Dear Dad....

DAD MATTERS
Warrington, Halton & Cheshire

This information is for

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If you have any questions or concerns about your wellbeing, or your child's, please contact

Nathan - 07856916687

This leaflet contains information to support you to have the best possible relationship with your family.

Inside you will find tips on bonding with your new baby and why this is so important.

You will also find signs and symptoms of anxiety and depression in new Dads and who you can contact if you have any questions or concerns.

Get In Touch

www.dadmatters.org
www.homestartwarringtonandcheshire.org.uk/dad-matters/

HOME START Warrington & Cheshire

CHESHIRE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

How do I do skin to skin?

- Get comfy, with your arms and back supported, as you could be sitting for a while.
- Put baby on your bare chest in just a nappy and cover with a blanket to keep them warm.
- Hold baby close, supporting them with both hands.
- Take note of how your baby responds to you and how they react to things around them.

How can I bond with my new baby?

- Some men find bonding with their baby difficult, but you don't have to wait until they are born to start!
- Babies can hear in the womb from around the 18th week of pregnancy. Talking, singing and reading to your baby before they are born helps them to recognise your voice.
- Remember baby doesn't understand what you are saying so talk about something that interests you.
- Skin to Skin increases levels of oxytocin, the hormone that promotes bonding and attachment.
- Carrying your baby, in your arms or a sling, can help you learn their cues and become more reactive to their signals. Helping you to get to know them better.

How can I help my baby's brain development?

- Baby's parents help them build their brain into a strong and stable blueprint for the future.
- Your baby's brain wiring (neural pathways) is around 20% connected when they are born.
- How well that wiring develops can affect the way they learn, communicate, and handle problems.
- It can also impact their relationships and physical and emotional health when they become adults.
- Consistent, positive and loving relationships help your baby's brain to grow and lower the effects of stress.
- Babies are primed to look for two-way interaction with their care givers, including touch, facial expressions, and conversation. When you respond to their cues, you are literally helping them to build positive brain connections.
- Responding to your baby, especially when they are sick or upset, and providing them with a safe, supportive and loving relationship is also important.

Self Referral

"It's great to find someone to talk to, I can't talk to my friends about this stuff."

"I will need to speak to you as we have no-one, it is just me and my wife."

"I don't know anything about babies and I need help."

Why is my mental health and wellbeing so important for my baby?

When a parent experiences poor mental health it can affect the way they respond to, bond with and care for their child. This can impact the child's psychological, intellectual, social and emotional development.

What is the likelihood of developing mental health issues as a new dad?

In England, 1 in 8 men experience depression, anxiety, panic disorder or obsessive-compulsive disorder. Postnatal depression affects 1 in 10 Dads. The most common time for men to develop postnatal depression is 3-6 months following the birth. Symptoms can come on anytime in the first few years of being a dad.

Signs to look out for;

Emotional Signs can include: insomnia, panic, confusion, helplessness, social withdrawal, indecisiveness, risk taking, irritability, anger, negative parenting behaviour, increased substance use, partner conflict and loss of sex drive.

Physical Signs can also include: Headaches, change in appetite, weight change, indigestion etc.....

ICON
Babies Cry, You Can Cope

Babies Cry - You Can Cope

Crying is one of the many ways your baby communicates and it's an opportunity to think about what their behaviour is telling you.....

I - Infant crying is normal

C - Comforting methods can help

O - It's OK to walk away

N - NEVER, ever shake a baby

Speak to someone if you need support such as family, friends, peer support, midwife GP or health visitor.

"You helped me more than you will ever know and got me through a really tough time"

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Who can I contact if I am worried about my relationship with my baby, or my own wellbeing?

dadmatters.org.uk

Your Midwife, Health Visitor or GP - Adult Mental Health Services. Parent Infant Services (referral needed)

Useful Resources

Other Useful Resources

ICON - Babies Cry, You Can Cope	iconcope.org
Cry-sis - National Helpline	08451 228 669
BASIS - Baby Sleep Info Source	basisonline.org.uk
The Samaritans	116 123
Mind	0300 123 3393
Calm	thecalmzone.net
Shout - text support	24/7 text SHOUT to 85258

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