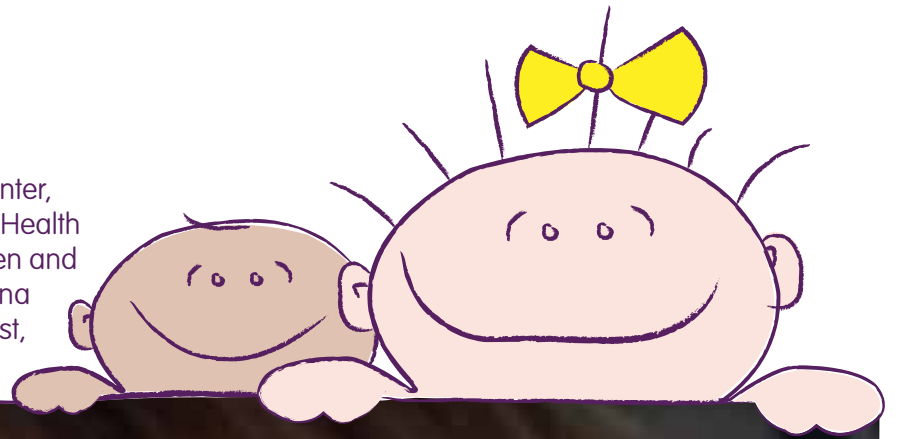




Pictured at the launch of Infant Mental Health week: L-R Debbie Hunter, Health Improvement officer, Maura O'Neill, Western Trust's Head of Health Improvement, Kieran Downey, the Western Trust's Director of Women and Children's services, Ann Linstrom Health Improvement officer, Sheena Funston, Child Development Interventions Coordinator, Western Trust, Ann McDuff Assistant Director of Community and Public Health.



Infant Mental Health Campaign

 **Health Improvement**
Western Area

 **Western Health**
and Social Care Trust

 **Public Health**
Agency

2017

"The evidence is overwhelming that children's life experiences in early years directly impacts upon their mental, physical and emotional well-being in later years. We recognise that improving long-term outcomes for the whole population begins with ensuring that every child has the best start in life. By adopting these simple 5 approaches parents and carers can make a real difference to the child's emotional health and wellbeing."

Kieran Downey, Western Trust, Director of Women and Children's Services.

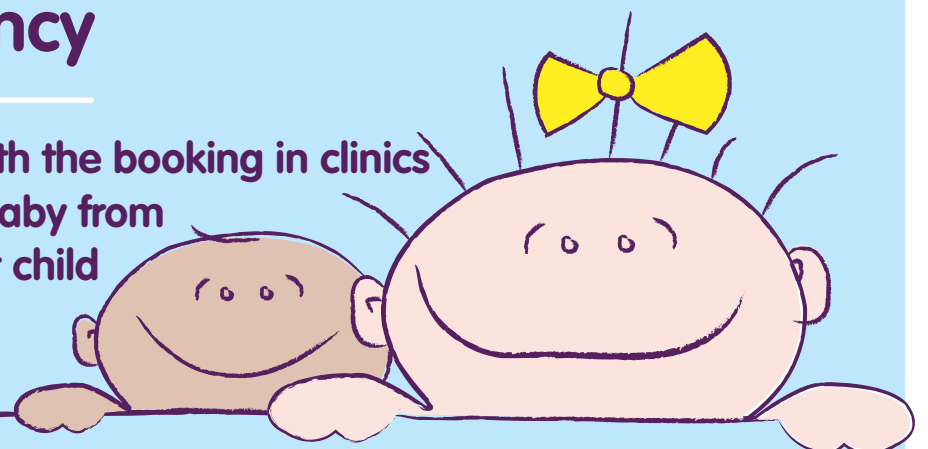
Out and About With the Health Visitors

The Western Health & Social Care Trust Health Visitors were out and about during Infant Mental Health Week in various community settings promoting the five Infant Mental Health messages.



