



The infant mental health policy landscape and what we can do to influence it

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G20 Initiative for Early Childhood Development

Building human capital to break the cycle of poverty and inequality

1. We are convinced that early childhood is one of the most significant and influential phases of life - especially the first 1,000 days. It determines the basis for every child's future health, well-being, learning and earnings potential, and sets the groundwork for young children's emotional security, cultural and

“The period from pregnancy to age 3 is when children are most susceptible to environmental influences. **Investing in this period is one of the most efficient and effective ways to help eliminate extreme poverty and inequality, boost shared prosperity, and create the human capital** needed for economies to diversify and grow.”

Unicef, World Bank and World Health Organisation Nurturing Care Framework.





Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Programme Board: delivery plan 2019-2020

Published: 30 Aug 2019

Directorate: [Mental Health Directorate](#)

Part of: [Health and social care](#)

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Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Programme Board
delivery plan for 2019 to 2020.



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'Supporting the best start in life'

Infant Mental Health Framework for Northern Ireland

April 2016

Promoting positive social and emotional development from pre-birth to 3 years.



lechyd Cyhoeddus
Cymru
Public Health
Wales

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F1000D Collaborative

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This page in Welsh/Y dudalen hon yn Gymraeg
Cyhoeddiadau y 1000 Diwrnod Cymal

The focus on the first 1000 days during pregnancy and up to a child's second birthday acknowledges the growing body of international evidence that a greater prioritisation of our resources in the very early years would bring both additional lifelong benefits and a better return on investment for society and public services. However, there is proportionally less financial investment currently made in the early years than across the rest of the lifecycle.

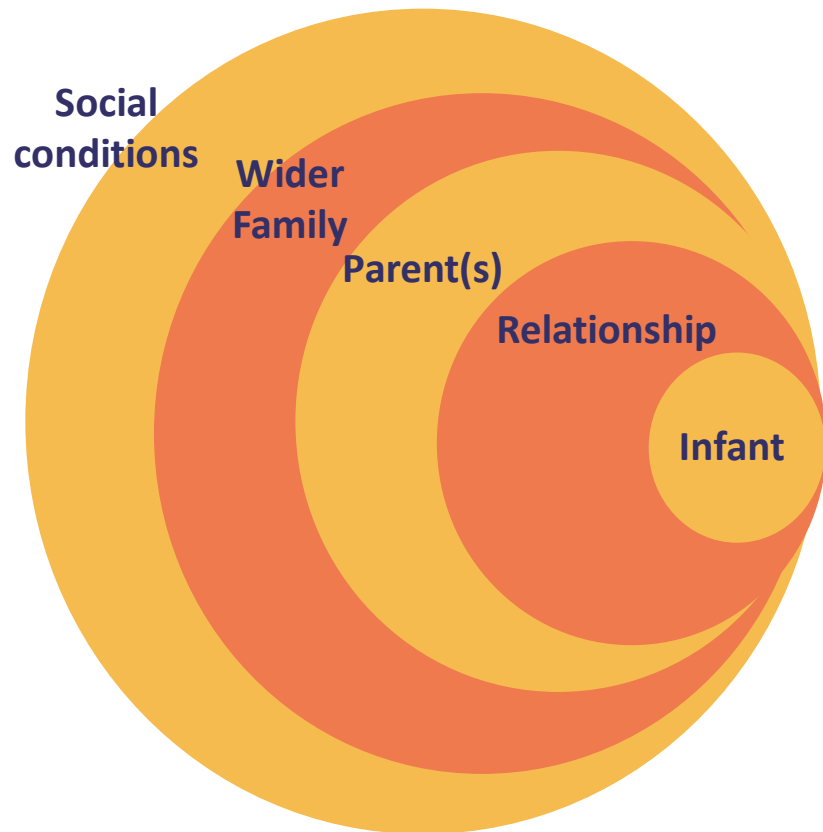
Despite our efforts to date, inequalities in health and wellbeing persist in Wales and the origins of many of these inequalities lie in early childhood and before birth.

To ensure that we are doing all that we can to support families in Wales at this pivotal time, Public Health Wales is facilitating the First 1000 Days (F1000D) Collaborative. It is not about creating new services; it is about learning from experience of what works well, sharing and implementing that learning, and working better together to improve outcomes for children.



**Where is Infant
mental health in UK
(Westminster)
Government policy?**







Good Policy has

- A vision
- Clear outcomes
- An evidence based strategy for achieving those outcomes
- Leadership
- Accountability
- Investment
- System reform
- Workforce development





House of Commons
Science and Technology
Committee

Evidence-based early years intervention

Eleventh Report of Session 2017–19

*Report, together with formal minutes relating
to the report*

*Ordered by the House of Commons
to be printed 30 October 2018*

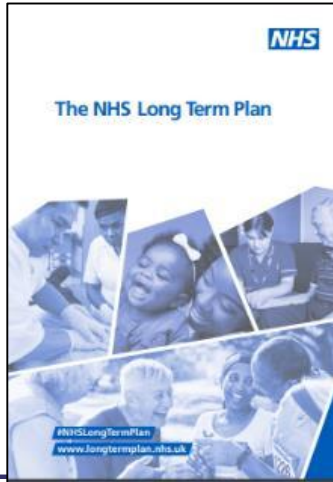
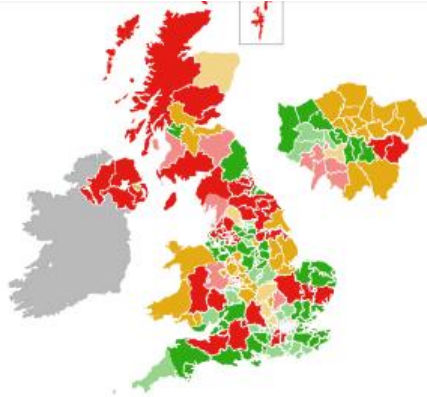
HC 506
Published on 14 November 2018
by authority of the House of Commons

“...there is **no clear, overarching national strategy** from the UK Government targeting childhood adversity and early intervention as an effective approach to address it.

