

For further information about this service contact:

**For further information about this service** call our Single Point of Access (SPA) number: 0300 555 0606 or email us: [ccs.beds.childrens.spa@nhs.net](mailto:ccs.beds.childrens.spa@nhs.net) or visit our website page: [www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk/BedsBabyFriendlyTeam](http://www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk/BedsBabyFriendlyTeam)

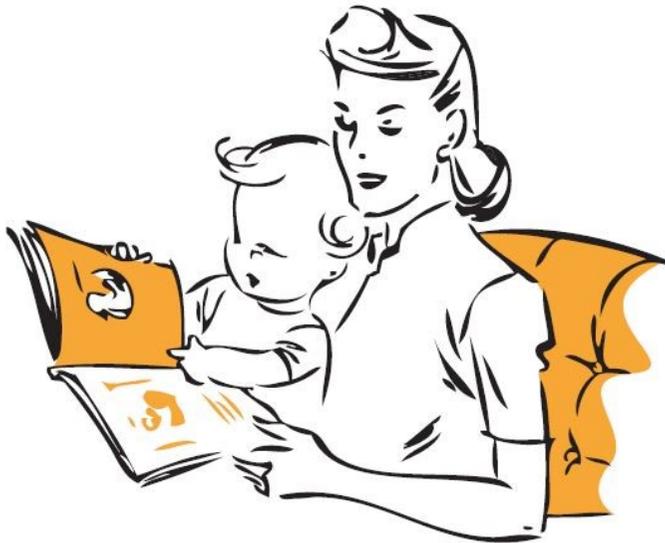
Our clinics are based at:

#### Bedford

- Enhanced Services Centre
- Kempston Clinic
- London Road Health Centre

#### Central Bedfordshire

- Biggleswade Hospital
- Queensborough House, Dunstable
- Flitwick Health Centre
- Leighton Buzzard Clinic
- Houghton Regis Health Centre
- Shefford Health Centre



If you require this information in a different format such as in large print or on audio tape, or in a different language please contact the service on the details above.

If you have any compliments about this service or suggestions for improvements, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 0300 131 1000 (charges may apply depending on your network) or email: [ccs-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ccs-tr.pals@nhs.net).

For free, confidential health advice and information 24 hours a day, 365 days a year please contact NHS 111.



**Bedfordshire  
Community  
Health Services**



## Books, babies and bonding

A guide to developing relationships through books

### 0-19 Children's Service



## Why Read to Your Baby?

Reading to your baby creates a special bonding time for you and your child, it helps them to learn new words and become a good listener.

- It prepares your baby for learning to read and for future success in school
- It introduces your baby to many experiences through stories, songs and rhymes
- It is a calming activity that makes parenting easier
- And most importantly... it is fun for both of you

## How to Share Books with Your Baby

- Have a regular time for reading each day, such as naptime, after meals or bedtime
- Pick a book that you and your child will like
- Find a comfortable and cosy place to sit
- Choose a quiet place away from TV, radio and other distractions
- Hold the book so your baby can see the pictures and words clearly
- Use your voice to make the words come alive
- Have your baby take part in the reading by pointing out objects, talking about the pictures or saying common words
- Read your baby's favourite books again whenever asked
- Pack a book to read during waiting times - on trips, at the doctor's or in a queue at a shop
- Borrow books from your library so there are plenty of books in your home
- Keep reading times short and fun. Stop if your baby becomes fussy or restless

## Newborn (Birth to 6 Months)

Newborn babies love the soothing sounds of familiar voices, the security of being held and the sight of bright bold pictures.

During this time your newborn will learn to:-

- Stare at things nearby and cry to show feelings
- Watch your movements and facial expressions
- Make different sounds - babbles, coos, squeals
- Play with hands and feet
- Enjoy rhythm and being rocked

## Ideas for activities with your newborn

- Place a few board books next to your baby to look at
- Listen to your baby "talk"; smile and babble back
- Talk about what you are doing
- Point to and name objects and pictures
- Choose some books that show faces of different people
- Choose some books that have different textures to touch and feel
- Calm your baby with nursery rhymes and songs
- Rock your baby to sleep with lullabies

## Older Baby (6 to 15 Months)

Older babies begin to say a few words. They like to grab, chew, poke, push, point and sort things around them as well as sit, crawl and maybe walk.

Your older baby will learn to:

- Reach out and hold toys and books
- Take objects in and out of containers
- Bang, shake, bite and drop things
- Play simple games (such as peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake)
- Understand action words and imitate speech sounds or words
- Follow simple directions

## Ideas for activities with your older baby

- Let your baby "help" turn the pages of strong board books
- Pick some books that allow your baby to move parts or put hands through holes
- Sing to your baby; recite active rhymes
- Point to and name objects in books
- Read the same favourite stories repeatedly to your baby

Bookstart packs for all children will be available at 14 day health visitor contact and as your child enters pre-school.