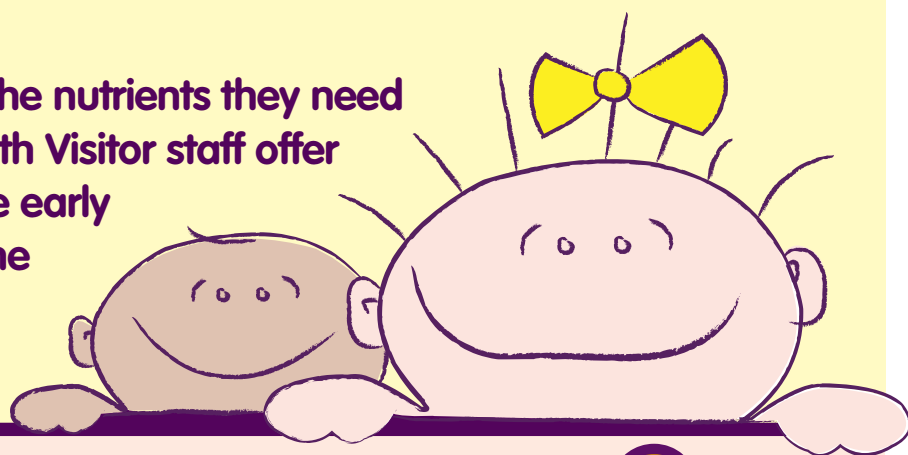
No smoking or alcohol during pregnancy

The Smoking Cessation Team from the Western Trust worked with the booking in clinics to support pregnant mothers to stop smoking. Protecting your baby from tobacco smoke is one of the best things you can do to give your child a healthy start in life. It's never too late to quit smoking.

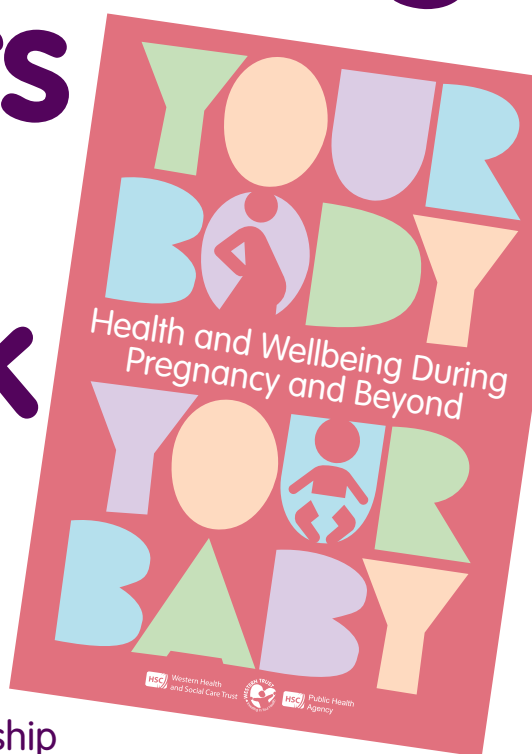


Breastfeed your baby

Breastfeeding is the normal way of providing young babies with the nutrients they need for healthy growth and development. WHSCT Midwives and Health Visitor staff offer support with breastfeeding to help ensure mums are aware of the early feeding cues and then able to position and attach their baby at the breast. The Western Trust have trained another 15 volunteer peer support mums.



Breastfeeding Mothers Return to Work Policy



The Health Improvement Department worked in Partnership with WHSCT Maternity Services to develop a new policy to support Western Trust Breastfeeding Mothers returning to Work. It recognised the value of breastfeeding for mothers and babies and aims to support them to breastfeed for longer. To help inform employees going on maternity Leave a new resource Your Body Your Baby was also developed. This new leaflet is distributed to women planning for Maternity Leave via Human Resource's Terms and Conditions Department providing a range of information regarding a healthy pregnancy and beyond.

Pictured below are colleagues from Health Improvement, Health Visiting and Midwifery involved in promoting Infant Mental Health.

