diabetes and leukaemia for baby, and reduces the risk of breast and ovarian cancer for mum.



To get breastfeeding off to a good start:

- Keep your baby close so that you start to recognise their signals, for example hunger, cuddle, nappy change, tired. Responding to these signals helps make baby feel secure.
- Being responsive to baby and picking them up when they cry are very important, and will help you both to build a close and loving relationship.
- Spending time cuddling and keeping baby close in skin to skin contact allows baby to hear your heartbeat, which is a comfort for them. Skin to skin contact also helps your body to start milk production.
- Breastfed babies cannot be overfed; putting your baby to the breast frequently is a way of spending time together or having a rest whenever either of you wants.
- Waking for breastfeeds during the night is normal, and very important for milk supply and comforting baby.
- Offering a breastfeed when when baby is distressed, fractious or appears lonely provides them with reassurance. Breastfeeding can help settle baby after an immunisation, if baby is unwell or to reassure them in an unfamiliar environment.
- Try to avoid limiting feeds to fit into a routine as this can threaten your milk supply, and reduces the chances of successful ongoing breastfeeding.
- If possible, avoid using a dummy until you and your baby are happy with breastfeeding (usually after your baby is at least one month old). This is because it may interfere with learning how to properly latch on, and if your baby has a dummy in between feeds this may reduce how frequently they want to feed, meaning they don't get as much milk as they should.

Seek support at our local Brasseries/Breastfeeding Cafes or call the Health Hub if you have any questions: <https://www.bedslutonchildrenshealth.nhs.uk/baby-friendly>

The Breastfeeding Friend, a digital tool from Start for Life, has lots of useful information and expert advice to share with you: www.nhs.uk/start4life/baby/feeding-your-baby/breastfeeding/



Mythbusting



MYTH

Babies become spoilt and demanding if they are given too much attention.



REALITY

When babies' needs for love and comfort are met, they will be calmer and grow up to be more confident.



MYTH

You should leave babies to settle alone so that they learn to be independent.



REALITY

When babies are routinely left alone, they think they have been abandoned and so become more clingy and insecure when their parents return.



MYTH

It's important to get babies into a routine, as this makes your life easier.



REALITY

Young babies are not capable of learning a routine. Responding to their cues for feeding and comfort makes babies feel secure, so they cry less, which makes your life easier too.



MYTH

Babies benefit from lots of toys to help them learn.



REALITY

Looking at your face is the best way for babies to learn. Talking, listening and smiling triggers oxytocin and helps your baby's brain to grow.

Expressing Breastmilk

Expressing milk means taking milk out of your breast by hand or using a pump. There are various reasons you may want to express milk such as:

- If your baby is premature - you may not be able to breastfeed straight after birth, but they can have your expressed breast milk.
- To boost your milk supply.
- If your breasts feel uncomfortably full and baby is struggling to latch.
- You are returning to work or study.

The NHS Start4Life pages provide lots of helpful information and advice on how to get breastfeeding off to a good start.

www.nhs.uk/start4life/baby/feeding-your-baby/breastfeeding/expressing-your-breast-milk/expressing-breast-milk

If you have any worries or concerns, the best thing to do is speak to your health visitor or call the Health Hub: 0300 555 0606.



Responsive bottle feeding

The NHS Start4Life pages provide lots of helpful information and advice on bottle feeding. If you have any worries or concerns, the best thing to do is speak to your midwife or health visitor.

Visit: www.nhs.uk/start4life/baby/feeding-your-baby/bottle-feeding



Please visit our Antenatal Padlet for:

- Online antenatal classes
- More antenatal information
- Getting to know your baby
- Building a close, loving relationship
- Feeding your baby
- Baby's development
- Information for dads and co-parents
- Support with mental health and wellbeing

And more!



<https://padlet.com/ccscommunications1/antenatal-information-including-getting-to-know-your-baby-ho-9zbvb0ey9in2e4r>

RESPONSIVE BOTTLE FEEDING

The early days with your baby are a great time to get to know and love each other. This can be done by keeping your baby close to you, enjoying skin contact and feeding according to these tips. Babies will feel more secure if most feeds are given by mum and dad, especially in the early weeks, as this will really help you bond with each other.

1

Feed your baby when they show signs of being hungry: look out for cues (moving head and mouth around, sucking on fingers). Crying is the last sign of wanting to feed, so try and feed your baby before they cry (for more details, see the Start4Life Guide to bottle feeding).

2

Hold baby close in a semi-upright position so you can see their face and reassure them by looking into their eyes and talking to them during the feed. Try and alternate the side you hold baby

3

Begin by inviting baby to open their mouth: softly rub the teat against their top lip. Gently insert the teat into baby's mouth, keeping the bottle in a horizontal position (just slightly tipped) to prevent milk from flowing too fast.

4

Watch your baby and follow the cues for when they need a break, these signs will be different from one baby to the next, they may splay their fingers and toes, spill milk out of their mouth, stop sucking, turn their head away or push the bottle away. Gently remove the teat or bring the bottle downwards to cut off the flow of milk

5

Your baby will know how much milk they need. Forcing your baby to finish a feed will be distressing, and can mean your baby is overfed.

WHAT INFANT FORMULA TO CHOOSE

If you are giving your baby infant formula, **FIRST INFANT FORMULA (whey-based)** is the only formula they will need in the first year of life

6

What infant formula should I use? It doesn't matter which brand you use, they are all very similar. It doesn't matter if you choose cows' or goats' milk based formula, but talk to your midwife or health visitor before choosing a soya based formula.

7

What about all the other milks that claim to help hungry babies, prevent colic, wind, reflux or allergies? There is no evidence that most of these "special" milks do any good, and they might not be safe for your baby. Ask your midwife or health visitor if you think your baby might need a different milk.

8

Should I move on to follow-on formula when my baby is six months old? There is no need for follow-on formula. Stick to a first infant formula throughout the first year.

9

How long do I need to use infant formula for? When your baby is one year old, they will be getting more of their energy, vitamins and minerals from food, and full fat cows' milk can be their main milk drink. If you have any concerns, or want to know about other milks, ask your health visitor.

