

## ADVICE AND INFORMATION

If you have any concerns about your or your child's health and wellbeing, we recommend that you talk to your health visitor or GP. You can also find general health advice on the NHS website ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)) and advice on child development and parenting at <https://www.nhs.uk/start-for-life/>. Here are some other websites and numbers you may find useful for advice on a range of issues that may affect families.

### General advice

Each local authority in England has an online Family Information Service, with local information and advice for parents. Search for "family information services [name of your local council]" or visit <https://familyhubs.campaign.gov.uk/> to find family support and information in your area, including:

- activities for babies, toddlers, young people, parents and carers
- support for parents and carers, such as with children's health, care and development
- support with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- help with mental health, relationships, money, housing or family life

**Parenting support - Action for Children.** Action for Children protects and supports children and young people, providing practical and emotional care and support. Visit their website: <https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/>

**Parenting support - Early Years Alliance.** The Early Years Alliance website has information about the 30 hours funded early education entitlement plus Family Time Tips – free play ideas, and guidance on choosing an early years setting. Visit their website: <https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/>

**Family Lives** provides support for all elements of family life. Call the free helpline on **0808 800 2222** (Mon-Fri 9am-9pm, Sat-Sun 10am-3pm), or visit the website [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk) to find advice on parenting, health, development and wellbeing for children of all ages.

**Home-Start** helps families through sending trained volunteers to visit and offer compassionate support to parents. Find your local **Home-Start** here [www.home-start.org.uk/find-your-nearest-home-start](http://www.home-start.org.uk/find-your-nearest-home-start).

**Gingerbread** supports single parents via online resources, forums and local support groups. Find out more at [www.gingerbread.org.uk](http://www.gingerbread.org.uk).

### Your child's wellbeing and development

For advice on how to develop your child's speech, reading and communication skills, visit:

- **NHS.uk** (online service only) has advice on how to help your child's speech from age 3 to 5 years at <https://www.nhs.uk/start-for-life/toddler/learning-to-talk/learning-conversations-and-telling-stories-3-to-5-years/>
- **I CAN** at [www.icancharity.org.uk](http://www.icancharity.org.uk) or telephone **020 7843 2544** to reach the free, confidential call-back or email [enquiries@ican.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ican.org.uk) for service from an I CAN speech and language therapist.
- **Words for Life** at [www.wordsforlife.org.uk](http://www.wordsforlife.org.uk) (online service only).
- **National Literacy Trust** at <https://literacytrust.org.uk/> has resources and tools for early language development and parental engagement.
- **Speech and Language UK** at <https://speechandlanguage.org.uk/help-for-families/> provides helps if you are concerned about your child's speech and language development.

The **NHS** website (<https://www.nhs.uk/>) has advice and information about a variety of topics, including feeding your child, looking after your child's teeth, and tips to support your child's sleep (<https://www.nhs.uk/baby/health/sleep-and-young-children/>).

You can find advice on young children's development (<https://www.nhs.uk/start-for-life/toddler/>), and information on autism (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/autism/>), developmental delay, or learning disabilities (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/learning-disabilities/>).

## Financial support

Your local **Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)** can offer independent advice on a range of issues including housing, debt and consumer issues. You can find out more at [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk). To speak to someone about money issues, call **CAB's national phone service - Adviceline** on **0800 144 8848**.

**Healthy Start** provides financial support to buy healthy food and milk. Eligibility for the scheme includes pregnant women (at least 10 weeks into pregnancy) and families with a child under 4 years old claiming certain benefits. Visit [www.healthystart.nhs.uk](http://www.healthystart.nhs.uk) to see if you qualify.

**The Trussell Trust** offers guidance for those in a financial crisis. Call the free helpline on **0808 208 2138** (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm). To find your local foodbank, visit [www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank](http://www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank).

**Childcare Choices** is a government scheme offering parents help with childcare costs. Visit [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk) to find out what help you may be eligible for.

## Smoking, alcohol and drug use

For help quitting smoking, the **NHS** provides guidance on its website [www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking](http://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking), where you can also identify your local **Stop Smoking Service**. You can call the **Smokefree National Helpline** on **0300 123 1044** to speak to a trained advisor (Mon-Fri 9am-8pm, Sat-Sun 11am-4pm).

**Drinkaware** [www.drinkaware.co.uk](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk) offers help to anyone worried about their own or someone else's drinking. Call the free alcohol helpline, **Drinkline**, on **0300 123 1110** (Mon-Fri 9am-8pm, Sat-Sun 11am-4pm), or use the online chat service, **Drinkchat**, on the website (Mon-Fri 9am-2pm).

**Talk to FRANK** offers free confidential advice on drugs and alcohol. You can email [frank@talktofrank.com](mailto:frank@talktofrank.com), text 82111, call 0300 123 6600 (24-hour helpline), or get advice via live webchat at <https://www.talktofrank.com/livechat> (available between 2pm-6pm UK time, any day of the week).

## Safety and mental health

If you are concerned about domestic violence, women can contact **Refuge** on the free 24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline **0808 2000 247**. Support for men can also be found by contacting **ManKind** on **0182 3334 244** (Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm), and those who identify as LGBT+ can call **Galop** on **0800 999 5428** for emotional and practical support.

**Mind** provides advice on a range of mental health problems, including: types of mental health problems; where to get help; medication and alternative treatments; and advocacy. Visit [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk) or phone **0300 123 3393** (9am-6pm, Mon-Fri).

**Young Minds**. For advice on children and young people's mental health, please visit Young Minds at <https://youngminds.org.uk/>, or call their Parents Helpline on **0808 802 5544** (9.30am-4pm, Mon-Fri).

**NHS Talking therapies**. You can access NHS talking therapies services for anxiety and depression. Visit the webpage: [www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-NHS-talking-therapies-service/](http://www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-NHS-talking-therapies-service/)

The **Samaritans** provide confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair. Freephone: **116 123** (24-hour helpline), or visit their webpage: <https://www.samaritans.org/>

If you have any concerns about your or your child's safety or mental health, we recommend that you talk to your health visitor or GP. You can also find general health advice on the NHS website ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)).

## Bereavement and loss

**Cruse Bereavement Support**: provides support for all types of bereavement or grief. Website: <https://www.cruse.org.uk/>. Helpline: **0808 808 1677**

**Child Bereavement UK**: families can find help to rebuild their lives when a child grieves or when a child dies. Website: <https://www.childbereavementuk.org/>. Helpline: **0800 02 888 40**