

YOUR JOURNEY TO BIRTH

December 2023

A service guide to help
you through your
journey from planning
for a pregnancy to the
birth of your child

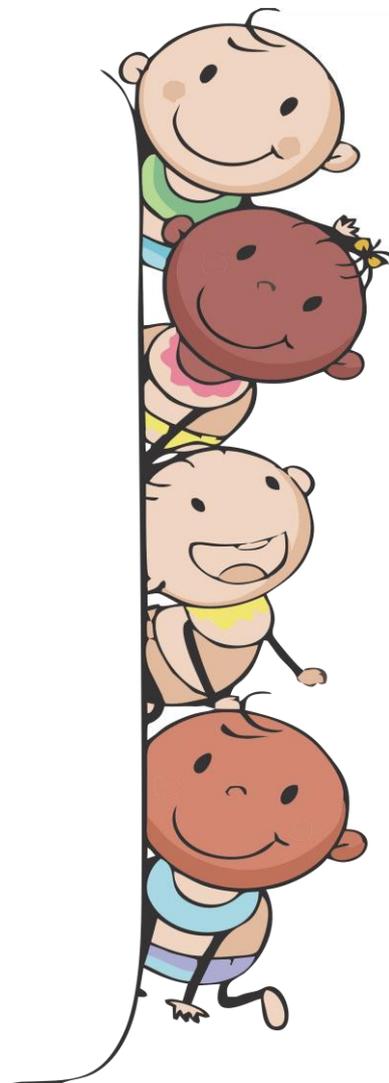
London Borough of

Redbridge



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ABOUT THIS BOOKLET

This booklet aims to give parents and caregivers information and services available for the crucial period from planning a pregnancy to after the birth of the child.

These services will support you during these early stages and are available to everyone who lives in the London Borough of Redbridge.



Planning a pregnancy

If you are thinking about having a baby, talk to your General Practitioner (GP) and or use the links below for health information and advice. They will help with all you need to know about trying for a baby, healthy happy pregnancy, labour and birth, parenthood, breastfeeding, vaccinations, and your and your baby's mental health and well-being. Find out more from the following websites:

- [Pregnancy - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)
- [Planning for Pregnancy \(Tommy's\)](#)
- [Pregnancy - Start for Life - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)
- [Pregnancy tips and advice - BBC Tiny Happy People.](#)

Your GP can also guide you with personal health advice, including fertility-related matters. If you're not registered with a GP, you can [find a GP](#) in your area and contact them to register.



Pregnancy

During any part of your journey from pregnancy to the birth of your child, **if you need help because English is not your first language**, then let the professional you are in touch with know and they will try to help you.

For information on finding out if you are pregnant, visit: [Finding out you're pregnant - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk).

When you find out that you are pregnant, contact a GP or a midwife to help you book your first appointment with a midwife. It is important to see a midwife as early as possible to get the [antenatal \(pregnancy\) care](https://www.nhs.uk) and information you need to have a healthy pregnancy. Your first midwife appointment should preferably happen before you are 10 weeks pregnant. This is because you will be offered some tests that should be done before 10 weeks. For further information visit: <https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/your-pregnancy-care/your-antenatal-appointments/>.

To find out about common symptoms in pregnancy and what to do about them, visit: [Common symptoms in pregnancy - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk).

It is important not to miss any of your pregnancy appointments, tests and scans as they will help identify any potential problems early and help you to look after your and your baby's health. To find out when all your antenatal and newborn screening tests should be done, visit: [Screening timeline](https://www.nhs.uk) (Public Health England).

If you have special health needs or disability, your midwife, GP or obstetrician may take shared responsibility for your maternity care.

Sadly, sometimes pregnancy can go wrong for support and advise visit: [When pregnancy goes wrong - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk).



Key Appointments During Pregnancy

Dates	Event	Purpose
As soon as you know you are pregnant	Book an appointment with your GP	To notify that you are pregnant
Before 10 weeks	Booking clinic	Offer a baseline assessment and plan the pregnancy
Between 10 and 13 (+6)	Dating scan	An accurate gestational age is calculated from the crown rump length (CRL) and multiple pregnancies are identified
16 weeks	Antenatal appointment	Discuss results and plan future appointments
Between 18 and 20 (+6 days)	Anomaly scan	An ultrasound to identify and anomalies, such as heart conditions
25, 28, 31, 34, 36, 38, 40, 41 and 42 weeks	Antenatal appointments	Monitor the pregnancy and discuss future plans

To learn more, visit: [Screening tests in pregnancy - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk).