10

Want to know more? A simple, up to date guide on infant milks can be downloaded at firststepsnutrition.org Unicef UK provides a guide on different types of infant milks, available for download at babyfriendly.org.uk

Breastfeeding is the healthiest way to feed your baby. If you decide not to breastfeed or to stop breastfeeding, it is possible to restart. Giving infant formula to a breastfed baby will reduce your milk supply. You do not need to eat any special foods while breastfeeding, but it is a good idea for you, just like everyone else, to eat a healthy diet.

Last updated: May 2019



Your new baby's tummy is tiny; about the size of a marble



This is because the first milk you make (colostrum) comes in very small quantities. All a baby needs is small and frequent feeds. The amount will gradually increase over the first few days and weeks. Colostrum is important as it contains antibodies to protect your baby from infection. It also has a laxative effect which helps baby clear its gut of the sticky meconium poo and triggers your baby's immune system.

Baby will feed frequently in the first few days and appear hungry

This is your baby sending messages/signals to your breast to make more milk. Around three to four days your milk will “come in”, your breasts will often feel heavy and you may feel very emotional. This is normal and will settle within 24-48 hours, if you continue to feed baby whenever they ask and for as long as they want. Your body will know how much milk to make.

In the first few days your baby may lose some weight. This is normal for all babies. If weight loss is more than expected, your midwife will discuss this with you and help you make a plan to increase effective feeding. It is important that you continue to respond to your baby's need for feeds (this is likely to be at least eight to twelve times in a 24 hour period) and as you make more milk, so baby will regain their weight.

Many babies will have a part of the day, often in the late afternoon or evening, when they show signs of hunger and will not settle other than on the breast for a period of several hours: this is known as cluster feeding.

Cluster feeding in the first few months is part of normal newborn behaviour and is not a sign that you do not have enough milk. In fact, this behaviour is your baby is building your milk supply, as well as using the comfort of the breast to calm after a stimulating day. Cluster feeding is an excellent way of setting up a superb milk supply, tailored to your baby's requirements as they grow and develop.



In the first 4 weeks this is a useful tool to reassure you that your baby is getting enough milk.

If you are not able to tick all these elements please call the Health HUB on 0300 555 0606.

How you and your health visitor can recognise that your baby is feeding well.	
What to look for/ask about?	✓
Your baby has at least 8-12 feeds in 24 hours after baby is 24 hours old.	
Is generally calm and relaxed when feeding and content after most feeds.	
Will generally feed for between 5 and 40 minutes and will come off the breast spontaneously.	
Has a normal skin colour and is alert and waking for feeds (although many babies will be a degree of jaundice in the first couple of weeks, which your midwife and/or health visitor will monitor).	
Has regained birth weight by 3 weeks of age or sooner.	
Your baby's nappies:	
At least 6 wet nappies in 24 hours from 5 days old. The amount of urine passed increases with age.	
At least 2 dirty nappies in 24 hours, at least £2 coin size. From day 4-5, stools are yellow and appear runny and loose.	
Your breasts:	
Breasts and nipples are comfortable.	
Nipples are the same shape at the end of the feed as the start.	
How using a dummy/nipple shields/infant formula can impact on breastfeeding.	

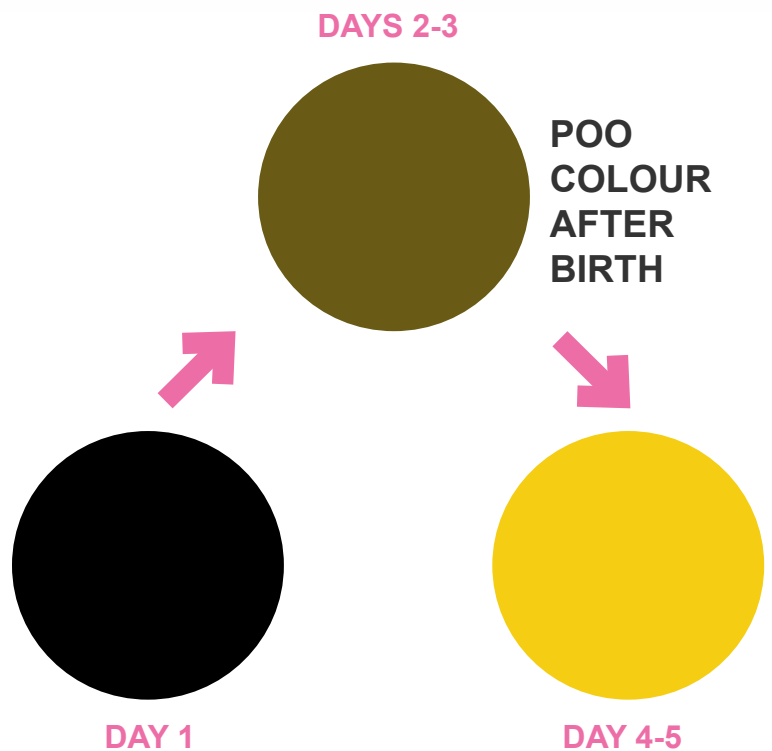


<p>Wet nappies:</p>	
<p>At day 5, to get an idea of how this feels, take a nappy and add 2-4 tablespoons of water as this will help you know what to expect.</p>	
<p>Stools/dirty nappies:</p>	
<p>By day 5 babies should pass frequent, soft, runny, yellow stools every day with 2 stools being the minimum you would expect.</p>	
<p>After 4-6 weeks, when breastfeeding is more established, this may change with some babies going a few days or more without stooling. Breastfed babies are never constipated and when they do pass a stool it will still be soft, yellow and abundant.</p>	
<p>Feed frequency:</p>	
<p>Young babies will feed often and the pattern and number of feeds will vary from day to day. Being responsive to your baby's need to breastfeed for food, drink, comfort and security will ensure you have a good milk supply and a secure happy baby.</p>	

Baby's poos

In the first few days after birth your baby will pass meconium. This is a black, sticky, tar-like substance. As milk passes through their digestive system their nappies will become wetter and their poo will gradually transition from black, through dark green, to yellow. By days four to five your baby should be passing at least two soft yellow poos (the size of a £2 coin) and six heavy wet nappies every day. This pattern should continue up until around four to six weeks.

