

Preparation for Birth and Beyond

You can find out more about our services, team and support available to you by visiting our website:
www.leedscommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk

 To keep up to date with what the 0-19 service are offering and when our service resumes normal face to face contact with families, please sign up to the Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust 0-19 Public Health Integrated Nursing Service Facebook page at:
0-19 Public Health Integrated Nursing Service

Help us get it right

If you have a complaint, concern, comment or compliment please let us know by speaking to a member of our staff. We learn from your feedback and use the information to improve and develop our services.

If you would like to talk to someone outside the service contact the **Patient Experience Team** on **0113 220 8585**, Monday to Friday 9.30am to 4.30pm or email lch.pet@nhs.net

We can provide this information in large print, Braille, audio or other languages on request.



0-19 **Public Health Integrated
Nursing Service**



Preparation for Birth and Beyond (PBB) is a course which is offered to first time parents as you prepare for the arrival of your baby. PBB is usually a six session course delivered to a group of parents over six consecutive weeks.

Usually, parents are supported by the facilitators to explore what they already know and build on this to prepare for the physical and emotional changes that may happen when baby arrives.

During this time of COVID-19, we are unable to offer this course face to face. However, we have prepared this guide to help link you to some resources that we share during our PBB course. All of the information is current evidence-based and has no commercial bias. This short guide has been developed from PBB sessions to help you to discuss and think about the changes that are about to happen as you adventure into parenthood.

We hope that you will enjoy reading this guide together.

Activity 1



Spend some time with your partner, family and friends thinking and talking about your hopes and fears for you, your relationship and your baby. This could be about labour, parenting, feeding or the relationship that you might have with your baby.

Your developing baby

Right now your baby is developing and learning about you even whilst they are growing inside of you.

- Did you know that at 13-20 weeks of pregnancy your baby can hear your voice?
- At 20 weeks your baby can hear music and will start to recognise familiar sounds (like your voices).
- At 22-27 weeks your baby will have taste buds and feel touch (they like it when you stroke your bump).
- At 32 weeks your baby can see and tell light from dark.
- Your developing baby is amazing and it all happens so that your baby will know who you are right from the moment that they are born.

Baby's brain development

Have you read about how your baby's brain is developing?

- Your baby will be born with 200 billion brain cells (neurones) all waiting for connections to be formed.
- Some of these brain connections are formed during pregnancy, but by the time of your baby's 2nd birthday, 80% of the brain connections have formed.
- **What helps build brain connections?**
Before birth nutrition, maternal wellbeing, touch-stroking your bump, and talking to your bump all help. Baby knows that you are there and thinking about him or her.
- After your baby is born, healthy connections are made by looking at your baby, being close to baby, touching, holding and talking to baby; by doing this you will make your baby feel safe and secure. This closeness will help release good hormones and chemicals which help brain pathways form.
- Building good relationships in the early years sets your child up for life, and helps them deal with relationship and emotional changes later on.

- When your baby is new you may not always know what they want. But remember that you and your baby are both learning about each other. You may not know what your baby is trying to tell you but responding to him or her is the most important way to show that you are there and you care.



Activity 2

Think about the experiences you are looking forward to sharing with your baby and how these will help to shape their brain. For example, by holding baby close and talking with baby you will help to make your baby feel safe and secure.

Below is a link to an animation which will help you to understand how a baby's brain develops:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMyDFYskZSU>

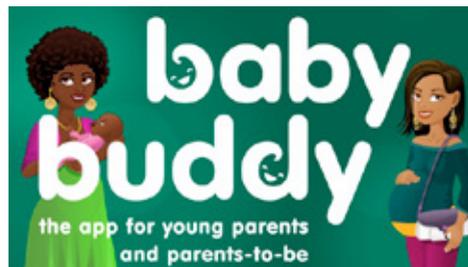
Or search on YouTube:

'How a child's brain develops through early experiences' or 'Brain Builders NSPCC'



Activity 3

You will find lots of really helpful information and videos to support you on the **Baby Buddy app**.



Changes for me and us

Becoming a new parent brings many changes for you as an individual, or as part of a couple, within a family and within your friendship circle.



Activity 4

- Talk with your partner, family and friends about your priorities and what you like to do in life right now; these may include work, socialising, going to the gym. Now think about how your priorities may change once your baby has arrived.
- Ask family or friends their thoughts on their experience of being new parents... what did they enjoy...what do they wish they had known... what helped them...?



Activity 5

Now for a lovely activity that will give you the time to think about your relationship and your developing bond with your baby - create a wish box or keepsake box for your baby.

You will need a box (a shoe box will do) and some craft materials.

Maybe you could write a letter from the baby's perspective to add to your wish box. You may include things like:

'I get excited when I hear Daddy's voice and I like to move around and kick more.'

'I love it when Mummy places her hand on me when I kick her, it reassures me that she knows I'm here.'

Giving birth and meeting our baby

Activity 6

Please read this together with your partner

Imagine you are in the safest, cosiest, warm place you have ever been, but you are about to go on a journey. You are getting ready for the journey ahead, preparing for changes even though you don't know what it will be like.

Where you are is warm and dark, you can hear soft sounds and there are some that you really like, which make you feel safe and secure. You are on your journey and it feels quite scary and maybe a bit uncomfortable, you are feeling squashed and pushed in what feels like so many different directions, this is new, different. The safe place feels different, new things are happening and you can hear unfamiliar sounds, some of them loud much more so than before.

