



Responding to the Fathers Consultation





Small Steps Big Changes Commitment to Father Inclusivity

Improving father inclusive practice across the partnership as always been a strategic aim of SSBC

'...work with local fathers to identify and understand their needs. This will then inform work with senior leaders, commissioners, service providers, early years and education institutions to ensure father inclusive practice is embedded across services; leading to all relevant local agencies working together to systematically engage fathers as an important partner in securing better outcomes for their children.' – A Better Start Nottingham Strategy, 2014

Co-production as a core principle...

Our Core Principle

Children at the heart, parents leading the way, supported and guided by experts





Next Steps Following the Fathers' Consultation

- Strategy development and Operational Plan
- Sharing the learning amongst the partnership
- Working with the multi-agency Father Inclusive Practice Group
- Establishment of a Fathers Advisory Group
- Review and further develop SSBC's Think Dads! training offer





A Focus on Paternal Mental Health

- SSBC recently commissioned accredited Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Champions training for the Children's Public Health Service with a view to later commission Paternal Perinatal Mental Health Champions Training
- A dedicated chapter to emotional wellbeing complete with signposting included within the resource being developed for new and expectant fathers/father-figures





Resource for **new and expectant** fathers/father figures

- **Labour and the initial weeks** – managing expectations and routine health appointments
- **Breastfeeding** – how breastfeeding works and the fathers role in supporting the breastfeeding mother
- **Combination and bottle feeding** – advice for safe and effective bottle feeding
- **Infant safety** – comprehensive advice and signposting within the interests of infant health and safety
- **Bonding and play** – supporting fathers with early bonding and cue responsiveness
- **Parental wellbeing** – advice for fathers on managing their own wellbeing and supporting the baby's mother also
- **Employment rights and financial benefits** – supporting fathers in knowing their statutory rights
- **An overview of services available in Nottingham City**



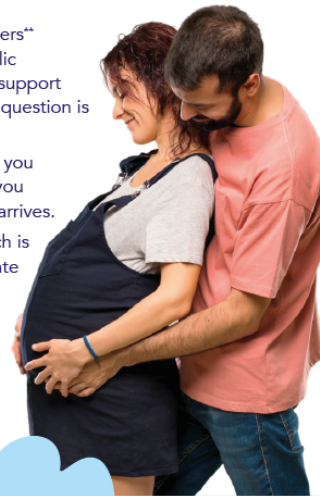
Breastfeeding Support

- Why is it so important that you are involved in breastfeeding?
- Why is breast milk the healthiest choice* for your family and the planet? *Unless you have been told otherwise by a medical professional
- Pregnancy is a time for preparation
- How does breastfeeding work?
- The science bit!
- How can you help with breastfeeding?
- How do you know if breastfeeding is going well?

Pregnancy is a time for preparation

- It's normal to be unsure of how you will feed your baby once they arrive. It's better to be open to every eventuality.
- The best way to prepare is to speak to the midwifery team or your specialist community public health nurse about breastfeeding. They will be able to answer any question you may have (or point you in the right direction).
- Nutritional Peer Support Workers** work within the Children's Public Health Service. Their job is to support breastfeeding. Remember, no question is too small.
- Antenatal group sessions help you with what to expect and give you information before your baby arrives.
- Doing your own online research is helpful. There is a lot of accurate information on the internet but be mindful of false and misleading information too.

** An overview of all professionals mentioned can be found in the (insert chapter # here)



At the end of this chapter, you will find a list of useful websites for you to look at.

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How does breastfeeding work?

The breastfeeding process starts in pregnancy.

The breast changes in response to hormones generated by the pregnancy.

Your baby's mother may notice that her breasts are getting larger as changes happen within the breast. They may also become more sensitive.

Milk may or may not leak during pregnancy. This is not a sign of whether breastfeeding is going to be easy or not.



When your baby is born, their stomach is small and cannot hold much liquid.