After 4-6 weeks SOME exclusively breastfed babies may go several days without a poo. This pattern can be normal as long as baby is still feeding regularly, having plenty of wet nappies, is gaining weight, is not distressed, and the poo is soft and abundant.



At different points in their development your baby will ask for more milk as well as wish to be at the breast for closeness and comfort. These periods are sometimes known as developmental leaps and for many babies they occur at around 3 weeks, 6 weeks and 12 weeks, although timings can vary, especially for babies born early. Following your baby's lead during these times will provide your baby with what they need as well as tailoring your milk supply.

Please note that giving formula at this time will interfere with the 'supply and demand' process of breastmilk production.

Please contact the Health Visiting team via the Health HUB on **0300 555 0606** for continued support.



Baby Feeding Cues (signs)

EARLY CUES - "I'm hungry"



- Stirring



- Mouth opening



- Turning head
- Seeking/rooting

MID CUES - "I'm really hungry"



- Stretching



- Increasing physical movement



- Hand to mouth

LATE CUES - "Calm me, then feed me"



- Crying



- Agitated body movements



- Colour turning red

Time to calm crying baby

- Cuddling
- Skin to Skin on chest
- Talking
- Stroking



Sharing a bed with your baby

Bringing your baby into your bed means that you will be able to breastfeed in comfort. However, if you do decide to share a bed with your baby there are some very important points to consider:

- If anyone in the bed has been smoking, drinking alcohol or taking drugs (prescription or illegal), do NOT bedshare as this increases the risk of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome).
- The mattress you sleep on needs to be firm.
- Keep pillows away from baby.
- Make sure baby cannot fall out of bed or become entrapped between the mattress and the wall.
- Make sure bedclothes do not cover baby's face or head.
- Do not leave baby alone in the bed (even young babies can wriggle into dangerous positions).
- Never sleep on the sofa with your baby.

www.lullabytrust.org.uk/safer-sleep-advice/co-sleeping



**“Night-time
breastfeeds
make more
milk”**

© Rob Mank Photography

Information adapted from Unicef “Caring for Your Baby at Night” leaflet - acknowledged with thanks.

<https://www.bedslutonchildrenshealth.nhs.uk/baby-friendly>

Caring for your baby at sleep times

Caring for your baby day and night (Safe Sleeping)

The safest place for your baby to sleep is in a cot, crib or Moses basket in the same room as you during the day, or next to your bed at night for the first six months.

Night time feeds are easier if:

- your baby is in the same room as you
- you learn to breastfeed lying down



Always put your baby on their back (also known as the supine position) for every sleep, day and night. This significantly reduces the risk of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome).

Place them with their feet at the base of the cot/crib so that they cannot wriggle down under any sheets or blankets.

The cot should be kept clear of any items such as bumpers, soft toys and loose bedding. These all increase the risk of suffocation.



- No pillows or duvets
- No cot bumpers
- No soft toys
- No loose bedding
- No products (such as wedges or straps) that will keep your baby in one sleeping position.



Some of the information on this page is taken from the LullabyTrust website.

For further information about safer sleep - please visit:
www.lullabytrust.org.uk/safer-sleep-advice



Starting Solids

When to start?

Starting solids is an important time for influencing a child's taste preferences and developing healthy behaviours. A baby is ready to start solid food at around six months. Before this time baby may not be developmentally ready.

There are three signs that a baby is developmentally ready to start solids.

1. They are able to sit unsupported and hold their head steady.
2. They can coordinate their eyes, hand and mouth so that they can look at the food, pick it up and put it in their mouth all by themselves.
3. They are able to swallow food - babies who are not ready will push the food back out so they get more round their face than they do in their mouths.

What to start with?

- **Offer** a variety of unprocessed foods.
- **Start** with soft mashed foods and finger foods. There is no need to puree foods.
- **Include** iron rich food for example pulses (beans, lentils and chickpeas), meat and poultry, fish, dark green vegetables, eggs and fortified cereals.
- **Avoid** foods containing salt or sugar. It is important not to give babies foods and drinks high in salt or sugar. High sugar foods are particularly bad for babies teeth and will give baby a taste for high sugar foods later in life.
- **Milk** remains the main source of nutrition for the first year of life.



- **Offer** small amounts of food to start.
- **Listen** to baby. Be led by your baby and never force feed or push them. Don't be concerned if they do not seem interested.
- **Stay Calm.** Babies will pick up on any anxiety. Make it a fun event allowing exploration through messy play.

For further information about starting solids and healthy start vitamins - visit the childrens centres websites below, or scan the relevant QR code:

Beds Borough:

<https://familyhubs.bedford.gov.uk/keeping-healthy/food-feeding>



Central Bedfordshire:

<https://cbc.cloud.servelec-synergy.com//SynergyFIS/Childrenscentres.aspx>



Luton:

www.flyingstartluton.com/baby/feeding-and-nutrition



Healthy Start

If you are pregnant or have children under four and are on benefits, or if you are pregnant and under the age of 18, you could qualify for Healthy Start.

With Healthy Start you will receive a prepaid card which is automatically topped up once a month. This money can be spent on:

- Cow's milk – whole, semi-skimmed or skimmed. It can be pasteurised, sterilised, long life or UHT,
- Plain fresh or frozen fruit and veg (fruit and vegetables with no added ingredients), whole or chopped, packaged or loose,
- Infant formula milk that says it can be used from birth and is based on cow's milk.



Ask your health visitor or midwife for details or visit: www.healthystart.nhs.uk

Healthy Start Vitamins

Vitamins are recommended for all pregnant and breastfeeding women and children from birth until 5 years of age (for children who are having 500ml or more of formula a day these vitamins are not needed).

Vitamins are essential nutrients that your body needs in small amounts so that it can work properly. Even though you can get lots of vitamins from a healthy balanced diet, you still might not get everything you need at certain times in your life – such as when you're pregnant, a new mum or a small child. It is recommended that at these times you should take a supplement containing specific vitamins to make sure you get everything you need.