Most pregnancies progress well, however, be aware that some women may have additional appointments such as for higher risk or complicated pregnancies. To find out more, speak with your midwife and visit: [If antenatal screening tests find something - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk).



Further Information for During Pregnancy

Birth and labour

For information on birth and labour please refer to the information provided by your midwife. You can also visit: [Labour and birth - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk).

Antenatal classes

Antenatal classes can help you to prepare for your baby's birth and give you confidence and information. You can also make new friends with parents to be who are going through similar experiences to yourself. To find out about classes near you, ask your midwife, health visitor or [GP](#). NHS antenatal classes are **free**. To learn more visit: [Antenatal classes \(NHS\)](#).

Vaccines for pregnant women

Do not forget to get your vaccines! There are two vaccines offered to all pregnant women:

- Whooping cough (pertussis) from 16 weeks' gestation;
- Influenza (flu) when available in autumn or winter.

To learn more, visit: [NHS vaccinations and when to have them - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#); and [Pregnancy and COVID-19 - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#).

Support

For advice for things you might need support with during pregnancy, visit: [Support - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

Feeding your baby

You may start thinking about how you would feed your baby. You may consider to breastfeed your baby as it has lots of health benefits. For information visit: [Breastfeeding - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#).



First Week After Birth

Congratulations and welcome to your new baby!

Within the first 24 hours of birth, a health professional will offer to give your baby an injection of vitamin K. This is to prevent a rare but serious blood disorder. You will also be offered a [newborn physical examination](#) for your baby in their first 72 hours. Among other things, their eyes, heart, hips will be checked for possible problems. An audiologist will check your baby's hearing and may bring you back for a repeat check.

If you notice anything that worries you about your baby, however small, speak to your midwife, health visitor or your GP. To learn more, visit: [Getting to know your newborn](#) (NHS).

Register your baby with your GP as soon as possible.

You can receive information and support regarding feeding your new baby including breastfeeding from your Midwife, Health Visitor, or trained Breastfeeding advisors from the Health Improvement of 0-19 Universal Services (NHS) or the Children's Centres Team. To learn more, visit: [New birth section](#) (NHS).

Newborn and baby sleeping advice

To find out what your baby needs to sleep safely, how much sleep they need, and get tips on coping with tiredness, visit: [Baby and newborn sleeping advice for parents - Start for Life - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)



Health Visiting Service

Health Visiting are part of a team of 0-19 Universal Children's Services from the NHS. They will offer you advice, information and support from pregnancy through to when your child is school age in the following:

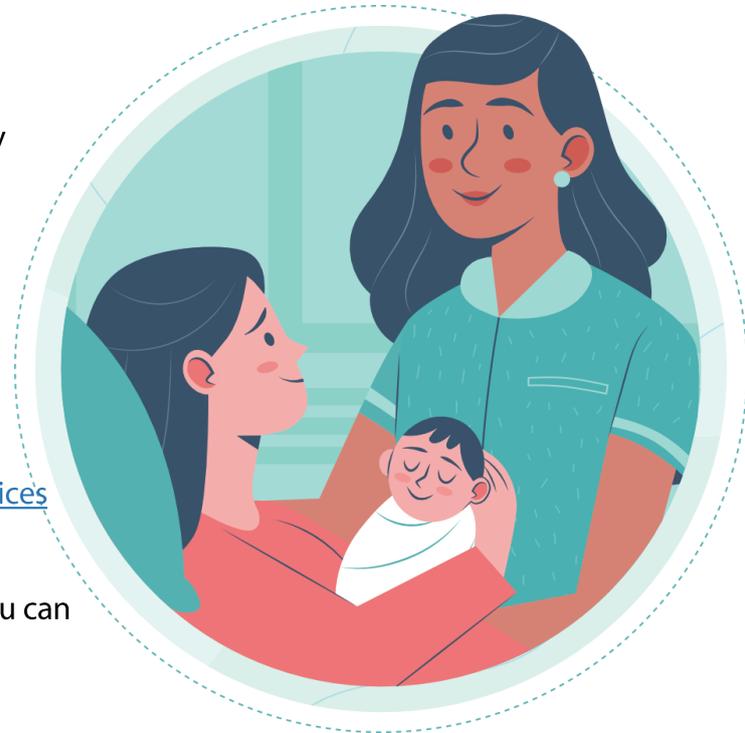
- health and well-being of you and your baby,
- feeding your baby,
- social and environmental issues that may impact the health and well-being of you and your family,
- And much more.

