

# Meeting Other Parents



Information Sheet on Meeting Other Mums, Dads and Carers December 2010

## Meeting other mums, dads and carers

Would you like the opportunity to meet new people and gain advice and support from other mums, dads and carers?

Parenting can be a lonely and unfamiliar experience but spending time with other parents and their children can make it easier.

There are many different ways to meet other mums, dads and carers such as through children's centre activities, parent and toddler groups and even online. These meetings often provide the opportunity to meet new friends, chat to someone who is going through a similar experience and allow your child to mix and socialise with other children.

## Where to meet other mums, dads and carers

**Before you are a parent** –Parents to be sometimes form friendships at antenatal courses, breastfeeding workshops and at other activities such as pregnancy yoga and aquafit classes.

**Out and about**- It is often possible to meet other parents when you are out with your child such as at parks, libraries and cafes.

**Groups** - There are lots of family and toddler and children's centre groups throughout York. There are also family activities such as swimming, baby signing and music

**Online**- There are several websites with discussion forums where you can chat to and gain support from other parents online. Sometimes parents arrange to meet up but for safety reasons, make sure you do so in a public area.

To find out more about these groups, activities and websites please contact Family Information Service (see details overleaf).



## Parent and Toddler Groups

At Parent and Toddler groups babies and children can play under the supervision and care of their parents. Adults can either join in with play or socialise with other adults. There are a variety of different names for groups and they meet in places such as church halls and community centres.

The charges for family and toddler groups vary from group to group and groups usually meet once or twice a week often for a couple of hours. Some have a waiting list but many operate on a 'drop-in' basis.

York Family Information Service can provide you with a list of Parent and Toddler groups in your area.



**Sure Start**  
**Children's Centres**  
York



## What do children's centres offer?

### Open access drop-ins

Children's centres run groups which are open to all parents/carers and children under 5 where you can just turn up. At these groups there will be opportunities to play in a stimulating environment with your child as well as receive information and advice from children's centre staff.

### Other open access activities

There are also drop in groups for breastfeeding support, young parents, multicultural families, parents and carers of children with additional needs, dads and male carers, childminders and babies under one.

### Groups where you need to book a place

These are groups with limited places where you will need to book a place. These include parenting courses, speech and language activities as well as groups about healthy lifestyles such as healthy eating, smoking advice and music and movement groups.

### Family Learning

Family Learning offer free courses in children's centres and in the community all over the city and most courses have free childcare. Adults can brush up on maths and English and gain an up to date qualification or take courses which look at how children learn through play.

### Parent Action Groups

Why not meet other parents by becoming involved in how the children's centres are run. Parent Action Groups are meetings where mums, dads and carers are involved in decisions about the services and activities run by their local children's centre and what they feel is needed in the community. Everybody is welcome to come along and find out what happens at these meetings.

A member of the children's centre team can meet you and take you into a group and introduce you. If you would like this support, please contact your local children's centre.

## York Family Information Service (FIS)

If you want up to date information on groups for your family please contact FIS on **01904 554444** or text 'advice' to 07624 802244. Alternatively go to [www.yor-ok.org.uk](http://www.yor-ok.org.uk).

You can call FIS for free from the warm phones at children's centres or access their website on centre public access computers.



## Useful Websites

[www.nct.org.uk](http://www.nct.org.uk) - National Childbirth Trust (NCT) have local and national discussion groups and run social events in York.

[www.netmums.com](http://www.netmums.com) - Netmums is a family of local sites that offer information on everything including where to find playgroups, how to eat healthily and where to meet other mothers.

[www.mumsnet.com](http://www.mumsnet.com) - Mumsnet is an information and social networking site.

[www.dadtalk.co.uk](http://www.dadtalk.co.uk) - A news, information and social network site for all dads.

For more information about children's centres please contact the Family Information Service on **01904 554444** or visit [www.yorkchildrenscentres.org.uk](http://www.yorkchildrenscentres.org.uk). Up to date leaflets on this and other topics can also be downloaded from the website.