As your journey continues, you feel squashed and squished and all of the things that made you feel safe and warm are disappearing as eventually you are pushed out into a bright, cold unfamiliar place with loud sounds, alarms and voices you don't know. You can't see anything and you have no idea where you are. You are confused, but in the distance you can hear something that you know. A familiar voice, that's comforting and gentle. It feels even better when you are placed on a warm, soft place as you recognise a rhythm, one you have heard for the whole time you remember. This is better it is cosy and comforting and you feel safe.

- Talk with your partner, family, friends about your hopes and plans for labour.
- Remember your midwife is there to support and to talk with you about any hopes or fears.
- Have a look at the Leeds Maternity Care – Leeds Teaching Hospitals website; there is information about labour and meeting your baby for the first time and the support available.

Remember the 'baby buddy' app has lots of local and evidence based information.



Activity 7

Search information about 'Biological Nurturing' which offers a laid back and responsive approach to breastfeeding your baby.



Caring for our baby

Feeding baby

Consider what you know about the advantages of breastfeeding for mum and baby whilst being mindful of the challenges and who is there to support you.

Why is breast milk so important?

Because breast milk is made especially for baby. Breastfeeding is one way to support a baby's development and health. Here are just a few reasons why:

- It lowers the risk of obesity, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma and leukaemia for the baby.
- It reduces the risk of type 2 diabetes, and breast, uterine and ovarian cancer for mum.
- Even the smell of breast milk can help reduce any pain the baby may have.
- Breast milk changes to suit the growing needs of your baby meaning it's tailor-made for them and is the best type of milk for your baby's tummy.
- The closeness and responsiveness of mums and babies when breastfeeding helps build strong parent relationships which will help protect baby from mental illness later in life.

Follow the link below to find important and useful information videos and facts about feeding your baby:

www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/support-for-parents

Please look at the fact sheet for dads and partners that accompanies this guide to see how dads and partners can get involved with supporting breastfeeding.

- Access the Unicef Baby Friendly website at <https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/> to see useful videos about mothers breastfeeding experiences and to find out more about positioning baby at the breast and attachment. There is also helpful information about how to overcome common infant feeding problems.
- You can get feeding support in Leeds from your midwife, your midwifery support worker your 0-19 Specialist Public Health Nurse (Health Visitor) breastfeeding groups, Children's Centre and Leeds Bossom Buddies Peer Supporters. Have a look in you baby's Personal Child Health Record (red book) for more information. Your red book will be sent to you in the post with an invitation to a telephone antenatal appointment at around 36 weeks of pregnancy. Also in your red book you can find information regarding our 0-19 Public Health Integrated Nursing Service and the support we offer in Leeds. Get to know your red book as this is where you will find up to date information about breastfeeding support groups in Leeds, peer support, breastfeeding counsellors and your 0-19 Specialist Public Health Nurse contact details.
- Antenatal contacts with your named 0-19 Specialist Public Health Nurse are being currently offered over the telephone, as a video call and may be undertaken face to face.
- **Breastfeeding support and pump hire** is available by contacting your local children's centre. You can find information about your local centre by going to:
<https://familyinformation.leeds.gov.uk/childrens-centres>



Activity 8

Please visit our pages on the Leeds Community Healthcare website. You will find helpful information about our service as well as leaflets such as caring for your baby at night, coping with a crying baby and other information:

www.leedscommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/our-services-a-z/0-19-/public-health-nursing-/

- Bathing and nappy changing will become part of your day as you care for your new baby. You will find helpful information and videos regarding this on the Baby Buddy app. The most important thing to remember is that when you are caring for your baby, this is a time to talk, to interact, to watch and wonder with your baby. By doing this you are providing reassurance for your baby as you consider and learn about what baby is feeling and how he is experiencing his world.



Attached to this guide is a booklet called '**Understanding your Baby**' which will explain that your baby is born a 'social baby' and able to communicate how baby is feeling and how you might respond to these 'cues'.



In the Understanding your Baby leaflet, there are suggestions about activities that you can do with your new baby that show how they are responding to you.

Activity 9

Talk about which you may be interested in trying.



Emotional health and wellbeing and keeping baby safe

- This is a good time to read about safe sleep and reducing the risk of sudden infant death for your baby. The Lullaby Trust www.lullabytrust.org.uk has some excellent evidence-based, online information to help you keep your baby safe at night. There is also a leaflet on the LCH 0-19 public health nurse page about keeping sleep time in baby seats and car seats to a minimum especially in the early days. The safest place for new baby to sleep is always near to you, on their back in their own cot/ Moses basket, with feet to the bottom of the cot and nothing else in the cot such as cot bumpers etc.
- Your baby will be offered immunisations at 8, 12 and 16 weeks by your GP - your red book has information about the immunisation schedule. For more information about immunisations, go to NHS Choices at www.nhs.uk

Activity 10

In the Baby Buddy app please search 'Understanding your Baby' in videos and you will find many helpful videos about soothing your baby, what different cries mean and what prolonged crying can mean.

- There may be times as a new parent when you feel worried or stressed - talk to each other about how you might deal with these times and how you can keep talking to one another. It is good to prepare for these changes so that you can support one another. Think of ways that you relax now - having a bath, walking, meeting a friend for coffee. These may be ways that you can overcome stress when you are a parent.

If you are concerned that you or your partner are feeling constantly overwhelmed and are bothered by feeling anxious, low or flat and the feeling does not pass, please talk to your midwife, 0-19 Specialist Public Health Nurse or GP about these feelings.

Activity 11

Think about something that you do to help you relax; something that you do that is just for you.

Write this down on a piece of paper, put it on your fridge or on your wall to remind yourself that this is 'your time' and that you will still need this when you have become a parent.

Car seat safety

Car seat safety advice can be found at www.childcarseats.org.uk