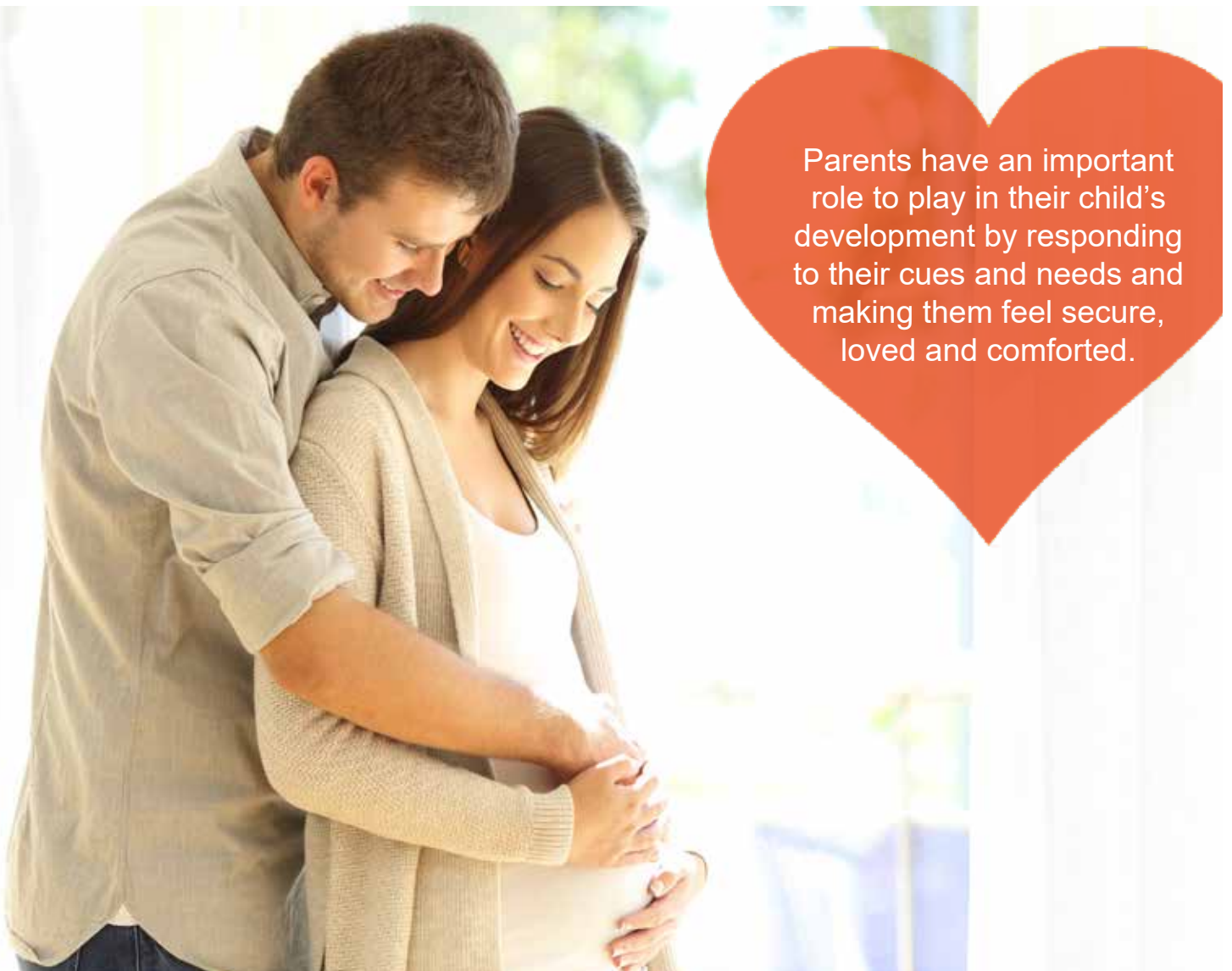
Ask your midwife or Health Visitor, or ring the Health HUB on 0300 555 0606, to find out how to get them in your area.

You can also scan the QR code here:



Parent's role in child development

- Take time to getting to know your baby - this makes them feel safe and get to know the world around them.
- Babies are not able to manage their feelings of upset and distress so are reliant on their parents to sooth and calm them by holding, rocking and cuddling.
- Parents cannot spoil their babies by too many cuddles or too much skin to skin.
- Parents can influence and support their baby's brain development by singing, reading and playing, both before they are born and afterwards.
- Having fun and noticing everything they do releases a cocktail of hormones in both parent and baby, which helps with bonding, and with attachment and the development of baby's brain.



Parents have an important role to play in their child's development by responding to their cues and needs and making them feel secure, loved and comforted.

Five to Thrive

Your baby's brain grows better when you.....



Read to your baby regularly, even when they are very young, and use as many rhymes, poems or songs as you can. Simple rhymes and rhythms will hold their attention.

- Provide a running commentary on your own life. Tell your baby about colours, count the steps you climb or the socks and towels as you do the washing.
- As children get older, word play and jokes help develop verbal skills and social awareness.

Follow your child's lead – if you join in their game, you are telling them that their ideas and decisions are important.

- Try to ensure you spend some time outside every day.
- Explore shapes, colours and textures with your child. You could look at picture books together, or make simple toys and pictures with pens, paper, fabric, etc.

Try to end exciting play or activity sessions with a wind-down time in which you and your child can enjoy a few moments of calm.

- Try to have some time when you are just focused on the experience of being with your child, not on things you need to get done, or on people or events that have made you upset or angry.
- Try to relax into being a parent: the experience may be unfamiliar or even scary but following your baby's lead and your own instincts to care and comfort them will enable you to learn on the job.

Cuddle your baby as often as you like – babies can't have too much contact.

- Respect the space of infants as they grow older. There may be times when they don't want a cuddle but you should try to find other ways to provide reassuring contact.
- Toddlers love giving as well as receiving all these different types of physical contact.

Try to work out what your baby's crying means and meet their basic needs - warmth and comfort, food, a clean nappy, sleep.

- Pass your baby objects they are interested in (if they are safe).
- Older children need to practice sorting things out for themselves, so wait and see can be a good first response.

