

APCP Neonatal Committee: Supporting infants, parents and families during Covid 19

The APCP Neonatal Committee are aware that hospital and community services for babies and young children will have changed in the last few weeks due to the coronavirus pandemic. We understand that this must be a worrying time for parents and families, in particular those with additional health needs. We are mindful that parents and families may not receive 'usual' input from therapy services during this time. In response to this, we would like to share some general resources available online that parents and families may find useful to help them to promote their child's developmental abilities at home.

Please be reassured that your local and specialist neonatal services will be making alternative arrangements for the follow-up of your baby after discharge from hospital. This may be in the form of telephone or video appointments, sending you information via post or email or rearranging your appointment for a future date.

If you are concerned that your child is unwell, please don't delay in seeking help. The UK Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) have produced this useful guide to help you recognise when your child may require urgent medical help.

https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2020-04/covid19_advice_for_parents_when_child_unwell_or_injured_poster.pdf

Resources for parents and families: Promoting your child's development

Please be reassured that in the first few months following discharge from hospital your baby may not usually have face to face contact with a physiotherapist unless you have already been advised of a specific need for this.

After discharge home, spend time with your baby and touch and hold them. Cuddles and skin to skin kangaroo care will have many physical and emotional benefits to both your baby and the sound of your voice will be comforting to them. You will see your baby's development progress as they settle in to 'family life'.

Association of Paediatric Chartered Physiotherapists (APCP)

Free access to online parent information leaflets developed by the UK based APCP. The website includes leaflets on awake time ideas, head turning preference, tummy time ideas, promoting development (lying to sitting) and awake time ideas.

https://apcp.csp.org.uk/system/files/awake_time_ideas_2015.pdf

<https://apcp.csp.org.uk/parent-leaflets>

<https://apcp.csp.org.uk/publications/tummy-time-poster>

EI SMART

Free access to online resources from UK based neonatal and paediatric therapists who lead the EI SMART team. EI SMART stands for Early Intervention: Sensory, Motor, Attention/Regulation, Relationships, Therapy.

<http://www.eismart.co.uk>

Also includes link to leaflets to provide ideas and support for toys and play

<http://www.eismart.co.uk/news-articles/>

The Association for Infant Mental Health UK (AIMH UK)

A UK charity providing a voice for infants and their parents or carers. The website link includes a section that shows parents how to respond to their baby in a way that fosters positive emotional wellbeing. <https://aimh.org.uk/getting-to-know-your-baby/>

BLISS

National UK charity with a mission to ensure that every baby born premature or sick in the UK has the best chance of survival and quality of life. The website contains up to date information for parents and families of preterm or sick infants in relation to the current Covid crisis and also general advice.

<https://www.bliss.org.uk>

Pathways

Free resources from the American Academy of Paediatrics to support parents to maximise their child's motor, sensory and communication development.

Resources by age: <https://pathways.org/growth-development/0-3-months/milestones/>

Videos: <https://pathways.org/videos/>

NHS Highlands Bumps to Bairns

General information about early childhood developmental and how to support this and ideas of how to help young children learn at home through play. Produced by NHS Highlands. <https://bumps2bairns.com>

Brazelton Centre UK

A national charity dedicated to supporting healthy parent-baby relationships through promoting an understanding of newborn babies' communication. Includes sections on the website informing parents how they can discover more about their baby's language and communication. <https://www.brazelton.co.uk/parents/your-babys-language/>

Blackpool Better Start

"Big Little Moments". Short videos describing little moments that parents can share with your baby/young child. <https://blackpoolbetterstart.org.uk/biglittlemoments/>

Sheffield Sling Surgery

Using a sling to carry your baby can be practical and help you bond with your baby. To ensure you use a sling safely please follow the TICKS rules for safe babywearing.

<http://babyslingsafety.co.uk>

There is also lots of useful information about using baby slings on the Sheffield Sling Surgery website. <https://www.carryingmatters.co.uk/sling-safety-how-to-use-a-sling-safely/>

If you are unsure whether it is safe to use a sling with your baby, please ask your therapist or a local sling library for advice.