

Best Start in Life

A booklet for you and your baby

Sign up to our e-newsletter to get up-to-date and relevant information for you and your family.

This includes details of free events, offers, updates to health information and much more.

To sign up, visit: bit.ly/bsilnewsletter



Waltham Forest

Welcome

Congratulations on your new baby!

Welcome to Best Start in Life, our one-stop shop for new parents and carers. Our Best Start in Life services are here to support you and your family with caring for your new baby.

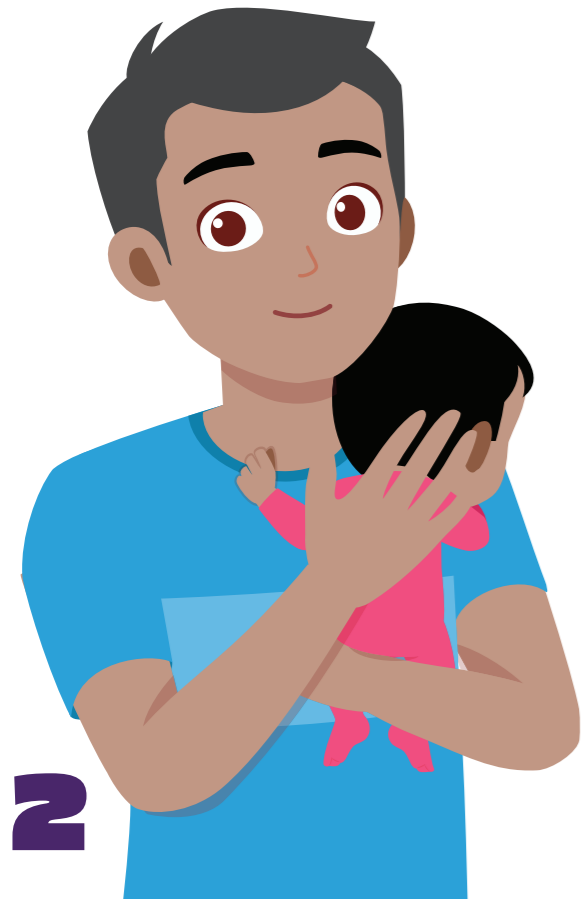
The first weeks and months are important for your baby's development. In this booklet you'll find useful information that you might need in the first few years of your baby's life.

Our Best Start in Life services are available in our Family Hubs, and in a range of places across Waltham Forest, such as libraries, parks and community centres. You can find out more about our services in this booklet and in our Best Start in Life timetable, which is available at bit.ly/BSIL-WF

Family Hubs provide a local resource to help you give your baby the best start in life. At our Family Hubs, you can get free support with feeding your baby and with your mental health. You can also join our fun play sessions for opportunities to meet other parents and make friends. All parents, carers and families are welcome at our hubs. We have four Family Hubs across Waltham Forest - see the map on the right.

Your health visitor will talk to you about registering with our Family Hubs, or you can drop in at one of the hubs and our friendly staff will help you to register.

If you haven't yet registered your baby's birth, it's important you do this. Visit bit.ly/registerbirth-WF to book your appointment to register your baby's birth at Chingford Family Hub or our Walthamstow or Leytonstone Libraries.



Did you know?
We have worked with parents, carers and our service partners to produce this booklet.

Our Best Start in Life services are for children under five and their families in Waltham Forest. They are delivered in our Family Hubs and in a range of other venues across Waltham Forest. They include Council services as well as services funded by the Council and delivered by our partners.



Family Hub locations

Open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm (not including bank holidays)

To download the most up-to-date Family Hub timetables, please visit bit.ly/BSIL-WF



Your baby's journey

We have written this booklet to help you know what to expect during these early weeks and months and to show how you can support your baby's learning and development. You can find out more at bit.ly/yourchild-WF. If you have concerns about your child's development, you can talk to your health visiting team by calling **0300 033 6200**.

Congratulations on your new baby!

0 to 4 months

- **0 to 4 weeks:** It might appear to you that I can only eat, sleep and poo but I'm already developing social and communication skills. I watch you watching me and I love hearing you talk to me.
- **4 to 8 weeks:** My vision is becoming clearer and I can be frightened by sudden noises.
- **6 weeks:** Post-natal appointment with your health visitor.
- **8 weeks:** Immunisations at your GP practice.
- **8 to 12 weeks:** I am getting stronger and my movements are getting smoother. Keep putting me in a variety of different positions to help me discover the world around me.