Understanding your mental health and emotional wellbeing when becoming a parent

- Everyone says how amazing becoming a parent is, but they often forget to mention how much like hard work it can feel sometimes.
- Becoming a new parent can be stressful especially in the first few months. You are not alone - all new parents are in the same boat.
- You do not have to do everything on your own, use your support network to ask for help.
- Parenting means facing new challenges and experiences, you will become more confident each day - be kind to yourself.
- It is vital that parents talk to each other. Try to tell each other how you feel so that you can support each other better. Parents have a crucial role in the healthy development of a baby, but it is not always easy, so please seek support and don't bottle up your feelings.
- Being a parent takes lots of energy - give yourself a head start by eating well and exercising.
- Grab sleep whenever you can - nap when baby sleeps.



Perinatal Mental Health

A 'perinatal' mental health problem is one that you experience any time from becoming pregnant up to a year after you give birth, even if you have never experienced this before.

Having a baby is a big life event. It's natural to experience a range of emotions during pregnancy and after giving birth. But if any difficult feelings start to have a big effect on your day-to-day life, the way you think, feel or function, you might be experiencing a perinatal mental health problem.

This may be a new mental health problem, or an episode of a problem you've experienced in the past; please speak to your Community Midwife (you can find the contact number in your pregnancy notes) who can refer you to specialist mental health team or your Health Visiting team to support you and your family and ensure that you get the right level of services to meet your needs. They will talk with you openly about your mental and emotional health and offer supportive advice and interventions where needed.

However you are feeling, you are not the only one so please share.



NHS National Support

If you need to speak to someone urgently you can call NHS 111 and choose option 2.

Other sources of urgent mental health support can be found here:

www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/mental-health-services/where-to-get-urgent-help-for-mental-health



NHS Local Support

The Bedfordshire and Luton Perinatal Mental Health Team provides specialist care for people with mental health problems who are pregnant or in the first post-partum year, or who are considering pregnancy.

You can speak to your GP, midwife, Health Visitor or other healthcare professional to ask for a referral, or self-refer by calling 01234 290130.

www.elft.nhs.uk/perinatal/where-we-work/bedfordshire-and-luton



Bedfordshire Wellbeing Service

Bedfordshire Wellbeing Service deliver therapy digitally so you can get the help you need now. You can self-refer via the website, or call on 01234 880 400.

www.bedfordshirewellbeingservice.nhs.uk



MIND

Mind are a mental health charity who provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. Their Infoline (0300 123 3393) provides an information and signposting service 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday (except for bank holidays). www.mind.org.uk



PANDAS

PANDAS is a community offering peer-to-peer support for you, your family and your network via telephone, text, social media, email and support groups. Their FREE Helpline (0808 1961 776) is available from 11am-10pm every day, with a dedicated volunteer team who can offer support and advice, and can help to direct you to other organisations, if necessary. www.pandasfoundation.org.uk



Samaritans

Samaritans are there for anyone who's struggling to cope, who needs someone to listen without judgement or pressure. You can call them on 116 123 any time of the day or night, and if you call the number will not come up on your phone bill. They also offer support via email, post or in person at one of their branches. www.samaritans.org



Breastfeeding Network Drug Facts Sheet

The Breastfeeding Network Drug Facts Sheets give parents information on a range of topics including antidepressants and anxiety medication whilst breastfeeding.

www.medicinesinpregnancy.org



Child Adolescent Mental Health Service

CAMHS service focuses on supporting parent-infant relationships. This helps grow family bonds, increase parents/ carers understanding of their children, increase parent/carers confidence and skills in parenting, and helps children and families to have healthy and secure relationships.

www.eft.nhs.uk/services/camhs-south-bedfordshire-and-luton



Total Wellbeing Luton

Total Wellbeing supports people living in Luton who want to improve their physical and emotional health. You can call them on 03005554152 or email info@totalwellbeingluton.org.uk www.totalwellbeingluton.org



Bedford Borough Family Hubs

Bedford Borough Family Hubs have a wealth of information to help support your mental health <https://familyhubs.bedford.gov.uk/keeping-healthy/healthy-mind>



Luton Family Hubs

At Luton Family Hubs there is a lot of useful information and advice to help and support you with your mental health and wellbeing <https://familyhubs.luton.gov.uk/>



DadPad

DadPad is for fathers who want to provide their child with the very best start in life, whether you are about to become a parent for the first time, or want to ensure that you can still cover all bases with a new addition to your family during pregnancy, around birth and beyond. It can provide useful guidance during pregnancy and for fathers of babies and children up to the age of two. It's particularly useful to have during paternity leave.

Developed in conjunction with the NHS, the DadPad will:

- Help you develop the necessary mindset and practical skills, even if you have no experience.
- Save you time by enabling you to quickly get to grips with your new responsibilities.
- Reduce your anxiety and help you gain confidence, so that you can offer the help needed.
- Give you the tools to provide the best support for your baby and your baby's mum.



dadpaduk



Information for this section is taken from DadPad: www.thedadpad.co.uk



Children's Centres & Family Hubs

Children's Centres offer a range of services to meet your child's needs all in one place. Whether you are a parent, grandparent, other family member or carer, your local Children's Centre provides a range of services from pregnancy to five years in a fun, family friendly and safe environment.

They aim to provide:

- child and family health services including antenatal, postnatal and breastfeeding, advice on parenting and parenting programmes
- information and advice to parents on childcare, early years provision and 2-year-old funded places
- early education and school readiness, early communication support e.g speech and language drop-in
- outreach and family support services including home visits
- a variety of drop-in sessions

For more info check your local centre's calendar of events.



