



The Rt Hon. Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

7th June 2020

Dear Prime Minister,

Over the last three months, our nation has faced challenges like never before. During the pandemic, your Government's focus has understandably been on tackling the direct impact of COVID-19 and securing our NHS and our economy. Now it is time to make the youngest in society a national priority too, in order to mitigate the secondary and potentially longer-lasting impact of this crisis.

Babies and toddlers have often been missed in government policy and guidance during the pandemic, even though these early years are a critical time in child development, when they are particularly vulnerable. These issues are not unique to the pandemic, but we have a huge opportunity to make a difference right now, as policy makers decide on COVID-19 relief and recovery packages and begin to think about building back a better Britain. It is time to commit to protecting the wellbeing of babies and toddlers and the parents that care for them. Supporting parents, strengthening early relationships and promoting emotional development will help to protect babies from the adverse impacts of COVID-19 and increase the likelihood that all our children will reach their full potential and experience happy and healthy lives.

We write to you, as the lockdown is beginning to be relaxed, to ask that your Government give urgent attention to the needs of babies and their parents. Without this commitment, our ability to recover and to improve the nation's economic prosperity, health and wellbeing will be significantly hampered.

It is now time for a clear cross-government strategy for improving outcomes for all children, including a focus on the first 1001 days, from pregnancy, which lay the foundation for later development. This needs leadership from a dedicated cabinet-level Minister and to be supported by clear investment. It must set out a vision for how families with the youngest children will be supported to recover from the impact of COVID-19 and how the Government will begin to 'level up' and close gaps in outcomes which have widened during the pandemic.

This week we are launching the First 1001 Days Movement, an alliance of over 130 charities and professional bodies spanning the children, family, mental health, maternity and baby sectors. We are organisations with the experience, knowledge, community connections and passion to work with you to drive improvements for our youngest citizens. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you, or a member of your Cabinet, as we look towards a world beyond the pandemic in which our youngest generation is equipped to build a bright and prosperous future.

Yours sincerely,

Imran Hussain, Director of Policy and Campaigns, Action for Children
Dr Jessica Heron, Chief Executive, Action on Postpartum Psychosis
Professor Jane Barlow, President, The Association for Infant Mental Health AIMH-UK
Kathleen Roche-Nagi, Chief Executive, Approachable Parenting
Emma Pickett, Chair, Association of Breastfeeding Mothers
Dr Nick Waggett, Chief Executive, Association of Child Psychotherapists
Hilary Kennedy, Chief Executive, AVIGuk
Monika Celebi, Director, Babies1st
Donna Twyford, Baby College
Professor Helen Ball, Co-Director, Baby Sleep Info Source (Basis)
Debbie Brace, Early Language and Behaviour Consultant, Baby Talk and Play
Sarah Fielding, Child Psychotherapist, Baby and Infant Bonding Support
Javed Khan, Chief Executive, Barnardo's
Alison Baum OBE, CEO & Founder, Best Beginnings
David Melbourne, Acting Chief Executive for Birmingham Women's and Children's Foundation Trust
Naomi Delap, Director, Birth Companions
Merle Davies, Director, Blackpool Centre For Early Child Development
Madeleine Cassidy, Chief Executive, The Bobath Centre
Elaine Sims, Chief Executive, Bradford Doulas, Action for Community Limited
Shereen Fisher, Chief Executive, The Breastfeeding Network
Sarab Bajwa, Chief Executive, British Psychological Society
Dr Sophie Flemig, Chief Executive, Cattanach
Claire Burns, Director, CELCIS, Centre for Excellence in Scotland for children in need of care and protection
David Deakin, Executive Director, Chasing Zero
Sir Norman Lamb, Chair, Children and Young People Mental Health Coalition
Rosie Lowman, Chief Executive, Cocoon Family Support
Joanna Gordon, Chief Executive, Daniel's Den
Vivian Allen, Founder and Chief Executive, Dorset Parent Infant Partnership
Melian Mansfield MBE, Chair, Early Childhood Forum
Carolyn Silberfeld, Chair, Early Childhood Studies Degrees Network
Beatrice Merrick, Chief Executive, Early Education
Neil Leitch, Chief Executive, Early Years Alliance
David Holmes CBE, Chief Executive, Family Action
Sarah Darton, Chief Executive, Family Links The Centre for Emotional Health

Adrienne Burgess, Joint Chief Executive, Fatherhood Institute
Dr Helen Crawley, Director, First Steps Nutrition Trust
Barbara Jayson MBE, Founder and Co Chair, The Foundation for Mother & Child Health
Karen Buck MP and Catherine West MP, Co-Chairs, Foundation Years Information and Research
Emily Tredget, Founder, Happity
Peter Grigg, Chief Executive, Home-Start UK
Dr Cheryl Adams CBE, Executive Director, Institute of Health Visiting
Kathryn Solly, Keeping Early Years Unique
Bev Morgan, Chief Executive, Koala North West
Eden Anderson, Chair, La Leche League GB
Lisa Constable, Chief Executive, Listening Touch Therapies
Jenny Ward, Chief Executive, The Lullaby Trust
Nikki Wilson, Chief Executive, Make Birth Better
Alain Gregoire, Chair, Maternal Mental Health Alliance (MMHA)
Rosemary Mackenzie, Chief Executive, Mellow Parenting
Mark Rowland, Chief Executive, Mental Health Foundation
Harriett Latham, Director, Mr Wobbles Day Nursery
Marise Gowenlock, Manager of the Early Years Service, Multi-Cultural Family Base
Miriam Donagh, Chief Executive, MumsAid
Anna Feuchtwang, Chief Executive, National Children's Bureau
Angela McConville, Chief Executive, NCT
Peter Wanless CB, Chief Executive, NSPCC
Clare Stead, Chief Executive, Oliiki
Penny Mansfield CBE and Verity Glasgow, Co-Directors, OnePlusOne
Dympna Cunnane, Chief Executive, Our Time
Helen Callaghan, CEO and Clinical Director, Oxford Parent Infant Project
Dr Beckie Lang, Chief Executive, Parent Infant Foundation
Celia Suppiah, Chief Executive, Parents 1st UK
Kane Burgess, Chief Executive, Petals - the Baby Loss Counselling Charity
Ed Vainker, Chief Executive, Reach Children's Hub
Kevin Watkins, Chief Executive, Save the Children
Linos Muvhu, Secretary, Society for Pre and Post Natal Services (SPANS)
Hazel Douglas MBE, Director, Solihull Approach
Kishore Sankla, CEO, Solutions 4 Health
Amanda McIntyre, Director, The Stefanou Foundation
Nancy Stewart, Chair, TACTYC: Association for professional development in early years
Jane Brewin, Chief Executive, Tommy's
Pip Pinhorn, Manager, Toyhouse Libraries Association of Tower Hamlets
Keith Reed, Chief Executive, Twins Trust
Evri Anagnostara, Chair, Unite/Mental Health Nurses Association
George Hosking, Chief Executive, WAVE Trust
Lydia Keyte, Chair, What About The Children?
Karen Wint, Chief Executive, Women's Health and Family Services
Clare Meynell and Helen Gray, Coordinators, World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative UK
Alex Florschutz, Chief Executive, Zero2 Expo

Please reply to Sally Hogg, Coordinator of the First 1001 Days Movement sally@parentinfantfoundation.org.uk