Your Health Visiting team will contact you at different stages as your child grows and develops. During the early days you will be contacted at:

- 10 to 14 days after you have had a baby for the New Birth Visit
- 6 to 8 weeks from birth, which is a general wellbeing check for you and your baby. This will be carried out in addition to the GP's 6 to 8 weeks assessment.

For more information, visit: [0-19 Universal Children's Services \(NELFT/NHS\)](#).

If you have any questions for the Health Visiting team, you can call the Duty Desk on 0300 300 1579.



Baby's Immunisations Journey

Remember to immunise your child in due course as below.

Age	Immunisation
Pre-Birth	Pertussis between 16 and 32 weeks
Eight weeks old	Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, Hib, hepatitis B, meningococcal B, rotavirus
Twelve weeks old	Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, Hib, hepatitis B, pneumococcal, rotavirus
Sixteen weeks old	Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, Hib, hepatitis B, meningococcal B
One year old	Hib, Meningococcal C, pneumococcal, measles, mumps, rubella, meningococcal B

Contact your GP or local pharmacy for your baby's immunisations. For more information visit: [Vaccinations and when to have them](#) (NHS).



New Birth Registration with the Registry Office

All births that happen in the London Borough of Redbridge must be registered at the Register Office in Redbridge Town Hall. If you have a baby in Queens Hospital in the London Borough of Havering, then you are also able to register your baby's birth at [Redbridge Register Office](#).

A birth should be registered within 42 days of the child being born.

You must make an appointment to register the birth of a baby online using this link: [Register a Birth \(Redbridge\)](#) and take all relevant documents mentioned in the website with you to the appointment.

Address:
Redbridge Town Hall
High Road, Ilford
Essex
IG1 1NF



Contraception after birth

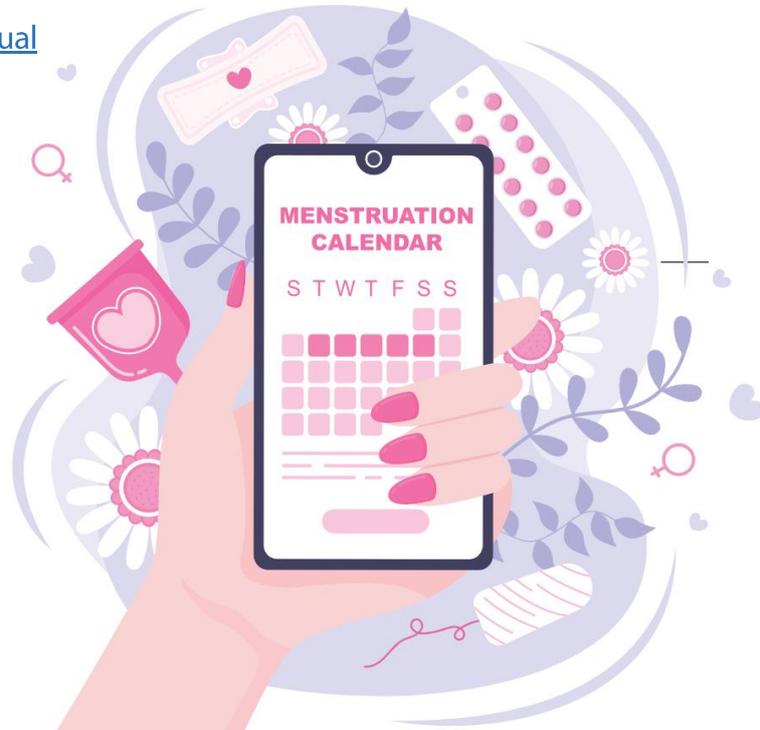
You can get free contraception after birth at your local sexual health clinics, including the Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) which can be offered 48 hours after giving birth, and confidential health advice, screening and treatment.