Central Bedfordshire:

<https://cbc.cloud.servelec-synergy.com//SynergyFIS/Childrenscentres.aspx>

Sandy and Biggleswade Children's Centre, Laburnham Road, Sandy, Beds SG19 1HQ	Shefford Children's Centre Shefford Lower School, School Lane, Shefford, Beds SG17 5XA	Stotfold Children's Centre St Marys Church of England Academy, Rook Tree Lane, Stotfold, Beds SG5 4DL
Flitwick Children's Centre Malham Close, Flitwick, Beds MK45 1PU	Leighton Buzzard Children's Centre, East Street, Leighton Buzzard LU7 1EW	Houghton Regis Children's Centre Tithe Farm Lower School, Tithe Farm Road, Houghton Regis LU5 5JB
Houghton Regis Children's Centre Hawthorn Park Lower School, Parkside Drive, Houghton Regis LU5 5QN	Dunstable North Childrens Centre, Westfield Road, Dunstable, Beds LU6 1DW	Dunstable South Children's Centre, Downside Neighbourhood Centre, Oakwood Avenue, Dunstable, Beds LU5 4AS

Beds Borough:

<https://familyhubs.bedford.gov.uk/contact-us>



Kingsbrook Children's Centre Stephenson Lower School Canvin Way, Bedford MK42 0HL	Queens Park Family Hub Marlborough Road MK40 4LE	Pine Cones Family Hub Slade Walk MK41 7SA
Eastcotts Children's Centre 65 Beauvais Square, Shortstown, Bedford MK42 0GG	Goldington Children's Centre 30 Meadway Bedford MK41 9HU	Peter Pan Children's Centre Edward Road, Bedford MK42 9DR
Lakeview Village Hall Brooklands Avenue, Wixams MK42 6AB	Daisy Hill Children's Centre Bedford Road Lower School Hillgrounds Road, Kempston MK42 8QH	Cherry Trees Children's Centre Hawkins Road, Bedford MK42 8NR

Family Hubs

Family Hubs available in Bedford Borough and Luton will bring together lots of different services for children and families creating a single 'front door' and making it easier for families to get the help they need at the right time. Family Hubs will offer help and support to families from pregnancy up until age 19 (or 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities- SEND) with great Start for Life services at their core, covering the critical 1,001 days from conception to age two

Family Hubs will provide a welcoming and inclusive route into services, either online or face to face, removing the need to explain more than once, to multiple people, what support you need.



Flying Start delivers services for families in Luton in the antenatal period and the early years. It is led by the Early Years Alliance who work in partnership with health agencies, schools, community and faith groups and others, including Luton Council. Collectively we support children to have a flying start in life. Flying Start is a key building block of the Family Hub programme in Luton and services are offered by Flying Start through a range of delivery sites and outreach.

They provide a range of services for families to meet other families, support your role as a parent and support your baby's development.

To see what services are available for you and your baby to access in Bedford Borough please visit the website:

To see what services are available for you and your baby to access please visit the websites and download the Family Hubs app for information and support:

<https://familyhubs.luton.gov.uk/>
www.flyingstartluton.com

<https://familyhubs.bedford.gov.uk/>



Phone: 01582 368245
Email: familyhubs@luton.gov.uk
flyingstart@eyalliance.org.uk



Phone: 0300 323 0245
Email: familyhubs@bedford.gov.uk

Facebook: @FSLuton
Twitter: @FS_Luton
Instagram: @flyingstartluton

Luton

Bedford

Park Town Family Hub
Flying Start Centre
Luton LU1 3DU

Hockwell Family Hub
Hockwell Community Centre
Mayne Avenue, Luton LU4 9LB

Pine Cones Family Hub
Slade Walk, Off Clapham Road,
Bedford MK41 7SA

Flying Start Family Hub
Pastures Way Nursery School
Pastures Way, Luton LU4 0PE

Flying Start Family Hub
Foxcubs Nursery
30a Runley Road, Luton LU1 1TZ

Queens Park Family Hub
Marlborough Road, Queens Park
Bedford MK40 4LE

The Baby Check App - The Lullaby Trust



The Lullaby Trust has a Baby Check app which features 19 simple checks that parents can do if their baby is showing signs of illness.

Each check tests for a different symptom and when completed, a score is calculated that tells parents or carers how ill their child is.

It can provide useful guidance during pregnancy and for parents of babies and children up to the age of two.

Visit: www.lullabytrust.org.uk/safer-sleep-advice/baby-check-app



Slings and Babywearing

Wearing and carrying your baby in a wrap or sling is a wonderful way to keep them close and support the development of their brain and body. It creates an environment of warmth, safety and containment and has many positive effects.

It is important to make sure you are wearing your baby safely and following the TICKS principles shown here.



For more information about why carrying your baby matters please visit www.carryingmatters.co.uk

If you live in Bedford Borough, you can book onto the NCT sling library sessions at Bedford Borough Family Hubs by scanning the QR code to the right.



The T.I.C.K.S. Rule for Safe Babywearing

Keep your baby close and keep your baby safe.

When you're wearing a sling or carrier, don't forget the T.I.C.K.S.



- ✓ TIGHT
- ✓ IN VIEW AT ALL TIMES
- ✓ CLOSE ENOUGH TO KISS
- ✓ KEEP CHIN OFF THE CHEST
- ✓ SUPPORTED BACK



TIGHT – slings and carriers should be tight enough to hug your baby close to you as this will be most comfortable for you both. Any slack/loose fabric will allow your baby to slump down in the carrier which can hinder their breathing and pull on your back.



IN VIEW AT ALL TIMES – you should always be able to see your baby's face by simply glancing down. The fabric of a sling or carrier should not close around them so you have to open it to check on them. In a cradle position your baby should face upwards not be turned in towards your body.



CLOSE ENOUGH TO KISS – your baby's head should be as close to your chin as is comfortable. By tipping your head forward you should be able to kiss your baby on the head or forehead.



KEEP CHIN OFF THE CHEST – a baby should never be curled so their chin is forced onto their chest as this can restrict their breathing. Ensure there is always a space of at least a finger width under your baby's chin.



SUPPORTED BACK – in an upright carry a baby should be held comfortably close to the wearer so their back is supported in its natural position and their tummy and chest are against you. If a sling is too loose they can slump which can partially close their airway. (This can be tested by placing a hand on your baby's back and pressing gently – they should not curl or move closer to you.) A baby in a cradle carry in a pouch or ring sling should be positioned carefully with their bottom in the deepest part so the sling does not fold them in half pressing their chin to their chest.

TICKS used with permission of the UK Sling Consortium

Free Online Courses for Residents of Luton

Luton has partnered with the Solihull Approach to sponsor FREE online courses developed by psychologists and professionals.