4 to 5 months

- **12 weeks:** Immunisations at your GP practice.
- I am beginning to develop and use my tummy muscles.
- You will start to see changes in how I react to others. I might start to appear shy or upset around people I don't know so well.
- I love to listen to your stories, songs and rhymes. I will stop and listen to your voice even when I can't see you.
- **16 weeks:** Immunisations at your GP practice.
- Breast milk or first-stage infant formula provides me with all I need until I am six months old.

6 to 8 months

- I am developing more control over my hands and am starting to use them more effectively. I can reach out for something and grab it without missing.
- It's time for me to try my first solid foods. Let me try a variety of foods and let me make a mess. Show me that eating is fun!

9 to 12 months

- I'm starting to find my feet and explore the world from new heights. This is a very hectic stage and I will move faster than you think, so be prepared!
- I am starting to understand everyday words in my daily routines like 'clap hands' and 'up'. You might hear me starting to babble and say strings of sounds together.
- **12 months:** Immunisations at your GP practice.

19 to 24 months

- I can make you understand what I need and want. I can ask for food, drinks and toys. Teach me to say please and thank you. I can understand simple words and follow basic instructions, such as 'Get your shoes, please'.

24 to 30 months

- Health and development review with the health visiting team.

12 to 15 months

- Health and development review with the health visiting team.

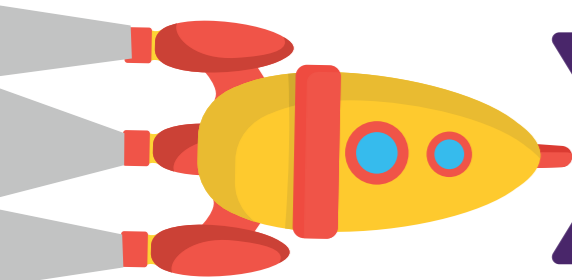
13 to 18 months

- I am keen to try to do things for myself, like dressing and feeding. Please be patient!
- We can all eat the same foods now, so let's enjoy meals together.
- I might be getting quicker and steadier at walking, or I might only just be starting to take my first independent steps. Remember that's okay as each of us develop at a different rate.



Support from the health visiting team

When will I meet the health visiting team?



At your antenatal appointment between 28 and 34 weeks of pregnancy

At home when your baby is between ten and 14 days old

During the early years of your baby's life, it's important to meet regularly with our health visiting team.

Health visitors are qualified nurses with special training and experience in the health and development of children and families. They work in teams with other health professionals, such as nurses, nursery nurses and clinical support workers, and are based in four neighbourhood teams across Waltham Forest. Health visitors offer support to all families, including health advice, information and guidance about childhood immunisations, support available for parents and meeting your child's health and development needs.

Health visitors visit all new babies at home, usually when your baby is ten to fourteen days old, and will arrange to see you again when your baby is six to eight weeks old. This appointment is different to your GP mother and baby six-week check, so please keep both appointments and let the team know if you need to rearrange the date.

We run regular drop-in child health clinics where you can come to have your baby weighed and review your child's growth and development. Coming to clinic gives you the chance to speak to a member of our team about any questions you may have about you and your child's health and wellbeing. You can come to clinic to speak to us without having your baby weighed.

To speak to a member of the team, please call our Duty Line on **0300 033 6200, Monday to Friday, from 9am to 5pm** (not including bank holidays).

We understand that all families have different needs. We can support you in lots of ways, including if:

- you are feeling worried;
- you have postnatal depression or other concerns about your mental health;
- you are in an unhappy or abusive relationship;
- you have concerns about your child's development;
- your child has a disability or health problems; or
- you have concerns about your family's health.

Did you know?

There are regular child health clinics held in all four Family Hubs every week.

For more details, visit: bit.ly/BSIL-WF

Or contact our health visiting team.

Phone: 0300 033 6200

Email: thgpcg.wf0-19spa1@nhs.net

Our health visiting team is part of the Waltham Forest 0-19 service, provided by Tower Hamlets GP Care Group.

At your postnatal appointment when your baby is six to eight weeks old

When your baby is one year old

When your child is two and a half years old

Red book

Your baby's red book is their personal child health record. Health professionals use it to record important information about your baby, including their height, weight and details of which vaccinations they have had and when.

It's a good idea to take your baby's red book with you every time you visit your health visitor or GP. It also has lots of helpful information on your baby's health and development.

Baby's growth and weight

Steady weight gain is one of the signs that your baby is healthy and feeding well.

It's normal for babies to lose some weight in the first few days after birth.

Your baby will be weighed during their first two weeks to make sure they're regaining their birth weight. Most babies are at or above their birth weight by three weeks.

A midwife or health visitor will support you if your baby loses a large amount of weight or does not regain their birth weight by three weeks.