LARC is most effective if received as soon as possible after delivery. It is over 99% effective, reliable, and quickly reversible.

To book an appointment call 0208 970 5724 or visit: [Sexual Health](#) (NHS).

You can also ask your midwife or GP regarding contraception.

For free emergency contraception and Chlamydia screening contact your local pharmacy or visit: [Sexual Health](#) (Redbridge).



Need a little help?

If you are finding things a little tough, the Baby Banks in [Children's Centres](#) can provide you with clothes, equipment and other essentials to welcome your baby. It is all clean, safe and FREE to families in Redbridge. There are three Baby and Toddler Banks available as below.

1. Orchard Baby Bank at Orchard Children's Centre |

Liston Way, Woodford Green, IG8 7BL | 020 8708 8344

| orchardbabybank@redbridge.gov.uk

2. Loxford Baby & Toddler Bank at Loxford Children's

Centre | 136 Ilford Lane, Ilford, IG1 2LG | 020 8708 2060

| loxfordcc@redbridge.gov.uk

3. Hainault Baby & Toddler Bank at Hainault Children's

Centre | 114 Huntsman Road, Hainault, IG6 3SY | 020

8708 9423 | newburyhallcc@redbridge.gov.uk



Healthy Start Scheme (NHS)

Get help to buy food and milk using the [NHS Healthy Start](#) card. You can get £4.25 every week to help you buy infant formula milk, cow's milk, fruit, vegetables and pulses. You can also get free vitamins.

If you are more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under 4 years, you may be entitled to get help to buy healthy food and milk. Getting a Healthy Start card will not affect your benefits.

Who is eligible?

- Under 18's who are pregnant
- Those at least 10 weeks pregnant who receive child tax credit, income support, job seekers allowance or universal credit
- Have at least one child under 4 years

If your application ([How to apply for Healthy Start card](#)) is successful, you will be sent a Healthy Start card with money on it that you can use in some shops.

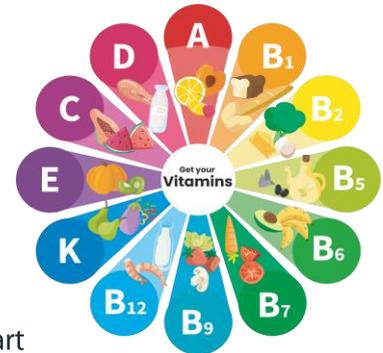
If you are not a British citizen but your child is, then you might be eligible for Healthy Start depending on your immigration status. To apply, ask for an application form via email: Healthystartclaim@dhs.gov.uk. Only use this email address if you think you cannot claim public funds because of your immigration status.

Healthy Start Vitamins

You can also use your card to collect the following:

- Healthy Start vitamins – these support you during pregnancy and breastfeeding
- Vitamin drops for babies and young children – these are suitable from birth to 4 years old.

To get your Healthy Start vitamins, visit one of the [health centres](#) or [Children's Centres](#) listed and show your Healthy Start card to the receptionist.



Financial Support

Maternity Allowance and Sure Start Maternity Grant

- [Maternity Allowance claim form \(GOV\)](#)
- [Start Maternity Grant: Eligibility - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk).

Maternity and Paternity Benefits and Leave

- [Maternity pay and leave: Overview \(GOV\)](#)
- [Maternity and paternity benefits and leave \(NHS\)](#).

Child Benefit

[Child Benefit: How it works \(GOV\)](#) and the [Child Benefit claim form CH2](#).

Childcare After Maternity Leave

For information on options for childcare and funding, visit:

- [Get childcare: step by step \(GOV\)](#)
- [Early education and childcare \(Redbridge\)](#)
- [Childcare choices \(GOV\)](#).

For more information on benefits and financial support, please go to page 20 of this booklet.



Other Services

Children's Centres

They provide **FREE** activities and support to help you to give your child **the best start in life**. From the moment you know you are expecting a baby, the [Children's Centres](#) services will be available to you up until your child's 5th birthday and their 8th birthday for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This includes families with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) or those who are refugees.