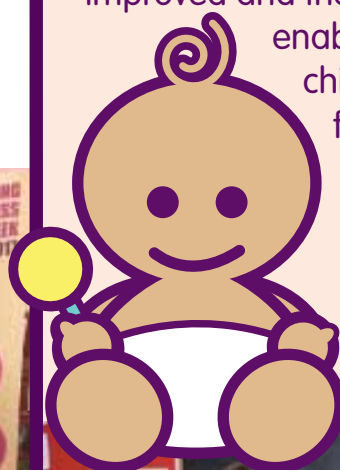


Solihull Training



The Solihull Approach Foundation Training supports and enables staff, parents and families to find a better way of working together. The approach builds strengths and resilience deepening supportive relationships within the family structure to build happy and secure families by enhancing the way parents communicate with their children. In line with the Solihull Development Plan 12 practitioners from across the Trust area were trained as trainers to deliver the 2 day Solihull Approach Foundation course and 10 practitioners trained as trainers on the 10 week Solihull parenting course, supporting the implementation of the Solihull plan for the WHSCT 2016- 2019.

The Health Improvement Department in partnership with WEST delivered a 9 week parenting programme to 10 parents in Ballykelly Primary School. The interactive course was aimed at parents and guardians of children aged between 0-18 years to help increase understanding of their child's behaviour. Overall the parents reported that their confidence and self-esteem improved and they developed their parenting skills which enabled them to build positive interactions with their child/ren. A number of parents had reported that family life had improved as they were able to understand their child's behaviour and communicate more effectively as a result of their training. Pictured below participants from the recent Understanding Your Child's Behaviour course.





Talking to our Babies

We created a 'heart' with the **'Give your child lots of love, affection and praise'** message inside and asked parents to take a photo of their baby, toddler or child holding the heart and share onto our Facebook page, promoting the message widely. This 'heart' was passed throughout our local nursery schools, community playgroups, parent and toddler groups, SureStarts, libraries and shopping centres.

The Talking To Our Babies project wrote an article for the Derry News around the 5 key Infant Mental Health Messages the article aimed to encourage parents to think about the impact their actions and language have upon their baby, toddler or child's mental health and the importance of 'giving your child lots of love, affection and praise'. Over 2,000 people benefited and engaged in this campaign.

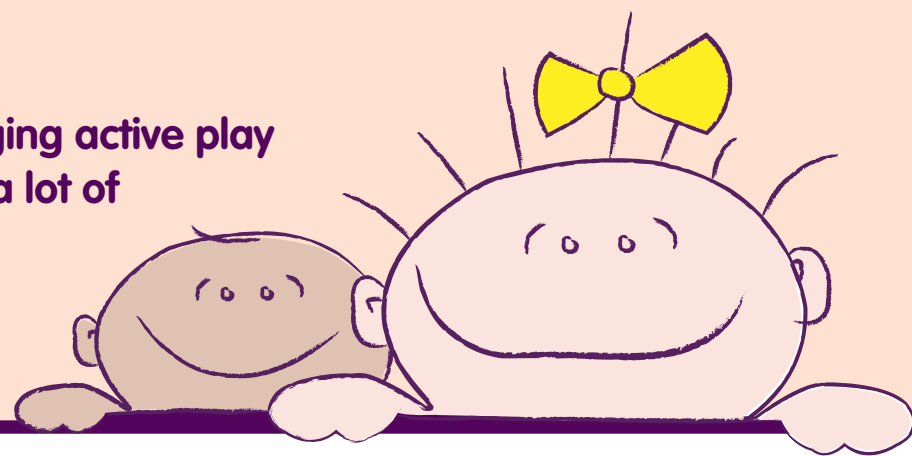


Give your child lots of love, praise and affection

Find ways that you enjoy spending time with your child and your child enjoys spending time with you. This will improve your relationship and result in a happier child and happier parent.

Have fun and play with your child

Reduce the risk of overweight or obesity in children by encouraging active play from birth. Lots of parents find that their child is able to release a lot of emotional energy by being physically active which helps them manage their mood and emotions.



Schools for Hope

Every child deserves HOPE and the opportunity to face life equipped with the essential tools for emotional wellness. Schools for Hope is a new curriculum project developed by iFred (the International Foundation for Research and Education on Depression) It is based on research that suggests hope is a teachable skill. The Health Improvement Department is working with Outer West Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership to pilot this innovative programme with a number of schools in the area.