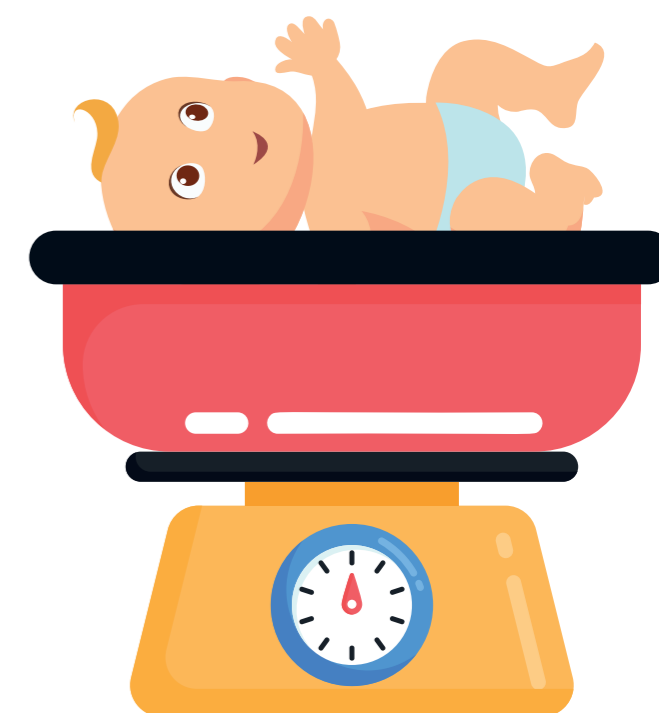
They'll talk to you about how feeding is going, possibly ask to observe a feed if you're breastfeeding, and look at your baby's health in general.

How often should my baby be weighed in clinic?

After the first two weeks, your baby should be weighed:

- no more than once a month up to six months of age
- no more than once every two months from six to twelve months of age
- no more than once every three months over the age of one

Your baby will usually only be weighed more often than this if you ask for it, or if there are concerns about their health or growth.



Feeding your baby

Feeding your baby is a chance to get to know them and build a close and loving bond. In the early weeks it's helpful if only one or two people feed your baby.

When your baby is a bit older, they will be ready to start getting to know other family and friends.

Hold your baby close, look into their eyes and follow their signals about when they want to feed and when they have had enough and want to stop.

Babies need to feed at least eight to 12 times every 24 hours, or sometimes more. Some will be short feeds and others longer – just like we have snacks and drinks as well as our main meals.

Top tips:

- Skin-to-skin contact can help if your baby needs comforting or calming. It can also help boost your milk supply.
- Don't force your baby to 'finish the bottle', let them show you how hungry they are.
- Babies go to the breast for milk and for comfort, pain relief and to help them go to sleep.
- Responding to your baby with love and cuddles helps them grow up to be happy and independent.



“ Not all babies burp after every feed and that's OK! ”

Did you know?

Your baby should have only breast milk or first-stage infant formula for the first six months.

Where you can get support

Go to the feeding support sessions at your Family Hub. Find out the dates and times at bit.ly/BSIL-WF

For more information

The **HENRY Infant Feeding team** gives practical and emotional support with breastfeeding, bottle-feeding, and mixed-feeding. Get face-to-face and online support. Call their infant feeding helpline, staffed by local practitioners, on **0207 961 9073, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, and Saturdays, 9am to 2pm.** (not including bank holidays).

Our **health visiting team** can also offer you support and information on feeding during home visits and at our clinics.

You can call the health visiting team on **0300 033 6200** or email them at thgpcg.wf0-19spa1@nhs.net.

For more information on feeding your baby, visit www.nhs.uk/start4life/baby/feeding-your-baby.

Parenting

Where to go with your baby

Come and meet our team in one of the many sessions at your local Family Hub. We aim to help you gain confidence as well as knowledge and understanding of your baby's development, and build a positive relationship with your baby. You can also make meaningful new connections in your community.

As your baby grows through the stages of development, there are different activities to support your relationship with them. Here are a few examples:

- Baby massage: proven to strengthen the bond between you and your baby.
- You and Your Baby: a drop-in session for parents and carers. We share first-hand experiences and provide activities to stimulate babies' developing interest.
- Under-twos: as your baby grows in to their next stage of development, this is the time to let them explore.

For details of these sessions and others, download the Best Start in Life timetable from bit.ly/BSIL-WF

Did you know you can get parenting support?

Parent/carer support programmes are available for all families in Waltham Forest.