They can support you with:

- bonding and attachment with your baby
- how your child can grow well
- your well-being (feeling low, anxious or isolated)
- parenting
- financial difficulties
- volunteering



To access services from [Children's Centres](#), register your family using the [Online Children's Centre registration form](#) and then book your place using the method suggested in the Children's Centres timetables.

For **information brochure, timetables** of activities and **how to book** visit: [Children's Centres](#).

Early Years Play and Development (EYPaD) Centre

The [EYPaD](#) Centre is specially designed with age-appropriate rooms to create the best early play environment for children and their family **living in Redbridge or other boroughs**. This centre provides fun activities with high-quality resources where parents and carers know their children will be free to discover and learn in safety at an affordable price. It is also a much sought after child-friendly, fun and safe venue for hosting children's parties and events.

For **bookings and information** about activities, visit [EYPaD](#).

For **venue hire for parties** and other queries, email: eypad@redbridge.gov.uk, or telephone: 020 8709 2012.



Other Services

Redbridge Families Information Direct (also known as FiND)

FiND is a Family Information Service and provides information, advice and guidance to families with children up to 19 years (or up to 25 years for those with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) both online and through a helpline service.

Their online Family Service Directory has information on a range of subjects, including:

- Early education and childcare
- Education and schools
- Children's Centres
- Children's health and wellbeing
- Financial support
- Leisure and activities
- Support for parents
- Redbridge SEND Local Offer

You can visit the FiND directory at [FiND Redbridge](#). For those who can't find what they're looking for in the directory or who would like some additional support, the FiND helpline can be contacted by email at find@redbridge.gov.uk, or by calling on 0800 587 7500.

Early Identification of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

If your child has complex developmental and sensory needs, these may be identified at birth. Health assessments, including the new-born hearing screening test, are used to help early identification of a range of medical and physical difficulties.

[Health services](#) and [health visitors](#) can work with you and help access appropriate support. For further information visit: [Redbridge Early Years SEND Local Offer](#).



Other Services

Solihull online parenting programme

If you live in Redbridge, you can access FREE online courses which were created to help you understand important developmental stages in children. They also give tips on how to get the best out of young lives.

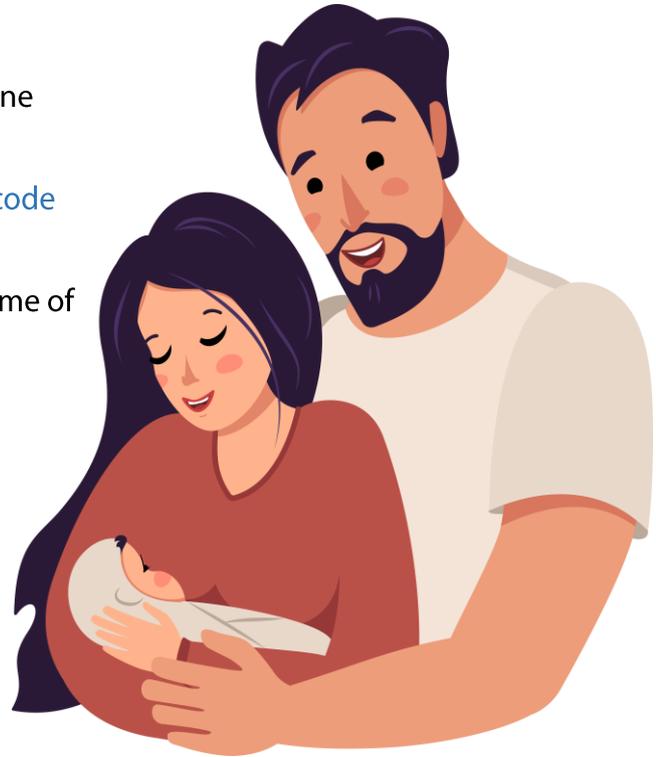
The **Understanding pregnancy, labour, birth and your baby** course was written by registered midwives and NHS professionals. The **Understanding your baby** course was written by psychologists, psychotherapists and health visitors. These courses are for everyone around the baby to support you and the arrival of our new baby.

To get free unlimited access visit [In Our Place](#) and use the [access code BRIDGE](#).

