

'Wellbeing' - for new and expecting parents

What do we mean by wellbeing?

Being well or 'wellbeing' means different things to different people. Most people agree that it's about more than just coping and surviving. It is about feeling good, being positive and living well - most of the time. It means feeling ok about ourselves and our lives.

Wellbeing and being a parent

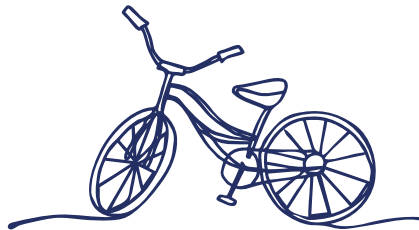
Becoming a new parent is a big change and big changes can be challenging. We need to look after our own wellbeing because it will help us to cope better with the ups and downs of pregnancy and being a parent. It can also help us to manage our day to day lives better, especially when times are difficult.



Wellbeing doesn't just happen on its own

Many different things affect our wellbeing. Most of the time we don't stop to think about them. The good news is that there are some simple actions that we can all do to look after our own wellbeing. These are called the 'Five Ways to Wellbeing'.

- Connect
- Be Active
- Take Notice
- Keep Learning
- Give



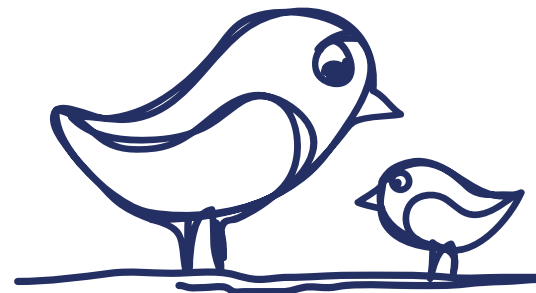
Make them part of your daily life and do them regularly. Start with something that is important to you, and build them up in small steps. If you are doing them already - great. Carry on and do them more often if you can.

If you don't feel quite so positive just try one thing and keep it going. It can really make a difference. Have a go at something else when you are ready. But do ask for support if you are struggling.

A good 'wellbeing' can be things like:

- Being able to do and enjoy things that are important to us
- Getting on with family and friends and having their support
- Coping well with the challenges that life brings

Most of us know how to look after our physical health; for example: eating plenty of fruit and veg regularly, or not smoking. But it is just as important to know what we can do to look after our own wellbeing.



More about the Five Ways to Wellbeing

Connect

Join a group to meet other parents and talk to someone new. Keep in touch with family, friends and work colleagues. Meet up with friends, instead of using text or Facebook.

Be Active

Try swimming, walking or dancing. You can do these with your baby. Being active helps you feel good physically and mentally. It helps your body adapt to pregnancy, and get back in shape afterwards. Meet up with other parents and go for a walk.

Take Notice

Take some time to notice things around you. Watch the changes in your baby and enjoy the little things, such as your baby's first smile, or first word. Notice what's around you when you go out for a walk. Notice any little changes to how you are feeling. Notice what is important to your wellbeing.

Getting Started

- o Ask your midwife or health visitor about parents' groups near you
- o Join a local leisure centre to go swimming at antenatal, or parent and baby sessions
- o Find out what's going on at your local library or children's centre

It's perfectly normal to feel a bit up and down just after having a baby. But if things start to get on top of you talk to your GP, midwife or health visitor. Don't wait to ask for help.

Keep Learning

There's lots to learn about being pregnant and being a parent. Join your local library. Try out a new recipe. Find out how to make simple toys for your baby, which are safe and fun.

Give

Give yourself time for you and let others have a chance to spoil you. Take time to talk with your partner. Invite a friend round for coffee. Offer to help another parent.

Help and Resources:

www.twainmind.org
www.netmums.com
www.fathersreachingout.com
www.app-network.org
www.apni.org
www.bestbeginnings.org.uk
www.breakthesilence-pni.org
www.solihullapproachparenting.com
www.maternalocd.org
www.nct.org.uk
www.pandasfoundation.org.uk
www.marcesociety.com
www.tommys.org

www.foundationyears.org.uk
www.nspcc.org.uk
www.your-baby.org.uk
www.beginbeforebirth.org
www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNNsN9IJkws

Factsheets, leaflets and guidance:

www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/postnatal-depression/#.U3ycVCgq8TI
www.tommys.org/file/Wellbeingplan.pdf
www.solihullapproachparenting.com/information-for-parents
www.rcm.org.uk/college/your-career/information-services/resources/

www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/live/11004/30433/30433.pdf
<http://maternalmentalhealthalliance.org.uk/>

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