These programmes are a fantastic way get you and your baby off to the best start by supporting you to:

- Promote your baby's development
- Understand your baby's cues
- Support your baby's emotional and physical health
- Cope with challenges around feeding, sleep and crying
- Manage parental stress

For more information please email earlyhelpparenting@walthamforest.gov.uk

Call/text: **07586713368**

Visit: bit.ly/parentsupport24

Based in our Family Hubs, the Lloyd Park Children's Charity have a dedicated team one-to-one support to families who need a helping hand. For more information please email familysupport@tlpcc.org.uk.

The Waltham Forest Early Help service is also available to help families deal with problems as soon as possible and to support their children to reach their full potential. For more information, contact your Family Hub (see page 3 for contact details) or speak to your health visitor.

Did you know?

Sharing ideas and concerns with other parents can help you feel more positive and less stressed.

Keeping your baby safe

Your health visitor will give you advice and support to help you care for your new baby. Here are some of the most important things to remember.

Sleeping

It's important to create a safe environment to help you and your baby get as much rest as possible.

Things you can do to keep the baby safe:

- Use a room thermometer and aim to keep the temperature between 16 and 20°C
- Place the baby's cot away from radiators and out of bright sun.
- Always place your baby on their back to sleep.
- Make sure no one smokes in your home during your pregnancy and after the birth, even when your baby is asleep in a different room.
- Place your baby to sleep in a separate cot or Moses basket. Keep the cot clear of toys and do not use a pillow or mattress topper.
- Make sure they are in the same room as you, day and night, for the first six months.
- Use a firm, flat, waterproof mattress in good condition.

Things which can be dangerous:

- Make all sleeps safe sleeps, make plans for how you will manage when visiting family friends or when out of your normal routine or away on holiday.
- Take your baby out of their car seat when you arrive at your destination to keep them safe when sleeping.
- Never sleep on a sofa or in an armchair with your baby.
- Don't sleep in the same bed as your baby if you smoke, drink or take drugs, are extremely tired, or if your baby was born prematurely or was a low birth weight.
- Do not let your baby get too hot. Your baby does not need a hat on when they are indoors.
- Do not cover your baby's face or head while they are sleeping.
- Do not use loose bedding.

If you are using a sling to keep your baby close, remember TICKS:

- Tight
- In view at all times
- Close enough to kiss
- Keep chin off the chest
- Supported back

It is not safe to use a sling when the person wearing it is asleep. For more guidance on safe sleeping and using slings safely, visit www.lullabytrust.org.uk/safer-sleep-advice.



Safety

It might seem a long way off now, but it won't be long before your sleepy, newborn baby can wriggle, kick, and roll over. Babies and children often have accidents because they develop so quickly. It is important to stay one step ahead by thinking about the accidents that might be associated with their new skills and how to prevent these.

Things you can do to avoid accidents and keep your baby safe:

- Change your baby's nappy on a changing mat on the floor.
- Do not leave your baby unattended on a bed, sofa or changing table, even for a second, as they could roll off.
- Keep small objects and plastic bags out of your baby's reach and be careful if older children have toys with small parts.
- If you're having a well-deserved hot drink, put it down out of reach before you hold your baby. A hot drink can still scald 15 minutes after it was made.

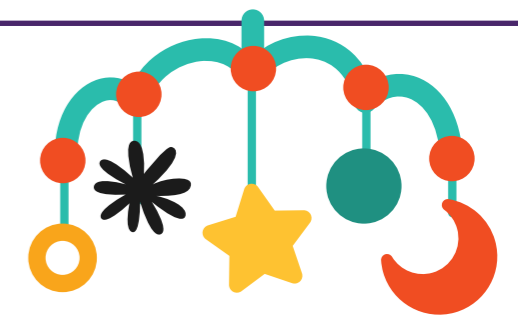
- At bath time, run cold water into the bath first, and then add some hot water. Test the temperature of the water with your elbow. Never leave your baby alone in the bath, even for a moment.
- Never shake your baby. It can cause lasting injuries or death.

For lots more information on how to protect your baby or toddler from some of the most common accidents as well as tips on car safety and keeping your baby safe in the sun, please visit bit.ly/NHSBabySafety

When babies cry it can be stressful and overwhelming. Speak to someone if you need support, and remember:

- I - Infant crying is normal
- C - Comforting methods can help
- O - It's OK to walk away
- N - Never, ever shake a baby

For more guidance, visit www.iconcope.org/advice-for-parents/



Keeping you and your baby well

It's important to know about the screening tests and vaccinations that you and your baby will be offered. For more information, visit bit.ly/NHSNewbornScreenings



Screening

You will be offered newborn screening tests for your baby soon after they are born. The results from these tests can help make sure that your baby is given appropriate treatment as quickly as possible, if needed. You will be offered a newborn hearing test and the newborn bloodspot test, which checks for nine rare but serious health conditions. You will also be invited for a physical check of your baby at six to eight weeks with your GP.