There are many more online courses available via this link with some of them being available in different languages.

Redbridge Council and Vision RCL

You can find out about other local council services for children and families from [Redbridge](#) or [Vision RCL](#) for Redbridge's culture and leisure offer.



Raising a Happy and Healthy Child

A lot goes into raising a happy and healthy child. The biggest area of brain development occurs from conception to before children turn five. During this time, their brain develops, creating emotional bonds with their primary caregivers, becoming resilient so that they can cope better with the difficult things in life, and establishing the foundations of communication and language.

After birth, a baby's environment is largely shaped by their primary caregiver. How happy and healthy a child grows up to be are dependent on the nurturing care they receive from their primary caregiver, such as physical health and nutrition, responsive caregiver relationships, safety and security, and early learning. This is because children experience their world as an environment of relationships, and these relationships affect virtually all aspects of their development. Therefore, what you do with your baby will spark connections in their brain and essential [neural](#) connections and pathways will be formed. Thus, you play a vital role in all areas of your baby's development.

To learn all about their different baby development milestones and how you can support, visit: [Your baby's development milestones](#) (UNICEF), and [All about baby's development](#) (BBC).

To find out what things you can do every day to help your child's growing brain so that they can grow to be happy and healthy, visit the sites below.

- [Baby Buddy app - Best Beginnings](#)
- Go to [Children's Centres](#) for baby massage, Coffee & Chat groups, infant feeding cafés, play and learning activities
- [Pregnancy: Tips, advice and ideas](#) (BBC)
- [An attachment-based approach to positive parenting](#) (Five to Thrive)
- [In Our Place](#) (see page 17 for access code).



Emotional Well-being of You and Your Partner

Being pregnant is a big life event and it is natural to feel a lot of different emotions. It is common to suffer from anxiety, low mood, sleeping difficulties, depression and stress ([Postnatal depression and perinatal mental health](#)). If you are feeling any of these and it is starting to affect your life, there are things you can try that may help. For more information and support visit:

- [Perinatal mental health](#) (NHS)
- [Mental health problems and pregnancy](#) (NHS)
- [Domestic Abuse support \(Redbridge\): https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/crime-and-public-safety/domestic-abuse/](https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/crime-and-public-safety/domestic-abuse/)

Information for dads and partners

Bringing a baby into your life is going to mean major changes to your routine and your energy levels. To find information and support to help you be an awesome dad, visit:

- [How Does Pregnancy Affect Fathers and Partners | Tommy's \(tommys.org\)](#)
- [Get Support](#) (Dad Matters);
- [Advice for dads to be](#) (Family Lives);
- [Father Support Groups](#).

For more information about what's happening at each stage of your partner's pregnancy and how you can support them, visit: [Supporting Your Partner During Pregnancy | Tommy's \(tommys.org\)](#).

If you feel you or your partner need help with emotional well-being then talk to your midwife, health visitor or GP. They will be able to advise and or refer you to a specialist community perinatal mental health team, or a mother and baby mental health unit (MBU) if you need it.

To learn more, visit:

- [Mental health before, during and after pregnancy- NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)
- [Mental health and wellbeing](#) (Tommy's)



More Useful links

Benefits and financial support

- [Benefits and financial support for families \(GOV\)](#)
- [Sign into your Universal Credit account \(GOV\)](#)
- [Benefits \(GOV\)](#)
- Redbridge Welfare Benefits service: Email: welfare.benefits@redbridge.gov.uk Tel: 020 8708 4180
- <https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/family-and-care/becoming-a-parent/baby-costs-calculator>

Turn2Us Benefit support

You could be missing out on money which you never have to pay back. Use their Grants Search tool and [Turn2Us](#). will match you to grants for which you may be eligible. If you don't have access to the internet or struggle going online, you can call the Turn2us **helpline** on **0808 802 2000**.

Cost-of-Living Crisis

To find support available for people affected by cost-of-living crisis visit:

- [Cost of Living](#)
- [Foodbanks or Find your nearest foodbank](#)
- [Weekly grocery savings](#) including Ilford Community Grocery
- [Help with your energy bills: Overview \(GOV\)](#)
- Debt: [National Debtline](#); <https://debtfreeadvice.com/>; www.breathing-space.uk
- The Magpie Project: <https://themagpieproject.org/about/>
- Support with water bills through the WaterSure scheme: www.thameswater.co.uk/watersure) or www.eswater.co.uk/watersure (depending on your supplier).