The aim is to equip students, educators, and parents with the tools they need to find and maintain hope even during the most trying of times. 30 facilitators representing statutory, voluntary and community sectors have been trained to deliver the programme. The University of Ulster's Psychology department led by Dr Karen Kirby have partnered with the Health Improvement Department to undertake the research.

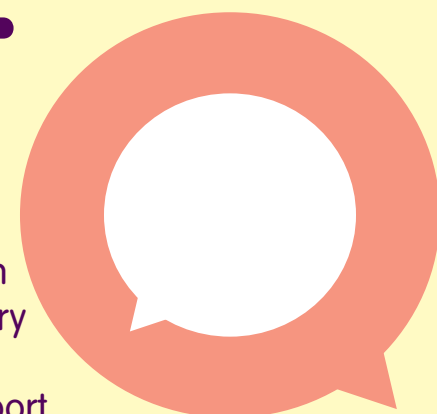


Pioneering Communities

Pioneer Communities vision is to have a society in which pregnant women, mothers, partners and young children experience optimum levels of health and wellbeing.

The pilot will deliver an early intervention programme working with parents and children to promote the physical, intellectual, social and emotional development of pre-school children and enabling them to have the best possible start in life within the 5 Neighbourhood Renewal areas of Derry City & Strabane District Council (Outer North, Outer West, Strabane, Triax & Waterside).

Speech & Language Therapy WH&SCT



Parents can talk, read, sing, have fun and tune in to their baby from the very beginning. The WHSCT Speech and Language Therapy Department support all the key messages of the IMH campaign and believe they are an excellent foundation for a happy, healthy childhood. The read a story message in particular is central to supporting ways of communicating with your child. Babies recognise sounds of speech and their parent's voices while they are in the womb so it is never too early to start talking with babies.

It is important to encourage parents to take turns with their child as communication is a two-way process. We also encourage parents by showing them what types of books, songs, rhymes suit babies and toddlers of various ages and stages of development. Communication is a vital skill that needs to be supported and nurtured from a young age.

Early Intervention Transformation Programme

"I feel more confident and informed, I have learnt about bathing, pain relief and feeding, thanks for all your help."

As a result of the classes I feel more confident and I've learnt practical skills and knowledge."

Programme participant, WH&SCT.

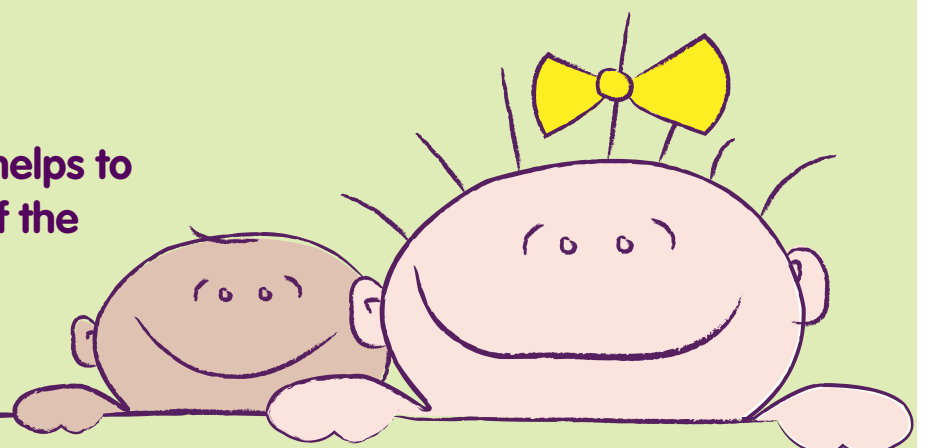


The Early Intervention Transformation Programme (EITP) aims to equip parents with the skills needed to give their child the best start in life via 3 strands - getting ready for baby; Getting ready for toddler; Getting ready to Learn