If your baby did not have their hearing test in hospital, you will be contacted about having an appointment locally. Speak to your health visitor for more information.



For more helpful information on caring for your baby, please visit www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby. Remember, you can call our health visiting team on **0300 033 6200, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm** (not including bank holidays).

Immunisations

Vaccinations are offered free of charge in the UK – just book your appointments with your GP and speak to your health visitor if you have any questions. The first routine vaccinations for babies are due at eight weeks. Remember, as well as protecting your own baby, you're also protecting other babies and children by preventing the spread of diseases.

For more information, visit bit.ly/NHSNewbornScreenings

Don't forget

It's important to register your baby with a GP as soon as possible in case you need their help. You can contact your GP at any time, whether it's for you or your child.

If your baby is not yet registered with a GP but needs to see one, you can receive emergency treatment from any GP surgery. If you're worried your baby is ill, you can find advice at www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/health.

New mums will also be offered a postnatal check with their GP six to eight weeks after the birth to make sure they feel well and are recovering from giving birth. For more information, visit bit.ly/NHS6WeeksChecks



Your baby's early learning and development



Early learning

Play is very important to your child's development. It supports their learning and emotional development. Your child can develop many skills through regularly playing and engaging in playful experiences with you and others. This will develop their language skills, emotions, creativity and social skills.

There is a range of 'stay and play' sessions taking place across the borough as part of the Best Start in Life programme, where you can meet other families and professionals who will support you to support your baby's learning. You can find full details of events at bit.ly/BSIL-WF



Early language and communication

Almost any daily activity is a chance to talk, bond and have fun with your baby. Holding your baby close and looking at them as you talk, singing together, telling them what you are doing and repeating sounds your baby makes back to them, are all things you can do to encourage their development. For fun activities and things to do with your baby to develop their communication skills, visit www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people.

If you have any questions about your baby's early learning and development or concerns about their communication and language skills, speak to your health visitor or visit bit.ly/WFParentingConcerns



Speech and language therapists provide early support and information about young children's communication development.

Please contact our speech and language therapy team on **0208 430 7970** or email them at wfspeechtherapy@nelft.nhs.uk.

Learning

Learning Together is our home learning programme project for under-5s. This project inspires families to have meaningful learning experiences at home and celebrates the benefit of these experiences. You can find learning activity cards and links to the Chit Chat Pitter Pat Facebook and Instagram pages at bit.ly/homelearning-WF



Your emotional wellbeing

Did you know?

It's important to meet others who are going through a similar experience to you. You can do that at your local Family Hub.



The Parent and Baby Emotional Wellbeing service (PBEW)

The journey of parenthood can be challenging. All parents go through times when we feel overwhelmed in caring for others and may worry that we aren't doing the right thing or compare ourselves to other parents. If these feelings continue they can lead to symptoms of low mood and/or anxiety which may reduce our ability to enjoy the pleasures in parenting.

For some of us, previous emotional difficulties resurface and may affect our relationships, including with our child. Often our worries feel very personal and we may wish to hide any negative thoughts and feelings. However, for most of us it helps greatly to feel heard and understood, especially when we connect with others who share similar experiences.

The Parent and Baby Emotional Wellbeing service (PBEW) in Waltham Forest supports expectant parents and families with children under two who are finding their parenting journey challenging.

Specialist PBEW workers will:

- offer specialist support that's right for you, based on an assessment of you and your family's needs
- refer you to some of the wide range of support on offer in the borough.

Find out how PBEW can help you by contacting:

Phone: 020 3787 4334
Email: thgpcg.walthamforestpbew@nhs.net

Find more information about PBEW:
bit.ly/WF_PBEW



Fathers and co-parents

While no two dads are the same, it is not uncommon for fathers and co-parents to experience changes in mood, and most parents and co-parents will be affected to some degree after the birth of a new family member by lack of sleep, money worries, and changing relationships with partners. Fathers and co-parents may be trying very hard to support their partner and find it hard to ask for support for themselves, especially if their partner seems to be struggling. If you are a biological, social or adoptive father or co-parent, it is just as important that you get the right support when needed so that the whole family can grow and thrive together.

www.walthamforest.gov.uk/mentalhealth.

We have one-to-one and group sessions available for fathers. Please contact the PBEW service or complete the self-referral form to find out more.

Find out how PBEW can help you by contacting:

Phone: 020 3787 4334
Email: thgpcg.walthamforestpbew@nhs.net

Find more information about PBEW: **bit.ly/WF_PBEW**



Did you know?

