



Babies Matter: Taster Session

Welcome (10 minutes)

Informal chat and introducing guests to one another

Introduction (5 minutes)

Introduce yourself and then give a brief outline of Babies Matter and who the programme is for. Remind guests that it's free but works on the basis that people commit to come each week to maintain the group dynamic. Explain that Kids Matter loves feedback and we use digital evaluations to measure if the programme is successful at improving parental confidence and well-being.

Q: Ask each person to introduce their baby to the group (name, age) or how far along they are in their pregnancy and whether they have any other children

(Make a graphic on an large piece of paper with stick people representing each family, so that you have a visual reminder.)

Icebreaker (10 minutes)

Each person picks a number and you read aloud the question and the guest answers it. Go first to set the tone - fun and light.

1. How would a good friend describe you?	9. What's your favourite meal of the day and why?
2. How would you spend an hour that you had all to yourself?	10. What's the best present someone has given you?
3. What is your favourite film/box set?	11. What was your favourite toy as a child?
4. If you could go anywhere on holiday where would it be?	12. What makes you laugh?
5. What was your favourite subject at school?	13. What is your favourite cake?
6. What is your favourite item of clothing?	14. Do you prefer chocolate or crisps?
7. What makes you laugh the most?	15. What's the funniest thing you've seen online recently?
8. What are you grateful for?	16. What do you wish someone taught you a long time ago?

Explain the programme (5 mins)

Babies Matter offers us the opportunity to take time to think about our newborn baby, what we do well / hope to do well as we care for them, and what we struggle with / may be nervous about. In our time together we will look at both the positives and the difficulties. *Encouraging one another to take positive steps in the way we parent, and learning from each other, is central to Babies Matter.* We hope that having a safe place where you can be honest and learn from each other will help positively shape the early years of your child's life and your experience of those years too.

The programme will also provide information about any local resources that are on offer and build contacts in the community.

We are planning on meeting for 6 sessions for 2 hours a week. Starting on

Broad outline of the programme

- Session 1 – Changes for me and us
- Session 2 – Attachment and bonding
- Session 3 – Helping baby to develop
- Session 4 – Building strong relationships
- Session 5 – Baby's amazing brain
- Session 6 – Thinking back, looking forward

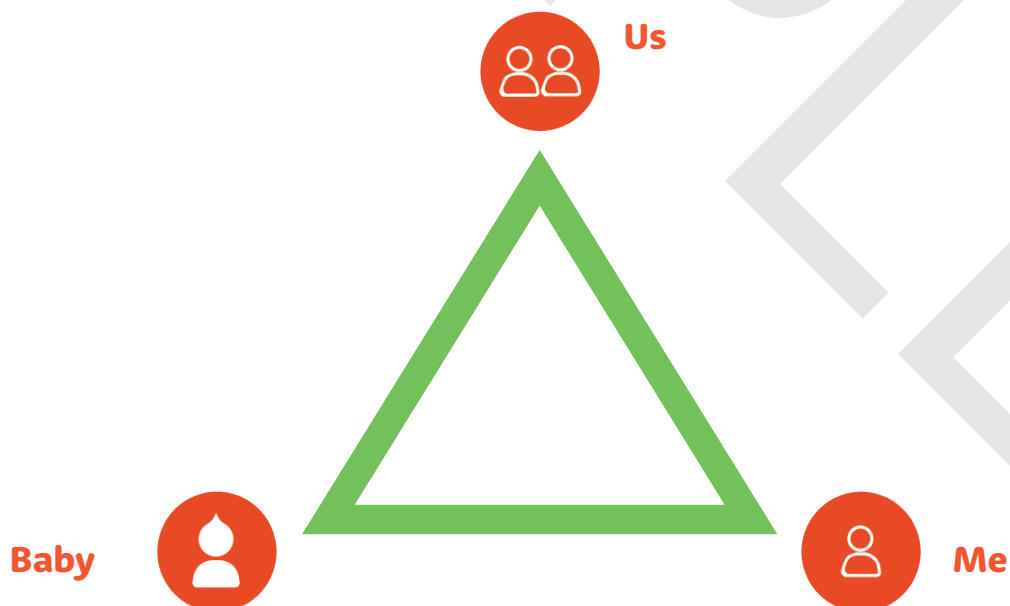
Six weeks later we will have a Booster session to catch up and see how everyone is getting on.

Explain that all the content in each session relates to either:

Baby - understanding what our baby needs and how we can get to know them

Me - our own wellbeing and the importance of this

Us - our relationship either with a co-parent or another important adult in our baby's life



Activity (10 mins)

To give us all an idea of how we much we are all adapting and adjusting to the arrival of a new baby, let's spend a few minutes thinking about what that is like for each of us.

Q: What have you found has been the biggest adjustment since your baby arrived / what do you anticipate will change when the baby arrives? *Encourage the parents that there are no right / wrong answers. If someone can't think of an answer, draw out how that feels.*

Babies may be small, but they have a BIG impact on many parts of our life – sleep, emotions, routine, relationships, for mums even our bodies change – you have either been through or will be going through a lot of change and transition with the arrival of your baby.

Q: Before your baby arrived, what did you find yourself looking forward to the most? Who experienced any nerves beforehand?

Q: For those who are still expecting their baby, what are you feeling excited about? Or nervous about?

It's really normal to be finding the adjustment hard or be nervous about the changes coming up. Sometimes people love to share their horror stories about babies too so it can be a nerve-racking time hearing about how little sleep or time to yourself you will have! Most people find that having support and encouragement as we become parents is really valuable.

In the programme, we'll use the term 'parenting teammate' to describe the person who supports you as you parent your baby. If you're not sure who this is, we'll spend some time helping you think about who could support you over the coming weeks.

Q: Who has noticed that the adjustment and adapting has been different for you and your parenting teammate?

There is lots to enjoy about parenting, but it can also be easy to expect everything to fall into place or set high standards for ourselves. Many of us might hope to be perfect parents for our new baby but there really is no such thing as a "perfect parent" (despite what social media might portray). We just need to be "good enough" parents and we will spend time thinking about all aspects of being this for your baby.

Q: What do you think of the term 'good enough' parent?

This is why we are running Babies Matter. We may not be experts by the end of the programme! But the time you spend on the programme will be a great investment for your family.

We will do our best to give everyone chance to share and speak, and to share honestly ourselves about our experiences. Confidentiality is essential for the group and we encourage each other to remember that each week, so that we know information about our families/children is not spoken of outside of the group.

Any questions about the programme? Concerns?

We really hope you will join us for the next 10 weeks.

Thank you for coming!

Confirm dates and times of Session 1.

Pass around the Taster Register to take contact details and ask permission to contact /send reminders to parents before the next session. *Ask parents to DM you to confirm they will be attending and ask permission to contact/send reminders to parents before the next session.*