



Virtual Peer Support for Parents in Ayrshire

What we do

Breastfeeding Network Peer supporters in Ayrshire work in partnership with health professionals as part of an Integrated Infant Feeding Team. Our peer supporters offer evidence based and non-judgemental support to Mums who have birthed via C-section or have a baby in the neonatal unit. Peer supporters also run infant feeding support groups for new mums in Ayrshire.



“So friendly. Made a huge difference during lockdown”

Covid-19 Response

We adapted our services to ensure families could still access support

- We set up Infant feeding group chat sessions 4 times a week on Zoom offering a chance for mums to chat and build social networks and to get support from trained peer supporters
- New Facebook page set up so mums can directly contact a peer supporter via private message
- One on one support offered via Near me video calls
- Face-to-face peer support for new Mums in the maternity unit (once guidance allowed)
- Video calls and voice calls for all breastfeeding mums with a baby in the neonatal unit and c-section Mums

“I’ve had amazing support from the team during lockdown. Nothing was too much trouble and they got us through such a challenging time. We we would never have succeeded without their support, advice and encouragement! My wee one is nearly 7 weeks and doing great. Exclusively breastfeeding was always our goal but I didn’t think we were going to make it. Without the team, I KNOW we wouldn’t have.”

Outcomes and Learning

- In the last 6 months we ran 71 infant feeding support groups via Zoom. 54 different women attended the groups and we had 331 contacts with these mums. In addition we supported 107 different families in the first 6 weeks after their baby arrived via 1:1 phone/video calls
- Mums told us that peer support helped them feel less lonely and supported them to have a more positive experience of feeding and early parenting
- After listening to feedback we adapted our advertising of the groups to emphasise that mums don't need to have questions they can come just for social support and to meet other local mums
- We plan to start new outdoor walking groups for mums in October 2020 to offer social contact for mums who are feeling isolated