These courses are designed to help you understand from pregnancy through to baby being born and beyond, as well as offering a chance to focus on your own feelings as you go through the various stages of becoming a parent.



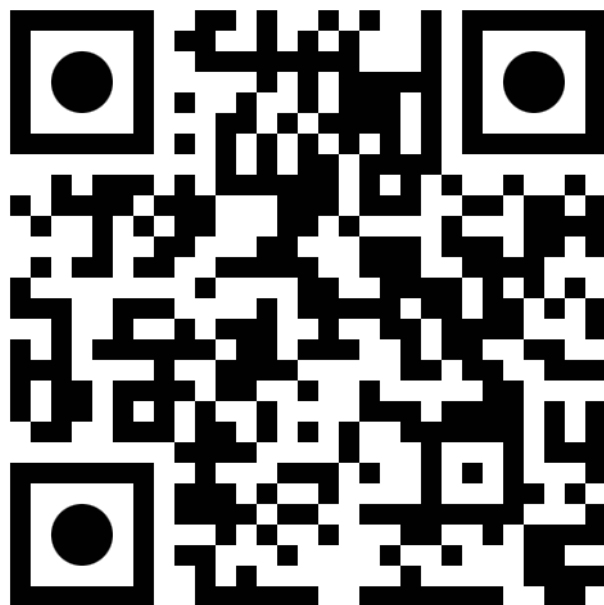
You will also learn to understand the changes in your baby's development as well as changes in your relationships as you embark on your parenting journey.

We wholeheartedly recommend these courses – they are for everyone, for everyday parenting. They don't tell you how to parent, that's up to you. Instead, they give you a framework for understanding what might be going on and space to think about how you want to respond up to and including the teenage years.

How to gain Access:

1. Visit inourplace.co.uk or scan the QR code on this page
2. 'Apply Access Code'
3. Enter (copy and paste) this Access Code: HATTERS
4. Fill in your information and continue.

Once registered, you can revisit the courses as many times as you like for as long as you like.



Support for Families in Bedford Borough



The Family Hubs and Children's Centres offer a whole range of free drop-in sessions and bookable classes and courses where you can find help and advice from our trained practitioners as well as meet other parents. Use any of the methods below to find out more or book your place.

Call 0300 323 0245

Email familyhubs@bedford.gov.uk

Find out about the support for you and your family <https://familyhubs.bedford.gov.uk/>

Book a place on our Eventbrite page



There are play and learn sessions and breastfeeding support & social groups on Monday to Friday and Saturday sessions once a month. Our sessions are run using the Five to Thrive approach, which is based on five key activities that are the building blocks of healthy communication and brain development – do ask our practitioners about this. We also offer groups for dads and young parents.



We also run the **Preparing for Baby - Triple P** and **Birth Bumps and Baby Stuff** courses, as well as short **Triple P workshops**, all of which can be booked via our Eventbrite page.

Preparing for Baby - Triple P will help prepare you for becoming a parent and is suitable for parents who are pregnant or in the first 12 months of baby's life. It will support you in developing strategies to build a positive relationship with your child from the start and help prepare you for parenthood. This course runs for 4 weeks at the Family Hubs and Children's Centres or can be completed in your own time online. Call us to find out more or book your place on our Eventbrite page.

Our **Bump, Birth and Baby Stuff** antenatal classes will help you prepare for your new arrival, find out more about birth, caring for you and your baby, and feeding your baby, whether you are first-time parents or as a refresher course. Book your place on our Eventbrite page.

Triple P workshops are short two-hour online sessions aimed at parents of children from 18 months to 5 years, which can support with the following areas:

- Hassle-free shopping
- Good bedtime routines
- Dealing with disobedience
- Managing fighting and aggression
- Hassle-free mealtimes

We can also support you and your family with more bespoke help when needed. For those with under-5s we can offer our Parents as First Teachers course which will help you understand how to support your child's play, child development, parenting behaviours, developmental topics, brain development, family culture and perspectives and family support. We also have an amazing family support team who will listen and find the best way to work through your family's individual needs. Call us to find out more.

For parents with children with additional needs or disabilities we work with the Child Development Centre to offer quiet stay and play sessions. These are aimed at children and families who may find other stay and play sessions too loud or overwhelming, or families who have concerns about their child's learning and development. Run by an Advisory Teacher from the Early Years Support Team and staff from the Children's Centre (term-time only).

Support for families in Bedfordshire & Luton

FreeToFeed

The #FreeToFeed campaign was launched to promote breastfeeding in public places, to support breastfeeding, and to encourage women and their families.

Working with our health visitors and partners in Bedfordshire & Luton supporting women and their children to allow them to be free to feed anytime, anywhere.



#FreeToFeed aims to raise mothers' confidence as well as raising understanding among the public, businesses and venues across the county.

Find out more here: www.bedslutonchildrenshealth.nhs.uk/freetofeed



Every year young babies are severely injured and even killed by parents and care givers who lose control when their crying becomes too much to cope with. In frustration, they shake a baby with devastating consequences.

ICON is all about helping people who care for babies to cope with crying.

ICON stands for:

- I – Infant crying is normal
- C – Comforting methods can help
- O – It's OK to walk away
- N – Never, ever shake a baby



Find out more about ICON here: www.iconcope.org



Find out more about 'All Babies Cry' here:
www.bedslutonchildrenshealth.nhs.uk/allbabiescry

Children's Community
Health HUB



Email: ccs.bedsandlutonchildrenshealthhub@nhs.net

Your one stop
contact point

Tel: 0300 555 0606

tubes OF life

Because Oxygen Matters

What **EVERY** pregnant woman
and new parent **NEEDS** to know...



“Did you know...
when I am born I will
breathe through my **nose**
for the first three to
four months?”

“Did you know...
it is healthy for me to wake up
more often when **breastfed**
as this helps lower my risk of
Sudden Infant Death
Syndrome (SIDS)?”



“Did you know...
soft is not safe
so my cot should be
clear of soft bedding,
sleep aids or toys?”



“Did you know...
my **brain** needs
oxygen to develop
properly, but
smoking takes
my oxygen away?”



