



Preparation for Birth and Beyond

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- Pregnancy, Birth & Beyond is a new antenatal education programme targeted at first time parents starting to be delivered in Leeds Children's Centres
- Based on a new framework developed by an expert panel set up by the Department of Health
- Developed in response to national and local research highlighting that current antenatal education is highly variable (McMillan et al 2009):
 - it tends to be highly medicalised & focussed on the birth.
 - it often fails to engage men.
 - some at risk families find classes hard to access.

A critical window of opportunity(1)

- Recent insights from neuroscience and developmental psychology highlight the critical importance of pregnancy.
- Growing evidence base that shows intervening early is the most effective way to promote good developmental outcomes for children and prevent maltreatment and neglect
 - Almost half (45%) of serious case reviews involve a child under one.

A critical window of opportunity (2)

- Pregnancy is a time most parents are highly receptive to changing their behaviour.
- Intervening during pregnancy can set the template for positive parenting.
- Antenatal classes can address critical risks factors for poor parenting and maltreatment:
 - lack of knowledge of child development
 - unrealistic expectations of babies/parenthood
 - parental conflict

What parents want

- Recent research has revealed key characteristics that parents value from antenatal education:
 - help through the transition to parenthood.
 - participative learning.
 - opportunities to talk to other parents.
 - local provision

Leeds Preparation for birth and Beyond Programme

- Focus on:
 - the transition to parenthood.
 - the relationship between parents.
 - the development of a positive parent-infant relationship.

Themes for the sessions:

- Our baby's development.
 - Changes for me and us.
 - Giving birth and meeting our baby.
 - Caring for our baby.
 - Our health and well-being.
 - People who are there for us.
- Highly interactive, not didactic approach.
 - Delivered by Early Start Teams in Children's Centres.

Action to date

- Established a working group to drive the implementation of PBB in Leeds ,reporting to Early Start Implementation Board
- Developed and delivered pilot PBB courses in 3 areas Bramley, Beeston, City and Holbeck.
- Involved Infant Mental Health (IMH)Service including delivery of 'Understanding your Baby' training to all staff
- Using the findings from pilot to inform the wider roll out plan.
- Identified 3 further teams to work with the IMH Service and pilot sites to establish the programme in their areas.

Some initial evaluation comments

- Bonding may not happen straight away – sense of relief
- As first time mums the info was helpful as we didn't know it
- I thought it would be useless but it has been useful
- I felt relaxed meeting new people ,I am not normally confident
- Dad's got very involved
- Feel my husband understands me better
- My husband brought home a wish box he had made (for the baby)
- To know there are people and things out there to access for support