It's understandable if leaving the house with your new baby makes you feel anxious, but it is important for both of you to get out and about. Why not start on a small walk round the block and build your confidence up that way?

Healthy eating

You should start to introduce your baby to solid foods from around six months old, when they are able to:

- sit and hold their head up unsupported;
- pick up food and put it in their mouth; and
- move food to the back of their mouth and swallow it.

At the beginning, they will still be getting most of their energy and nutrients from milk.

- Eating is a whole new chapter for you and your baby. As well as getting used to eating, they are developing long-lasting habits around food.
- Keep trying, and give your baby lots of encouragement and praise.
- Eat together when possible as babies enjoy watching you eat and will try to copy you.
- It can take time for babies to learn and accept new foods and textures. Offer small amounts of the same food over a few days.
- Let your baby enjoy touching and holding the food. Allow them to feed themselves, using their fingers, as soon as they show an interest.



Where can I go?

Our Family Hubs offer many different free sessions including workshops to help you with starting solids and healthy eating.

HENRY Healthy Families team

The HENRY Healthy Families team supports families with children aged up to five to provide the best and healthiest start in life for their children. Our HENRY nutritionists can help you with starting solids, healthy family habits, active play and much more.

Join a HENRY starting solids workshop online or at your local Family Hub. These group sessions allow you to explore how, when and what to feed your baby.

HENRY Healthy Families team
Phone: 0208 496 5223
Website: www.henry.org.uk/walthamforest

Did you know?

All babies in Waltham Forest are offered up to three bottles of free Healthy Start vitamins, containing vitamins A, C, and D.



Collect your Healthy Start vitamins in Waltham Forest

Young children may not get enough vitamins A and D even if they are eating well. Healthy Start vitamin drops for babies and children under four contain vitamins A, C and D.

Your health visitor will give you a bottle of baby vitamins at your first home visit after your baby is born.

The second bottle will be given at your 6-8 week health visitor review and the third can be collected at one of the health visitor child health clinics that take place at the Family Hubs.

Visit our website to find out where you can collect these: bit.ly/healthystart-WF

If you have a Healthy Start card, you can collect further free bottles when you need them from Family Hub reception.

Read on to find out if you're eligible for a Healthy Start card, or speak to your health visitor for more information.

Need help to buy food and milk?

If you're eligible, you can receive a **Healthy Start card** which will be topped up with money to help you buy healthy food. This is worth £8.50 a week for each baby aged under one, and £4.25 a week when you are pregnant and for each child aged one to three. You can use the card to buy **liquid cow's milk (not flavoured); fresh, frozen and tinned fruit and vegetables; fruit in fruit juice; fresh, dried and tinned pulses; and first-stage infant formula made from cow's milk**. You can use it in most food shops and you can also use it to collect Healthy Start vitamins.

You might be eligible for a Healthy Start card if you are at least ten weeks pregnant or you have at least one child under four. You must also be receiving any of the following:

- Child Tax Credit (only if your family's annual income is £16,190 or less)
- Pension Credit (which includes the child addition)
- Income Support
- Universal Credit (only if your family's monthly take-home pay from employment is £408 or less)
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance

Even if you don't claim any benefit, you will also be eligible for a Healthy Start card if you are both under 18 and at least ten weeks pregnant or have at least one child under four.

Apply for a Healthy Start card online at www.healthystart.nhs.uk.

If you need help with signing up or would like to talk to someone about the Healthy Start scheme, you can contact our health visiting team or drop in at any of our Family Hubs.



Healthy teeth

Every parent wants their child to have healthy teeth, but it can be difficult to know what to do to make sure this happens, especially in the early years. Children's teeth are more prone to decay than adult teeth, so it's important to establish good habits early. The good news is that by following a few simple steps, tooth decay can almost always be prevented.

Top tips for healthy teeth

- Use a soft-bristled toothbrush with a tiny amount of fluoride toothpaste. Brush your baby's teeth twice a day, including once just before bed, after all food and drink is finished.
- Don't worry if you don't manage to brush much at first. The important thing is to get your baby used to brushing their teeth as part of their daily routine. You can help by setting a good example and letting them see you brushing your teeth.
- Don't rinse your baby's teeth after brushing. Rinsing washes away the fluoride that protects the teeth. As your baby gets older, encourage them to spit the toothpaste out after brushing their teeth.
- Use songs, games and lots of praise to make brushing your baby's teeth fun.
- Avoid giving your baby sugary drinks and snacks, especially between meals.
- Milk or water are the best drinks for young children. If you're bottle-feeding, start using a free-flow beaker instead of a bottle from six months.



Where can I go?

Our Family Hubs offer a number of play sessions and parent workshops to help families get their children's dental health off to a great start.

