



Children's Centres  
First place for families

You are pregnant.  
Here's who you might meet along the way...



Hertfordshire Children's Centre programme  
[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/childrenscentres](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/childrenscentres)



# Children's centres

Did you know you are welcome to go to your local children's centre before your baby has been born?

Did you know children's centres offer classes and breastfeeding support?



Children's centres work with midwives, GPs, health visitors, early years settings, schools and community groups to help you. Children's centres offer a wide range of services that take place at children's centres, in community venues, and in family homes.

Children's centres can help you with:

- breastfeeding support/feeding your baby
- information about early education and childcare
- advice and guidance
- family learning activities
- antenatal classes/parenting courses
- employment or training advice.

You can register with your local children's centre at any time, even before your baby is born.

To find your local children's centre visit [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/childrenscentres](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/childrenscentres)

**Hertfordshire's Families First Portal** also has a range of information for families.

## Why visit your local children's centre?

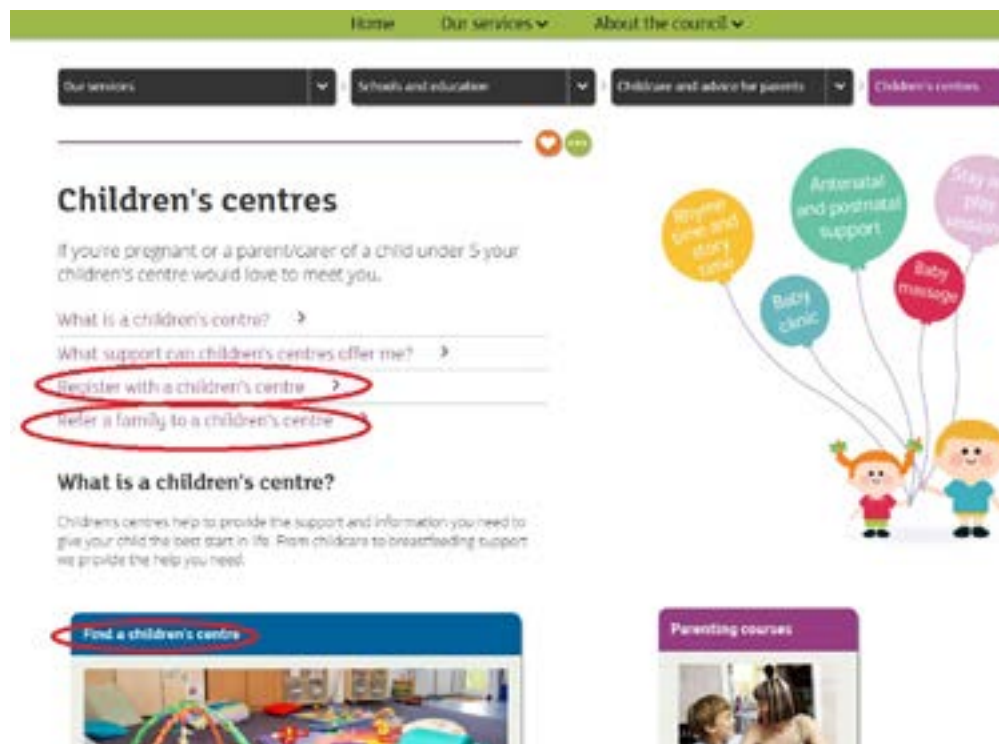
Hertfordshire Children's Centres support families through pregnancy and until your child is five. This can be through group classes such as baby massage, baby sign, stay and play, cooking classes, fitness classes and many more!

Most centres offer antenatal services working closely with midwives and health visiting teams. It's a great opportunity to meet new people and to ask any extra questions you might have. You can access antenatal classes, breastfeeding support and also find out what classes you can go to once you have had your baby. Baby health clinics also run in children's centres in most areas.

If you are unsure of the support you need just give your local centre a call and they will be able to help you.

You can find your local children's centre/ register with that centre by visiting [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/childrenscentres](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/childrenscentres)

Just select the options as shown in the picture. You can also request that a children's centre contact you by filling in a short online form by visiting [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/ccrequest](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/ccrequest)



Turn the page to see what other professionals you will meet at the children's centre, hospital or GP surgery.

# Midwives

The hospital midwife will complete the antenatal booking appointment, and you will be able to arrange your scans.



The midwife at the hospital will ask you to make further appointments with your community midwife based either at your GP surgery or local children's centre.



You can also book antenatal classes including ones about breastfeeding. To find out when and where these are running, ask your midwife.

Tours of maternity units are available at the two main maternity units in Hertfordshire, **Lister Hospital** in Stevenage and **Watford General Hospital**.

Following the birth of your baby and until your baby is ten days old the community midwifery team will call and visit you at home to check all is going well.



# Neonatal/special care baby unit

Your baby may be born too early or need specialist care, if this happens they may need to be admitted to a neonatal/special care baby unit.

In the unlikely event that your baby may need this specialist care following their birth they will be looked after in the neonatal unit/special care baby unit, by specially trained neonatal nurses and doctors, who with other professionals work as a team to care for you and your baby. These nurses and doctors will support you and care for your baby until they are well enough to go home.

## **Neonatal units specialise in looking after babies who are:**

- born too early (prematurely)
- full term but very small
- full term but require extra support because of a medical condition.



# Health visitor

Health visitors are registered nurses who have additional training in community public health nursing.

They offer support to you and your family during the early years of your child's life until the age of five.

In some areas of Hertfordshire health visitors will meet you when you are 28-34 weeks pregnant. They will then contact you 4-7 days following the birth of your baby and will arrange to visit you at home when your baby is 10-14 days old. This is called a new birth visit. It's at this stage that your health visitor takes over from your community midwife, marking the next stage of your parenting journey.

At the new birth visit you will be given a Bookstart Baby gift of free books to share stories, rhymes, and songs with your baby.

The health visitor will arrange a further visit between 6-8 weeks to review your baby's progress and discuss how you are feeling.

You can find out more about health visitors by visiting the **Hertfordshire Community Trust website**.



# Community Perinatal Team

## What does the Community perinatal Team (CPT) do?

Perinatal is the period of time during pregnancy and up to your child's first birthday. During this time any parent can be vulnerable to experiencing emotional difficulties and need extra support. We offer support to you and your family if you are likely to, or are experiencing problems during this time. We can help you to have a safe and healthy pregnancy and support you after the birth of your baby.

## What help can I get?

We support Hertfordshire families experiencing or at risk of emotional problems during the perinatal period. Without this support, it could be a challenging and unsettling period for you, your baby and family. Support can be provided from the beginning of pregnancy until your child's first birthday and is available for mums and partners too. Pre-conception counselling is also available. This is for women who have previously had a serious mental illness and want to get advice about managing risks and treatment, in a future pregnancy, before they become pregnant.

## How can I get referred?

A professional (such as your GP, midwife, health visitor, children's centre staff or similar) can refer you. It's important not to worry if a professional would like you to receive our support. We are here to help you, your baby and family have the best experience, and sometimes this requires getting a little extra help. We want to keep you well and know that acting early helps prevent problems developing later on.

To find out more about the **Community Perinatal Team** visit their web page.