Citizen Advice Redbridge

[Citizens Advice Redbridge](#) provides free, confidential, independent and impartial advice and campaign on the issues affecting lives.



More Useful links

Keeping well during pregnancy

The links below will give you information and advice on how to look after yourself and your baby while you are pregnant.

- [Keeping well in pregnancy - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)
- Stop [alcohol intake](#); [Stop smoking](#) (NHS). [Redbridge Quits Smoking website](#)
- [Healthy diet](#) (NHS); [Exercise in pregnancy](#) (NHS)
- Sign up for [Better Health: Start for Life's weekly NHS emails](#)
- [Every Mind Matters](#) (NHS)
- [Mental Health and Wellbeing Map](#)
- [Redbridge health-and-wellbeing](#)
- NHS approved digital mental wellbeing service [Good Thinking](#)
- [Bleeding gums in pregnancy](#) (NHS). It's very important to keep your teeth and gums clean and healthy while you are pregnant. NHS dental care is **free** during pregnancy and for the first year after the birth of your baby. To get free dental care, you need to apply for a maternity exemption certificate (MatEx). Ask your doctor, nurse or midwife for form FW8. Visit <https://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/service/dental-services/oral-health-promotion/>



Finding a dentist, your local pharmacy and other services

[Health Watch Redbridge](#)

Ready to Learn

[Ready to Learn](#) starts from the time you become pregnant. If your child is **READY to LEARN** by the time they reach formal schooling i.e. reception class, it is more likely that they will learn, grow and succeed throughout their school life and beyond. Practising the tips, ideas and activities in this [leaflet](#) will help your baby to enjoy learning, feel good about themselves and be happy, healthy and ready to start nursery or school when they are older.

Summary of Steps in Your Journey to Birth

Step 1

Planning a pregnancy:

When planning to have a baby, talk to your GP or use the Tommy's Tool for health information and advice.



Take Folic Acid and Vitamin D supplements.

Make positive lifestyle changes.

Start to think about how you may want to feed your baby



Step 2

Antenatal - During your pregnancy:

Inform your GP that you are pregnant. Your Midwife will contact you with advice and resources to support and prepare you for your baby's birth.



Before 10 weeks: Attend midwifery 'Booking Clinic'. Get important tests and scans done.

At 16 weeks: Get Whooping Cough vaccination for mum



Step 3

First Week After Birth:

Within the first 24 hours: Vitamin K injection will be given. Within the first 72 hours: a newborn physical examination will be completed.



Important tests will be carried out, e.g. newborn blood spot and hearing screening test



Step 4

When you come home with your baby:

Health will advise you on baby's feeding. Between 10 to 14 days of birth: New Birth Visit with a Health Visitor to give support, advice, and a health and well-being check-up for you, baby and family.



Register your child with GP ASAP.

Register child's birth within 42 days



Step 5

When your baby is 6 to 8 weeks old:

A physical checkup for you and your baby with your GP. A mother and baby review by your Health Visitor with advice and support.



Baby 8 weeks old: first immunisation



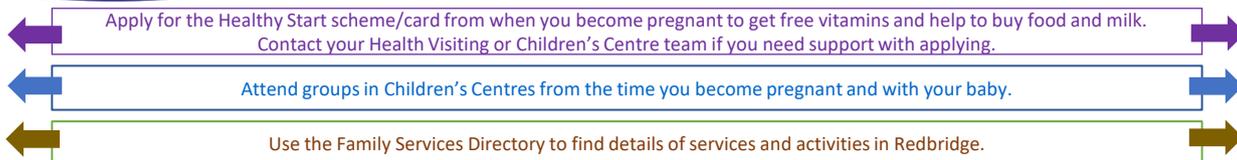
Step 6

When your baby is 8 to 12 weeks old:

Attend activities in Children's Centres and in the community venues to support you and your baby's happy and healthy growth.



Baby 12 weeks old: second immunisation





“Society is what happens when babies grow up”

Sally Hogg, 1001 Days Campaign