The HENRY Healthy Families and Dental Health teams offer face-to-face and online healthy teeth workshops. The workshops are run by a senior dental nurse who can answer all your dental health questions.

You can also speak to the HENRY Dental Health team if you would like help finding an NHS dentist in the borough. See the HENRY website for an up-to-date list of NHS dentists currently offering routine appointments and accepting new patients.

HENRY Dental Health team
Phone: 0208 496 5223
Website: www.henry.org.uk/walthamforest

Did you know?



It's important to start thinking about and planning childcare before you need it. Choosing childcare to support your child's learning and development is a big step. Each child and family are different. The type of childcare you choose will depend on your own family circumstances and your child's needs.

From September 2024, eligible working families will be able to claim 15 hours of free childcare per week for children from the age of 9 months. This will increase to 30 hours from September 2025.

For details of different childcare options, advice on what to look for, help with childcare costs and full details of the free childcare offer, visit bit.ly/childcare-WF

Email: childcare@walthamforest.gov.uk
Phone: 0208 496 3566
Childcare directory: bit.ly/WFchildcare_directory



Libraries are a great place to visit with your child. You can find lots of great events, information and support at the libraries, including free story, rhyme and play sessions. These are perfect for babies and toddlers, and are held throughout the week.

Visit bit.ly/libraries-WF to find more information about local libraries. Details of activities for under-fives are included in the Best Start in Life timetable, available at bit.ly/BSIL-WF



Bookstart is the first national books for babies programme in the world. The aim is to provide every child aged four and under with two free Bookstart packs to promote to parents and carers the idea of reading and a lifelong love of books. Bookstart Baby is available for babies aged up to 12 months.

To pick up a Bookstart pack for your new baby, visit your local library or Family Hub.



If you are living in Waltham Forest and are an expectant parent, or a parent or foster carer with a baby under 18 months or under the age of 5 with a disability requiring nappies, you are eligible to apply for a **£70 nappy voucher**. Your voucher can help with the upfront cost of buying reusable nappies or contribute towards a paid-for nappy laundry service. The aim is to help you save money and reduce disposable nappy waste.

To find out more and to apply, visit: www.realnappiesforlondon.org.uk/waltham-forest



Households with a new baby up to three months old are entitled to 30 hours of free parking within the borough.

Email wfpshop@nsl.co.uk or call **0203 092 0112** (option 3) for more information.

“You probably won’t shower every day and it doesn’t matter if you are still in PJs at 5pm, just go with it.”

“Don’t be scared to ask for help. We all need it sometimes.”

“I wish I knew that I wouldn’t remember a thing, baby brain exists and we all get it!”

“I wish I knew about groups for pregnant mums – to share ideas and make new friends – definitely go along, it’s worth it!”

“Leaving the house for the first time with your baby can be hard. Start on a small walk round the block and work your confidence up that way.”

“Your body will have changed shape and that is normal – you have just carried a baby! You’re amazing!”

“Getting help with childcare costs through the Tax Free Childcare Scheme has really helped us financially.”

“My child has really developed their social skills and independence since going to nursery and we can practise the things they do there at home too.”

“I wish I knew about swaddling, it was the only way our little one could sleep at first. It was a saviour – ask someone for a demo!”

“I wish I knew that there would be long waiting lists to get into the nursery that I wanted, so it’s better to start looking at nurseries or childminders well ahead of time.”

Top tips from parents in Waltham Forest

“Drink up your fluids if you’re breastfeeding – you need to be hydrated!”

“Getting help with breastfeeding can help you feel supported and informed.”

“I wish I knew that the first laugh is amazing and that all babies are different.”

“The Council’s website has a suggested list of questions for me to ask a childcare provider to ensure they are high quality.”

“I didn’t know what I was going to do about childcare when I went back to work, but then I found the childcare directory on the Council website which has everything you need to get started.”

“Just remember you are doing a great job with your new baby, housework can wait!”

“White noise can help your baby sleep. Noises such as a Hoover, hairdryer, washing machine and others can help soothe your baby. They are similar noises to what your baby hears in the womb.”

“I wish I’d known that I wasn’t the only person struggling with having a newborn – from feeding to lack of sleep. I know now it’s okay to not enjoy every second! And it gets so much easier.”

“Make cups of tea in flasks so they are still hot 3 hours later!”

