



Supporting your emotional wellbeing

Whether it is your first child, or you are adding to your family, having a baby can be a very emotional time. You might have questions, worries or concerns, or just need some reassurance.

County Durham Family Hubs are here to support you, from the moment you find out you are having a baby.

We support all parents, including biological parents, people who are fostering or adopting a baby, step-parents, and Kinship Carers (people taking on the role of a parent, such as aunts, uncles, brothers and sisters).



Throughout pregnancy and beyond



The **midwifery team** can support you throughout your entire pregnancy, during the birth, and until your midwife feels you no longer need support. When you find out you are pregnant you need to contact your local midwifery team. Your GP practice will tell you how to do this. If you're not registered with a GP practice, telephone your nearest one and they can give you the information.

If you have an existing health condition that you take medication for, or require regular care, speak to your **GP** when you find out you are pregnant. This is to make sure the care you receive throughout your pregnancy is still right for you.

Not registered with a GP Practice?

Visit www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-gp to find one closest to you.



If you are pregnant, you can attend **antenatal classes** in the Family Hubs with your partner, or with someone who is supporting you. You may know these classes by a different name, such as "Preparing for baby classes" or "Parentcraft". These are delivered in partnership with midwifery and health visiting teams. Ask your midwife or local Family Hub for details.

There are also many **courses available for free online**. Visit www.durham.gov.uk/solihull and create an account.

Courses include:

- Understanding pregnancy, birth & your baby
- Understanding your baby
- Understanding your child 0-19 years
- Understanding your child with additional needs
- Understanding your child's feelings
- Understanding your teenager's brain (short course)
- Understanding your brain (for teenagers only!)

Our website has lots of free advice about being a parent, including information about free courses for parents and the whole family.

Visit www.durham.gov.uk/helpforfamilies to find out more.



Aqua-natal classes are a fun way to get moving during pregnancy and to meet other pregnant people in your area. Keeping fit is not only good for you and your baby, but it can help you feel more relaxed. Classes are held in Durham County Council leisure centres.

Visit www.durham.gov.uk/leisure to find details of your local leisure centre or ask in your Family Hub.



NHS Durham and Darlington Talking Therapies

offer free support to mums, dads, adoptive parents and kinship carers, to help you with the changes you experience when becoming a parent. They can help you understand your feelings about giving birth, becoming a parent, and if you are dealing with grief. They provide support with mental health problems such as stress, anxiety or depression, as well as panic, phobias, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Please let the service know that you are expecting a baby, or have a child under the age of 2, or grieving the loss of a baby. The team will put you in touch with the best people to support you, and you will receive support in less than 2 weeks.

New mums and mums-to-be who have low mood and anxiety can join a free weekly online support group called **Baby Steps**. This runs over 6 weeks, covering a new topic each week. It will help you to identify who can support you (your support network) and provide techniques to help you challenge upsetting thoughts, find new coping strategies and ultimately feel better about yourself, and your baby's development. Each session lasts approximately 1.5-2 hours. Give the team a call to find out more and book a place.

Telephone **0191 333 3300** or visit **www.durhamanddarlingtontalkingtherapies.org.uk**



NHS Tees, Esk and Wear Valley's telephone listening service is free and available to anyone over the age of 18.

You can talk to someone over the phone about what is worrying you. Talking can often be enough to help you cope. This is a safe space to talk, you don't even have to give your name.

Call **08000 516 171**, press **option 1** then **option 3**.

Kooth is a free online mental wellbeing community and is available to everyone under the age of 18 in County Durham, 24 hours of the day. Access is free and immediate, no waiting lists and no need for a referral. Chat to professionals online about anything that's on your mind, join conversations on the discussion boards or read helpful articles, personal experiences and tips from young people and the Kooth team.

Go to **www.kooth.com** to join.



Worried about money?



Bringing a new baby into your family may make you worry about money. Visit www.durham.gov.uk/helpwithyourmoney for free and impartial advice.

The **Surestart Maternity Grant** is a one-off payment of £500 to help towards the costs of having a child. The grant does not have to be paid back and it will not affect your benefits. You may also be able to get a grant if you're adopting or becoming a surrogate parent. To find out if you are eligible visit www.gov.uk/sure-start-maternity-grant or talk to your midwife or health visitor.

Healthy Start - If you're more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under 4, you may be entitled to get help to buy healthy food and milk. If you're eligible, you'll be sent a **Healthy Start card** with money on it that you can use in some UK shops. This card will be topped up every 4 weeks. You'll get:

- ✓ £4.25 each week of your pregnancy from the 10th week
- ✓ £8.50 each week for children from birth to 1 year old
- ✓ £4.25 each week for children between 1 and 4 years old

You can also use your card to collect:

- ✓ Healthy Start vitamins – these support you during pregnancy and breastfeeding
- ✓ Vitamin drops for babies and young children – these are suitable from birth to 4 years old

To find out if you're eligible visit www.healthystart.nhs.uk/how-to-apply or speak to your midwife, health visitor or a member of staff at your local Family Hub.

Baby banks and pre-loved baby equipment

There are lots of places where you can get free or low-cost pre-loved equipment and clothes for your baby. Your local Family Hub may have items you can take and will be able to tell you what else is available in your area.