The first milk produced is very thick and can be yellowish – this is because it is very concentrated to deliver all the nutrients your baby needs without having to stretch their stomach.

Even if you and your baby's mother have chosen not to breastfeed your baby, it is great for your baby to at least have this first milk.

In the days following birth, the amount of breast milk produced will increase as your baby grows.

The milk will become more watery and white.

Hormones are responsible for regulating breast milk.

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Emotional Wellbeing

- Pregnancy and birth
- Early days and supporting your baby's mother
- Mood
- Healthy behaviours (including smoking cessation)
- Communication
- Managing stress and infant crying
- Domestic abuse

Pregnancy and birth

Your midwife will talk you through a birth plan that will help you to understand what to expect. Make sure you attend antenatal appointments.

Things don't always go as planned.

Both mums and dads can experience Postnatal Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) after birth.

If you feel you have any of the following symptoms please talk to your midwifery team, the children's public health service or your GP

- Flashbacks of the birth that cause emotional distress
- Nightmares that may or may not relate to the birth
- Feeling that you, a loved one and/or your baby is not safe
- Feelings of guilt. Questioning your actions and the actions of others during the birth
- Keeping yourself busy to avoid feelings and memories
- Low mood, depression and anxiety

Mind is a mental health charity that has a lot of useful information on their website.



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Early days and supporting your baby's mother

'Baby blues'

Many women experience low moods (crying, anxiety and sadness) in the early weeks after birth. Hormones and tiredness are usually to blame - these symptoms usually go away after a few days.

You can help:

- Be supportive (*being there will help her to feel better*)
- Encourage her to have skin to skin with your baby
- Encourage her take naps (*to catch up on sleep!*)
- Make sure she is eating well & drinking water (*this will give her energy!*)
- Check in on her (*by text or call if you aren't able to be there*)

Worrying about your baby's health is normal. It is important to get support if you have concerns.

Getting answers helps reduce that worry and the impact it can have on your mental health.



In the early days of becoming a father you are likely to spend most of your time supporting your baby's mother and spending time with your baby.

That's ok! But remember to take time for yourself and do things you enjoy, like exercise and seeing friends.

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Employment Rights and Financial Benefits

- Paternity leave
- Paternity pay
- Leave for antenatal appointments
- Shared parental leave and shared parental pay
- Unpaid parental leave/carers leave
- What financial benefits are available for families with young children?

Leave for antenatal appointments

You (and your baby's mother) can take up to 6.5 hours unpaid leave to attend antenatal appointments, by law. You can do this up to two times during the pregnancy.



That's two appointments - up to 6.5 hours a time!

You must be in a permanent job or working through an agency for at least 12 weeks to be entitled to leave for antenatal appointments.

It is important that you attend antenatal appointments as the information is just as important to you as it is your baby's mother.

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Shared Parental Leave and Shared Parental Pay

Shared Parental Leave allows both parents to take time off work to care for their baby in the first year as long as parental responsibility is shared. The great news is both parents can take Shared Parental Leave at the same time!

If you are entitled to paternity pay you will also qualify for Shared Parental Leave and Shared Parental Pay so long as your baby's mother also fits the same criteria.

Both parents can take up to 50 weeks of Shared Parental Leave - you cannot have 50 weeks of leave each.

Employers require you to give at least 8 weeks notice of your Shared Parental Leave plans

- Up to 37 weeks of Shared Parental Leave will be eligible for Shared Parental Pay
- Shared Parental Leave can be taken in one go or in up to 3 blocks (lasting at least 1 week) separated by periods of work
- Shared Parental Pay is paid at the rate of £151.20 a week or 90% of your average weekly earnings, whichever is lower

** Your paternity leave period of two weeks is not the same as your Shared Parental Leave.*



To check if you are eligible visit: gov.uk/pay-leave-for-parents

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- Co-production
- Progressive and realistic project design
- Sustainable change

