



**HEARTY  
LIVES**  
Carrickfergus

# **HEARTY LIVES CARRICKFERGUS**

## **Sharing the Learning: Family Scoping Study and Early Years, Healthy Start Toolkit**

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British Heart  
Foundation  
NORTHERN  
IRELAND

# Hearty Lives Carrickfergus: Overview

## Over-arching aim:

*To support the development of new and effective ways to highlight the impact of obesity, focus on:*

- Pre-conception
- Antenatal and postnatal mums
- Families with children aged 0 - 4 years old



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# Project Infrastructure

- Funded by British Heart Foundation July 2013- June 2016
- Key partner organisations:
  - ❖ Northern Health & Social Care Trust
  - ❖ Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
  - ❖ Public Health Agency



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## **Strand 3 Project Aim**

To develop an evidence based multi-sectorial approach to enable families with young children (aged 0-4 years) to develop knowledge and key skills to prevent obesity and reduce risk of CVD



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# Setting the Scene

- Insufficient engagement with the target community
- The Family Scoping Study - funded by the PHA - provided the opportunity to ask parents and users what they wanted (spring 2015)
- Literature Review
- 97 Surveys completed and returned
- Five Focus Groups facilitated at Mother and Toddler Groups
- Interviews with key stakeholders

# Family Scoping Study: Highlights 1

- Positive experience reported about Parent and Toddler Groups: accessible, supportive and sharing environments
- Parents prefer structured physical activities
- Cost can be prohibitive to parents engaging their children in physical activities
- The need for consistent and appropriate opening times in leisure facilities
- A perceived lack of opportunities for early years across the community

# Family Scoping Study: Highlights 2

- Lack of ongoing support and facilitation of breast feeding
- Prolonged bottle feeding more than 12 months
- 50% incidence of early weaning at less than six months of age
- An assumption of knowledge by Health Professionals that parents and carers know what to do Parents feel they are not listened to
- A lack of consistency in the advice given by different Health Care Staff; which leads to insecurity and ultimately a lack of confidence in information received
- Health care professionals are often not the first point of contact
- Parents often seek information from different 'trusted' sources: eg other parents, internet, or people in the community.



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# Family Scoping Study: Lessons Learned

- Additional activities and programmes for families with children aged four and under would be welcome
- People need to easily access relevant, professional information about physical activity and diet and nutrition for their children
- Mums and Toddler Groups are valued by mothers and carers: support for these groups is vital to ensure that high quality and accurate information is shared within this supportive environment.
- Parents want to do the best for their children, but sometimes do not know what the 'best' choices are, or do not receive the support
- An identified need for an Early Years Toolkit, promoting a Healthy Start for babies and young children



# Underpinning Principles

- **Basic information**
- **Easy read**
- **Pictures**
- **Clear Layout**
- **Easy to Navigate**
- **Relevant**

**Easy to  
Understand**

- **Utilise parent  
and tot groups**
- **Self  
Explanatory**
- **Ready to roll**
- **No need for  
HCP**

**Accessible**

- **Parents**
- **Grandparents**
- **Carers**
- **Leaders**
- **Childminders**

**Educational  
Tool**

**Consistent  
and  
Accurate**

- **Evidence  
based**
- **Peer reviewed**

# Process

**MDT Working Group**



**TOR/ Action Planning**



**Toolkit Development**



**Development of Resources**



**Peer Review and Amendments**



**Pilot**



**Feedback & Evaluation**



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# Early Years, Healthy Start Toolkit

The graphic features the British Heart Foundation Carrickfergus logo at the top left. The main title 'Early Years Healthy Start Toolkit' is centered in large red font. Below the title, a series of colorful cloud shapes represent different topics: 'Physical Activity / Screen Time' (orange), 'Feeding' (blue), 'Dental Health' (purple), 'Emotional Wellbeing and Attachment' (green), 'Sleep' (teal), and 'Minding Mum' (pink). In the center, there are silhouettes of a baby, a toddler, and a parent. At the bottom, text describes a pilot project with mother and toddler groups and provides contact information for Claire Ramsey or Emma Newell.

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## Early Years Healthy Start Toolkit

Physical Activity / Screen Time

Feeding

Dental Health

Emotional Wellbeing and Attachment

Sleep

Minding Mum

**Toolkit Pilot with Mother and Toddler Groups**  
If you have any questions please contact Claire Ramsey or Emma Newell on: 028 9335 8261 or leave a message with your contact details so that we can return your call.

- **3 age sections:-**
  - 0-6 months
  - 6-12 months
  - 1-4 years
- **6 Topics:-**
  - Feeding
  - Physical activity/screen time
  - EWB and relationship building
  - Dental
  - Sleep
  - Minding mum



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# Resources



# Top 10 Tips

## Top 10

### For parents of babies aged 0-6 months

**1.** Food other than milk is rarely needed before 6 months of age.

**2.** Introducing solids before 6 months of age could be harmful to your child's health when they are older. Never wean your baby before they are 4 months (17 weeks of age) as their body will not be ready. Speak to a health care professional for further advice if you are considering introducing solids before 6 months as it is unlikely your child will be ready.



**3.** At the age of 6 months you should start to introduce your baby to a cup for some of their drinks.

**4.** If your baby is managing more than 500mls (16oz) of breast or formula milk they will not need vitamin supplements until they are 6 months old.

**5.** It is important to encourage your baby to exercise. Exercise for babies includes floor-based play, tummy-time, reaching and grasping for objects. This is important as it helps your baby develop movement skills and co-ordination as well as brain, bone and muscle development.



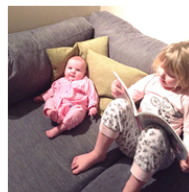
**6.** Try to minimise the amount of time your baby is in an infant carrier, pushchair or seat and minimise the amount of time they spend in front of a screen.

Handout 1a: Top 10 for parents of babies aged 0-6 months



**7.** Your baby is entitled to free dental care. It is important to start brushing your child's teeth when their 1<sup>st</sup> tooth erupts and get them used to visiting the dentist from a young age so this doesn't become an issue in later life. Remember prevention is better than the cure.

**8.** At this age your baby will require 14-16 ½ hours of sleep made up of day time and night time sleeps. A good bedtime routine teaches the brain to become familiar with sleep and wake times. This can also help with making sure you have time for other tasks both now and as your child grows older.



**9.** Your baby's brain is growing and developing rapidly. It is being formed by their environment and experiences and this will form the foundations of your baby's behaviour. Babies need love and comfort which in turn will help to build resilience. Talk to your baby, read to them and join in with their activities, their learning starts the day they are born.

**10.** Make time for you. Prioritise tasks, ask for help and accept if help is offered. Accept that some things won't get done and that it is important to look after your own health and well-being. Speak to your GP or Health Visitor if you are feeling low, don't let this feeling get worse, it's more common than you think and it doesn't make you a bad parent.



# Early Pilot Feedback

“The toolkit is useful to have at our Parents and Toddlers. The content is excellent, with simple and relevant information. I liked the Minding Mum section – Mums often forget to look after themselves as well”. *Parent and Toddler Group Leader*

“I used the Toolkit to get information about sleeping and eating for my toddler. It was easy to get the information I wanted; and I liked that there was something to read to reassure me”. *Mum*

“The Toolkit gives basic information for new parents. It can be used as a point of reference; and combines useful information in one document (rather than separate books). The Top Ten Tips provide a good summary for parents to take away”.

*Early Years Support organisation*

# A Key Message:

**True engagement with service users comes from listening to them, and providing the service they want and need *rather than* us providing the service we think they need and want.**