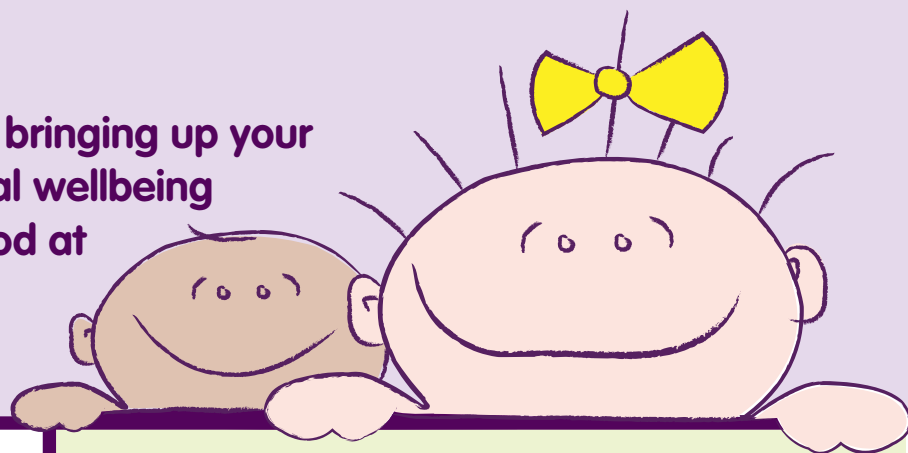
Read a story to your child everyday

It's best to read little but often. Quiet and focused reading time helps to develop your child's listening skills and concentration. So turn off the TV, mobile and radio to give your child your full attention.



Happy parent, happy child

As a parent or carer you have a vital and most privileged role in bringing up your child. It is important to look after your own mental and emotional wellbeing because your emotions are reflected to the baby. Babies are good at picking up on emotional states, this is their language.



Hug the Castle Event

Action for Children

To demonstrate the appreciation of the vital role that parent's play in giving their child the best start in life, the multi-agency locality planning group hosted a family fun day this month at Enniskillen Castle. The 5 Infant Mental Health messages underline the direct work Action for Children deliver around the Early Intervention Family Support Service.



The 800 Baby Steps Walk at Enniskillen Castle on Friday 16th June 2017 brought together 58 parents and families with practitioners to celebrate the best start in life. Families were welcomed into the historic grounds of Enniskillen Castle by Fermanagh and Omagh District Council to play and have fun with physical and learning initiatives that were hosted by the locality planning group members including Bubble Toddler Yoga, Take 5 campaign, storytelling, puppets and arts and crafts.



Roots of Empathy

The Roots of Empathy programme is a classroom based programme which centres around a baby visiting the classroom with his parent throughout a school year, nine times in total. A Roots of Empathy instructor facilitates and encourages the pupils to observe the relationship between baby and parent. This helps the pupils to understand and name their feelings, raising social and emotional competence to increase their understanding of empathy whilst at the same time reducing levels of aggression.

A total of 5 additional teachers completed the Roots of Empathy Training for Trainers this year making a total of 18 programmes being delivered to 425 pupils within 17 primary schools. 100% of all ROE programmes were fully completed within participating schools.

ROE is great example of effective partnership working with education and health. Children without siblings have felt connected to the baby as the baby has been an invaluable life experience of being an older sibling. With regards to children for who English is not their first language ROE has been inclusive of their needs, made them feel included and helped them bond with classmates.



Relax Kids

Relax Kids uses a range of relaxation techniques to teach children how to relax. Outcomes show Relax Kids is a proactive programme to strengthen mental and emotional wellbeing and resilience in children that is inclusive to every child's needs. The programme demonstrates a measurable increase in children's self-esteem, mood, listening skills and confidence. There are benefits to the children's home and school life with regards to behaviour, ability to manage feelings and ability to relax.

Incredible Years

The Pre-school basic Incredible Years (IY's) training took place in January 2017 and trained 15 practitioners from both statutory and voluntary sector to deliver the pre-school basic and school readiness programme. In February 2017 practitioners and line managers attended a peer networking workshop which outlined the steps to becoming an accredited trainer and a support library has been developed to support practitioners who wish to become accredited.



The Best Start in Life for Your Child

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