Support for families in Luton

Safe at Home



Luton 'Safe at Home' is a child accident prevention service delivered through a local multi-agency partnership led by Flying Start & Bedfordshire Early Years Alliance in association with Public Health and Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service. The scheme provides a FREE service for families in Luton who are pregnant or have young children under the age of five.

They focus on the priority areas of common everyday accidents such as falls, poisoning or burns. Their aim is to help families protect their young children by reducing risks. Their safety advisers provide a trusted source of knowledge, advice and information.

All parents living in Luton with children under five can have a free home safety risk assessment. If you are over 34 weeks pregnant or already have a child/ren under the age of 5 years you can apply via:

www.safeathomecip.org.uk/apply-online or call 07553348485

email: safeathome@eyalliance.org.uk



Keeping Baby Safe Workshop

Safe at Home offer free monthly advice and support workshops to expecting and new parents in Luton, in a small group session. Those who attend and provide feedback receive a FREE child safety gift bag.

You will be offered top tips on how to make informed and safer choices when buying nursery equipment for your baby and learn important techniques on protecting your newborn in the early months of life.

To book or find out more please email safeathome@eyalliance.org.uk with the following information:

- Full name
- Luton Home address
- Email address
- Telephone number
- Expected Due Date (or baby's Date of Birth)

Alternatively call the Flying Start Office: 01582 368245

Healthy Pregnancy Programme



Active Luton offers a Health Pregnancy Programme for pregnant people aged 13 or over with a BMI between 18.5 and 45. The Healthy Pregnancy Programme is here to support you achieve a healthier lifestyle for you and your baby.

Over six to eight sessions, they will provide healthy eating guidance and gentle maternity-appropriate exercise advice – suitable for post birth too! Sessions are delivered by nutritionists and pre-natal exercise instructors to ensure that they give you and your baby a healthy start.

You can self-refer via www.totalwellbeingluton.org or by calling 0300 555 4152.



Find out more about Active Luton's offer for expectant parents here: www.activeluton.co.uk



Obesity and Risk in Pregnancy



Across Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes MoreLife offer help, advice and information on a Maternity and Postnatal programme, via two different health and wellbeing programmes:

- MUMS2B programme for women during pregnancy
This flexible prenatal programme focuses on balanced health behaviours and the prevention of gestational diabetes. Our friendly team will help support you to make balanced and healthy choices around food and exercise.
- 4MUMS programme for women up to 24 months after giving birth.
The focus of this programme is on postnatal weight loss and offers both 1:1 and group support. Partners are welcome to join in with sessions.

These programmes provide a psychologically informed approach and focus on the importance of living healthy lifestyles.

To find out more, visit: www.more-life.co.uk/Bedford



Stop Smoking with Smokefree Bedfordshire & Total Wellbeing Luton

Carbon monoxide is especially risky to pregnant women, babies and children. It is found in cigarette smoke, including breathing in 'second hand' smoke. Inhaling carbon monoxide starves the body of oxygen which is needed for your baby's growth and development in the womb.

Stopping smoking during pregnancy brings immediate health benefits to you and your baby and reduces the risk of:

- complications during pregnancy, labour and birth
- stillbirth
- premature birth and babies being born underweight
- SIDS

You're up to three times more likely to succeed with expert advice and support.

For families in Bedfordshire, Find out more and self-refer via www.thestopsmokingservice.co.uk/smoking-and-pregnancy, or call 0800 013 0553.

For families in Luton, Total Wellbeing are ready when you are.

GET IN TOUCH - start feeling the benefits and stop smoking for good.

Text: QUIT2022 to 60066 Tel: 0300 555 4152 Email: info@totalwellbeingluton.org

Or self refer via www.totalwellbeingluton.org



Help and Support

If you have any questions, please contact the Bedfordshire Health Visiting Team via the **Health HUB** on **0300 555 0606**

or email: ccs.bedsandlutonchildrenshealthhub@nhs.net

www.bedslutonchildrenshealth.nhs.uk/hub



Children's Community
Health HUB



**Your one stop
contact point**

Tel: 0300 555 0606

Email: ccs.bedsandlutonchildrenshealthhub@nhs.net

For more information on how we support children and families scan the QR codes or visit the websites below:

Bedford Borough <https://familyhubs.bedford.gov.uk/>



Central
Bedfordshire

<https://localoffer.bedford.gov.uk/kb5/centralbedfordshire/directory/home.page>

Luton <https://familyhubs.luton.gov.uk/>



Other sources of support

National Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0808 2000 247 (24hrs)

Help and support with feeding and caring for your baby is available from:

National Breastfeeding Helpline: 0300 100 0212

National Childbirth Trust (NCT) Helpline: 0300 330 0700
Website: www.nct.org.uk

Association of Breastfeeding Mothers (ABM) Helpline: 0300 100 0212
Website: www.abm.me.uk

The Breastfeeding Network (BfN) Helpline: 0300 100 0210 (9.30am - 9.30pm)
Website: www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk

La Leche League GB Helpline: 0345 120 2918
Website: www.laleche.org.uk

Local Breastfeeding Counsellors

Visit the NCT, ABM, BfN or LLL website to search for support near you.

Information can also be found on the following websites:

- www.babyfriendly.org.uk
- www.babymilkaction.org
- www.heartsmilkbank.org
- www.human-milk.co.uk
- www.lcgb.org
- www.kellymom.com
- www.bestbeginnings.org.uk
- www.breastfeedingtwinsandtriplets.co.uk
- www.BasisOnline.org.uk
- www.breastfeeding.support
- www.tommys.org/planningforpregnancy
- www.bedfordshirehospitals.nhs.uk/maternity-voices-partnership-mvp/



If you require this information in a different format such as in large print or on audio tape, or in a different language please contact the service on the details above.

To find out how we use what we know about you (Privacy Notice) or how to access our buildings (AccessAble), please visit www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk and follow the links or please contact us.



If you have any compliments about this service or suggestions for improvements, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 0300 131 1000 (charges may apply depending on your network) or email: ccs-tr.pals@nhs.net.

For free, confidential health advice and information 24 hours a day, 365 days a year please contact NHS 111.