

Baby blues

Our children's health is closely linked

As parents whether you are a single parent, a mum, dad or carer we all want to do what's best to keep our children safe, fit and well. However, it can be easy to forget about our own health and well-being. If as parents we have a positive attitude, a good social outlook and a healthy lifestyle it is often the case that our children will too.

Family life plays an important role in the well-being of both children and parents. Doing active and creative things together can really boost happiness levels all round. Children's Centres can be great places for you to socialise and meet other parents as well as giving your child the opportunity to meet friends. Sometimes it can be a bit daunting when meeting a group of complete strangers, but it can be an easy way to meet new people and make friends, after all, you all have something in common - your children!

We are often our children's first teachers and they not only learn about practical things from us, but pick up on attitudes that can last a lifetime. It is important to take care of your own physical and mental health in order to be able to 'parent' well.

Postnatal depression

Some women experience depression after having a baby and this is more common than many people realise. It can develop within the first few weeks after giving birth, or may not occur until around six months after the birth. Some women feel they are unable to look after their baby or they feel too anxious to leave the house or keep in touch with friends.

Treatment will benefit both your health and the healthy development of your baby, as well as your relationship with your partner, family and friends.

Seeking help for postnatal depression does not mean you are a bad mother or unable to cope. Talk to your health visitor or GP about how you feel.

Your baby's six week check

This is an essential part of the Healthy Child Programme. The check should take place between 6-8 weeks and include:

- A physical examination.
- A review of development.
- Health advice.
- An opportunity for you to express any concerns.

Don't forget to take your baby's Child Health Record, usually known as the 'Red Book', as all the results will be recorded in it.



Your six week postnatal check

You should have your postnatal check about six weeks after your baby's birth to make sure that you feel well and are recovering properly and to discuss contraception etc. Tell your GP if:

- You are having trouble holding urine or problems opening your bowels.
- Having sex is painful.
- You are feeling very tired, low or depressed.
- You are worried about anything.

1

I often overlook my own well-being as I want to do the best for my child.

2

Your child's well-being is linked to your health.

3

It is important to have a healthy family lifestyle and treat your own health as importantly as your child's.

