

Est.
2016

YORK ST JOHN
**COMMUNITIES
CENTRE**

BREASTFEEDING GROUP



Treasure
Chest

Est.
1841

YORK
ST JOHN
UNIVERSITY

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What are the groups for?

York St John University's Counselling and Mental Health Centre has teamed up with Treasure Chest to bring crucial breastfeeding resources to families free of charge. As we know, breastfeeding is an important part of an infant's early health, however, England has some of the lowest breastfeeding rates in the world. Research shows that parents receiving postnatal support are more likely to breastfeed and breastfeed for a longer period of time.

Who can join a support group?

The group is a part of our Parent and Family Centre, and it aims to give new families a chance to talk with peer supporters as well as other families who are breastfeeding or combination feeding. If you are a breastfeeding parent, you are welcome! There is no need to be struggling with breastfeeding, you can come for conversation and tea if you want to talk to other families that are currently breastfeeding in an environment which is breastfeeding friendly. The group is open to anyone in the community including parents affiliated with York St John.



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How do I join a group?

Groups will be held on a Tuesday from 10:30am - 12:00 in York St John University's Chapel on campus. There is no need to book a place, and you can just drop in any time during sessions. There will be a place inside the chapel to park pushchairs, and older siblings are welcome as well.

What do the sessions involve?

The group will give you an opportunity to chat to peer group members and other families in a welcoming environment about all things breastfeeding. If you choose, you will also be able to talk with Dr Paige Davis and one of her students if you would like to participate in studies around breastfeeding and transition to parenthood.

What does the research involve?

Parents that would like to be a part of our research will be able to give our researchers insight into how to best support parents and their little ones to breastfeed. We will be looking at the groups we offer and asking parents how we can make it better and more useful for the community. We will also be looking into the breastfeeding relationship between parents and children. The parents who opt to get involved in our exciting breastfeeding research will be helping future breastfeeding parents get the support they want and need.

Facts about breastfeeding:

1) Human milk doesn't only feed your baby, but improves their health. Specific bacteria already in the baby's gut later helps your baby's immune system. The milk educates the baby's immune system as to what bacteria are good and what bacteria are harmful.

2) Human milk helps infants brains develop from 2-months, and later their cognitive development at 7-years. There has even been a study which looked at 30-year-olds where predominant breastfeeding was positively associated with IQ, educational attainment, and income.

3) Breastfeeding is protective against postnatal depression for parents and helps to regulate postpartum mood. It also helps the uterus shrink back to its pre pregnancy state.

4) Breastfeeding rates in the UK are the lowest in the developed world. In the UK, 8 out of 10 parents stop breastfeeding before they desire. An increase breastfeeding rates would save the UK £31 million per year.

5) Breastfeeding groups have been found to help parents breastfeed for longer, for example, significantly more mothers in a peer support breastfeeding group continued to feed their children at 3 months postpartum than those in a control group.

6) Breastfeeding groups are not just positive for helping parents breastfeed! They have also shown helpful in improving parents confidence in parenting itself, in giving parents a place for social contact, company and to make new friendships with likeminded people.

Further research:

Alexander, J., Anderson, T., Grant, M., Sanghera, J., & Jackson, D. (2003). An evaluation of support group for breast-feeding women in Salisbury, UK. *Midwifery*, 19, 215-220.

Belfort, M.B., Anderson, P.J., Nowak, V.A., Lee, K.J., Molesworth, C., Thompson, D.K., Doyle, L.W., & Inder, T.E. (2016). Breastmilk feeding, brain development, and neurocognitive outcomes: A 7-year longitudinal study in infants born at less than 30 weeks' gestation. *The Journal of Pediatrics*, 177, 133-139.

Breastmilk Scientific (2020). Online lecture series.

SUPPORTING YSJ COMMUNITIES CENTRE

Your donation makes a great difference! It supports us to cover the costs of providing free services such as our Drop-ins, Emotional Support Groups and Self-development, Bereavement Groups and Parent and Family Drop-Ins. As our income grows, so too does our staff team, counsellors, coaches, and group facilitators. Anything that you are able to donate, can help support us being able to support the work we do and the services that we offer to our community.

www.justgiving.com/campaign/ysjcc



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Research

Dr. Paige E. Davis is the York St John University lead for this group, and it is a project close to her heart. Advocating and researching breastfeeding became an interest because of her personal interactions with breastfeeding. As a breastfeeding mother herself, she found that having a community of people who were sharing similar experiences extremely important, and helpful.

Additional breastfeeding support:

Treasure Chest Breastfeeding Support

Treasurechest.org.uk | Facebook: Treasure Chest & Beyond (York)

The Breastfeeding Network

An independent source of support for breastfeeding parents

Breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk

National Breastfeeding Helpline

Telephone service from 9:30am-9:30pm available at the rate of a typical UK call

Telephone | 0300 100 0212

La Leche League

Aids and encourages breastfeeding families using peer support.

Laleche.org.uk

Association of Breastfeeding Mothers

A source of information for breastfeeding families, news and groups in your area

Abm.me.uk

Kelly Mom

A source of evidence based information for breastfeeding families

Kellymom.com

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