Just for dads



Durham Mental Wellbeing Alliance

offer free support for dads-to-be and dads with children under the age of 2 (including step-dads, kinship carers and those who are fostering or adopting). There are options to suit all dads such as sports or gym sessions, men's CREEs, walking groups, and practical skills lessons such as carpentry and much more. Available as one-to-one and group support.

Find out more at

www.durhammentalwellbeingalliance.org
or call **0300 304 5527**.

Durham Young Dads Project

provides free one-to-one support to young dads and dads-to-be (aged 25 and under) in County Durham.

Text or telephone
07990 164 449 or
visit www.neydl.uk



Their DigiDad website is also full of useful information and videos, made by for young dads www.digidad.uk

The **DadPad App** is available for free to everyone in County Durham with a smartphone or tablet. Visit your usual app store or www.thedadpad.co.uk to download.

When your baby has arrived



When your baby arrives the first few weeks can feel overwhelming for the whole family. This is quite common, and we are here to support the whole family.

When you have a new baby your **health visiting team** are here for you, **they will support you until your child is 6 years old.**

You can contact your health visiting team for some reassurance, either over the phone or through a home visit, to help you and your child as you adjust to your new family life. Nobody will judge you, so don't be afraid to get in touch.

You can call your health visiting team on **03000 263 538.**

Mams will be offered a maternal mental health appointment with their **GP** around 8 weeks after giving birth. This is as well as the baby's "6 week check" appointment. Some GP practices only offer one appointment, unless you ask for a separate one.

Your GP is also there to help when you feel like you need a little extra support. Both mams and dads can experience postnatal depression/post-adoption depression. You're not wasting anyone's time and nobody will judge you, so don't be afraid to make an appointment.

The **New Parent Community Connectors** project offers free one-to-one support for families who are expecting, or have a new baby and are struggling to get out into their community. The team can help you with all the things you're finding tricky either during pregnancy or just after giving birth.



To find out if you are eligible contact the Durham Mental Wellbeing Alliance on **0300 304 5527** or **www.durhammentalwellbeingalliance.org**

Breastfeeding gives your baby the best start in life. It has health benefits for your baby and can help you and your baby build close relationships. In Durham we have the UNICEF Baby Friendly Award.



No matter how you feed your baby, we are here to help you learn how to recognise when your baby needs food and comfort. We offer really practical help in a number of ways from one-to-one support to friendly groups, ask your Family Hub for what's on offer near you.

Your midwife and health visitor can provide you with lots of information, and there are breastfeeding support groups that you can attend.

For more information **www.durham.gov.uk/breastfeedingsupport**

Got a breastfeeding question anytime, day or night?

You can chat to the Start for Life chatbot for fast, friendly, trusted NHS advice.

Find out more at **www.nhs.uk/start-for-life/baby/feeding-your-baby/breastfeeding/breastfeeding-friend-from-start-for-life**



Family Hubs run **Baby and Me** and **Toddler and Me** groups. These informal groups will help you to understand your child's development and give you the chance to meet other parents.

Baby and Me is for families with babies from birth to 12 months and Toddler and Me is for families with children aged 1-2 years.



Both groups are free and run for 90 minutes, once a week in all Family Hubs. Don't worry if you can't make the start or need to leave early – these are drop-in sessions, and you can stay for as long as you like. Contact your local Family Hub to find out more.

Birth Reflections Service



Do you wonder about the birth of your baby? Have you got unanswered questions regarding this important time of your life? If so, then this service may be able to help.

The **Birth Reflections Service** has a team of experienced midwives who will meet with you to review your experience of pregnancy and childbirth, to help you get clear in your head about what happened. You can access this service from 6 weeks after giving birth up to a year.

You can attend with your partner, but they can't go without you, as it is your medical record that is discussed.

Find out more at www.cddft.nhs.uk/our-services/division-of-women,-children-and-sexual-health/maternity/birth-reflections.aspx or contact cddft.birthreflections@nhs.net or call **01325 342 254** to book an appointment.


If you have your baby in a hospital outside of County Durham this service will be provided by the NHS foundation trust for that area.


For hospitals in North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust visit www.nth.nhs.uk/services/maternity/reflecting-on-your-pregnancy-and-birth/


For hospitals in South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust visit www.stsft.nhs.uk/services/maternity-new/maternal-mental-health-birth-reflection-and-bereavement-services/birth-reflection



Chat to us

 **/FamilyHubs** – follow our page to keep up to date and you can send us a direct message on there too

 Call us on **03000 261 111**

 Pop into your local Family Hub. There are 15 across the county:

- Bishop Auckland
- Brandon
- Chester-le-Street
- Consett
- Durham
- Easington
- Ferryhill
- Horden
- Newton Aycliffe
- Peterlee
- Seaham
- Stanley
- Tudhoe Moor
- Wheatley Hill
- Willington

Get full details and addresses at
www.durham.gov.uk/familyhubs

You can get FREE internet access at your local library.

Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format:



Braille,



Audio,



Large print.

Email: altformat.familyhubs@durham.gov.uk