Further help and support



Support	How to get in touch	More information
Alcohol and drug misuse	<p>Change Grow Live Website: www.changegrowlive.org/walthamforest Email: CGL.WalthamForest@cgl.org.uk Phone: 0203 826 9600</p> <p>Download the DrinkCoach app at: bit.ly/Drinkcoach1</p>	<p>Change Grow Live: If you feel you are struggling with alcohol or drug misuse, don't go through it alone. It's important for you and your family that you get the support you need. Change Grow Live can support you with a range of services in a safe and confidential space.</p> <p>DrinkCoach: Allows you to assess your own drinking and risk by taking a quick, easy and confidential quiz. You will then receive personalised advice online and the option to access further support and advice, including one-to-one consultations.</p>
Domestic abuse and community safety	<p>Waltham Forest Domestic Abuse Support bit.ly/domesticabuse-WF</p> <p>National Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0808 802 5565 Available 24/7</p> <p>Waltham Forest Solace Women's Aid Email: advice@solacewomensaid.org or Phone: 0808 802 5565</p> <p>Waltham Forest Safer Neighbourhoods' Team Website: met.police.uk/area/your-area/met/waltham-forest/ If you are unable to get in contact with your SNT then please call 101. For urgent matters please call 999.</p>	<p>Waltham Forest Domestic Abuse Support: If a family member, partner or carer hurts, threatens or tries to control you, or you don't feel safe in your community, there is confidential support and advice available.</p> <p>National Domestic Abuse Helpline: If you want to talk about your experience, seek refuge accommodation, or access other support services.</p> <p>Waltham Forest Solace Women's Aid: Practical and emotional support, information, and help to access specialist services, eg. legal options, financial advice, and reporting to the police.</p> <p>Waltham Forest Safer Neighbourhoods' Team: Contact your local SNT to share your non-urgent concerns regarding anti-social behaviour, graffiti, and other quality-of-life issues.</p>
ESOL support for speakers of a different language	<p>To find a free language course, text, or WhatsApp your NAME + 'ESOL advice' to 07770 054167 or call 020 8496 2974.</p>	<p>Waltham Forest English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Single Point of Contact service supports residents in finding free, high-quality help with learning English and joining in with society.</p> <p>The service is open to everyone, regardless of income or immigration status.</p>
Financial support	<p>Your Crisis Our Action bit.ly/costliving-WF Citizens' Advice Website: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/local/waltham-forest Phone: 0808 278 7838</p>	<p>If you're worried about your financial situation, there is information and advice on our website. Our partners at Waltham Forest Citizens Advice Bureau can also help with debt problems, and provide support if you are worried that you may be about to get into debt and want help to prevent it.</p>
Housing	<p>Housing Advice Website: bit.ly/housing-WF Email: Housing.advice@walthamforest.gov.uk Phone: 020 8496 3000 option 4</p>	<p>If you're worried about your current housing situation, there is help available.</p>
Returning to work	<p>Adult Learning Services Website: www.lbwfadultlearning.co.uk</p>	<p>If you are trying to get back into work, get your first job or change your career, it can be hard to know where to start, especially as a new parent. From CV tips, to adult learning, to job vacancies – our Adult Learning Services can help.</p>
Sexual health	<p>Website: bit.ly/sexualhealth-WF</p> <p>All East London Sexual Health service Website: www.alleast.nhs.uk Phone: 0207 480 4737</p>	<p>All East London Sexual Health service provides free, confidential sexual health clinics across east London and Waltham Forest. You must book an appointment first, online or by phone. The service also offers advice, support, contraception and quick access to testing. It can also refer you to other experts if this is necessary. Your GP and some pharmacies can also provide contraception.</p>
Special education and disability support (local offer)	<p>Email: localoffer@walthamforest.gov.uk Phone: 0208 496 6503</p>	<p>This service is available to all children and young people, aged to 25, with special educational needs or disabilities. It brings together all the information on our special educational needs and disability services into one place so you can find it quickly and easily.</p>
Stop smoking	<p>Queen Mary, University of London: Stop Smoking support Phone: 020 7882 8230 or 0800 169 1943 Email: clinicbookings@qmul.ac.uk Website: www.quitrightwf.org</p>	<p>You can get free, confidential advice, information and support to help you stop smoking. Our Stop Smoking Service is provided by Queen Mary University of London and includes a 12-week plan with support from a trained practitioner, weekly nicotine replacement therapy and support online or over the phone. Face-to-face help may also be available.</p>
Young carers	<p>Email: young.carers@walthamforest.gov.uk Phone: 0208 496 2442</p>	<p>You can get free, confidential advice, information and support to help you stop smoking. Our Stop Smoking Service is provided by Queen Mary University of London and includes a 12-week plan with support from a trained practitioner, weekly nicotine replacement therapy and support online or over the phone. Face-to-face help may also be available.</p>

Didn't find what you need? Visit our website to find out more: bit.ly/BSIL-WF

