



Supporting you as a parent

As a care leaver there is a lot of
support available for you



Lambeth



We want to be there for you when you need us to ensure you have the best start to pregnancy and parenting. Becoming a parent is rewarding but also the most difficult and stressful job you will ever have to do. Being a parent is rewarding but it takes skills and knowledge for any parent to do it well. As well as lots of love, most importantly, babies need a safe, stable and secure environment so that they can develop and grow into healthy and happy adults.

We will:

- Support you to do the best for your child and help you arrange childcare, if this is what you want
- Take an interest in your child
- Help you find support
- Help you link with other young parents if you would like to.



Better Start

The Better Start teams in our Children's Centres also have outreach services to help you access the services and Parent Champion volunteers that can support you and help you connect with other new parents. These services are not just for care leavers who are parents so it will be a good opportunity for you to connect with other parents and build a social network. You can find out more at www.lambeth.gov.uk/childrenscentres.

Our Early Years and Parenting Service offer parenting courses both online and face to face, your Personal Advisor (PA) will be able to connect you to these. You can find out more at www.lambeth.gov.uk/parenting

Some of the groups running include:

- Lambeth's **Baby Steps** programme for expectant parents who are 26 to 32 weeks pregnant. You can find out more at BabySteps@gstt.nhs.uk
- **Together Time Group** for parents of babies aged 3-8 months. This group is about a safe space to explore your relationship with your baby and share feelings and experiences with other parents. You can find out more at pairs_lambeth@slam.nhs.uk. They run sessions in Lambeth's children's centres
- **Circle of Security Parenting**. This is an 8-week group programme offered to parents/carers of children aged from 6 months to 5 years. The course aims to help you to understand and respond to your child's needs, support your relationship with your child, improve your child's self-esteem and be a confident parent.

Other support includes:

- **The Little Village** works with parents living in poverty and offers baby groups and runs baby banks passing on loved goods from one family to another <https://littlevillagehq.org/>
- You can find top tips for parents here <https://ihv.org.uk/families/top-tips/>
- You can contact a Lambeth Health Visitor by contacting. **Tel: 020 3049 5300**
Email: gstt.spahealthvisiting servicelambeth@nhs.net

There are also local groups for young parents and for dads that your Personal Advisor can help you access. Find groups, additional local activities and support in Lambeth by visiting our Digital Family Hub at www.lambeth.gov.uk/family-hub and browsing our directory of services for children, young people and their families.

Feeling safe

We know domestic abuse increases during pregnancy and soon after babies are born. Even if your child is not in the room, hearing arguments will make them feel scared. If your partner is controlling with money, being possessive or not letting you see your friends, family or professionals and taking or checking your phone, this is also abusive.

If you are worried about how your relationship may affect your child, it is really important that you ask for support to make sure you and your child are safe. You can speak to your Health Visitor, Midwife or your Personal Advisor to get the support you and your partner need to make sure you can be the best and safest parents you can be. We are here to support you.

You can find out more information about support available through our Violence Against Women and Girls Programme Violence against women and girls (VAWG), Lambeth Council (<https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/community-safety-anti-social-behaviour/violence-against-women-girls-vawg>).

Here you can find out information about:

- Keeping yourself safe
- Advice if you are worried about harmful behaviour
- What to do in an emergency
- Contacts for safe spaces for you and your child if you need to leave your home

Our Young Person's team at the GAIA centre is here to support young survivors of domestic abuse, including those impacted by Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). We understand that abuse can happen in different ways- emotional, physical, financial, sexual, or controlling behaviour. The team offers specialist, one-to-one support that is confidential, non-judgemental and tailored to your needs. We listen to you, help you understand your rights and work with you to feel safe and empowered. Whether you need support with your relationship, housing, safety planning or just someone to talk to, we are here for you.

Lambeth's Gaia centre can offer you confidential, non-judgemental and independent support, it is free and staffed by female staff only. Their contact details are:

- Email lambethvawg@refuge.org.uk
- Phone **020 7733 8724**
- Website <https://refuge.org.uk/>

Support for you and your child

As a care leaver there is a lot of support available for you and your child. You will be able to access a range of support whether your child lives with you full time or not. You can find out more about free childcare for under 5's, help with childcare costs and other financial support available for bringing up children at www.lambeth.gov.uk/children-young-people-families/childcare-and-early-learning

We are beginning a support group for care leavers who are parents, this will take place in our new care leavers hub. Ask your Personal Advisor (PA) for more details on this.

Lambeth's Better Start Children's Centres aim to provide the best support for you as a parent, and your child (aged 0-4 years) and there are lots of groups and activities for you to join in with. They can also help you access free and confidential services if you are seeking training and employment opportunities. You will need to register with your nearest children's centre.

To register for Better Start services and find your nearest Children's Centre visit www.lambeth.gov.uk/childrenscentres

You can also find out what additional support is available from our Parent Support Service www.lambeth.gov.uk/parenting



A checklist to make sure you have the right support in place

Below is a checklist for care leavers who are parents to help you think about whether you and your child are getting the right support.

- 1** Does my pathway plan consider the support I may need as a parent?
- 2** Have I received all the financial support I should as a parent as part of Lambeth's care leavers offer?
- 3** Do I have the right information and support to help me think about education, employment and training for myself?
- 4** How can my PA help me think about childcare so I can work or study?
- 5** Is where I live suitable now I am a parent and for my child, how can my PA help me if it is not to find out about my choices?
- 6** How can I get support to help me travel to parenting groups or play groups?
- 7** Am I receiving all the benefits I am entitled to?