Nor does there seem to be effective oversight mechanisms for the Government or others to monitor what local authorities are doing.

This has led to a **fragmented and highly variable approach** to early intervention across England...”





- Some good things are happening, but it's **fragmented**.
- Whilst many of these policies promote Infant mental health, Infant mental health/babies' emotional wellbeing **is not explicitly recognised in most cases** (with the exception of parent-infant therapy in perinatal services).





Many things are going in the wrong direction.

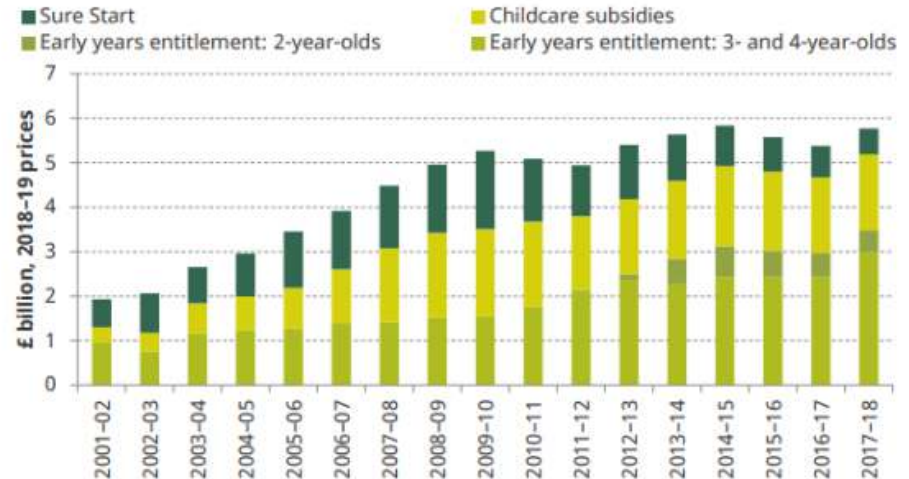
- Funding for children's services has fallen by a third per child in England since 2010 (NCB, 2019)
- Funding allocated to local authorities for early intervention fell by 64% between 2010 and 2017 (CRAE, 2019)
- Over 1000 Children's Centres have closed since 2009. (NCB, 2019)
- Health visitor numbers have fallen by over 2,000 from their peak at over 10,000 in September 2015. (The Guardian, 2018)





This isn't just about a lack of spending on early life, it's also about funding being focussed on different priorities.

Figure 2.6. Total early years spending through various sources, 2000-01 to 2017-18 (2018-19 prices)





Advancing our health: prevention in the 2020s

Presented to Parliament
by the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health
and Primary Care
by Command of Her Majesty

Published July 2019

“To support parents, we will modernise the Healthy Child Programme so it’s universal in reach and personalised in response.

This will enable effective, focused services where additional needs are identified; use of the latest evidence on effective practice; and help bring councils, the NHS and partners together to achieve priority outcomes for children and families.

We willlook to improve the way we support perinatal mental health and the healthy social and emotional development of babies and young children.”



The NHS Long Term Plan



#NHSLongTermPlan

www.longtermplan.nhs.uk

“Over the next five years, the NHS will therefore continue to invest in expanding access to community-based mental health services to meet the needs of more children and young people...

aged 0-25...

Over the coming decade the goal is to ensure that 100% of children and young people who need specialist care can access it.”





Babies' needs are not identified.



Babies' needs are not recognised by services.

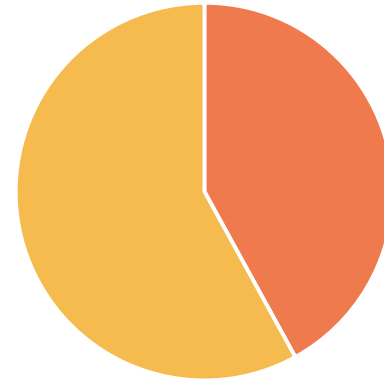


Babies' needs are not supported.



Babies are not prioritised.

42% of NHS Commissioning (CCG) areas in England said Children and Young People's Mental Health services **would not** accept referrals for children 2 and under.



Specialised parent-infant relationship teams



- **Multidisciplinary teams**, including highly skilled mental health professionals.



- **Experts and champions** offering training, consultation and/or supervision.



- Offering **direct support** for families who need specialised help.



- Provide **individualised packages** of support based on an assessment of need.



- Focus on the **parent-infant relationship**.



- Have clear **referral pathways** based on problems in early relationships.



- Accept referrals for children **ages 2 and under**.



The “Rare Jewels”

**Small, scarce but
incredibly valuable.**





Where is infant mental health on the political agenda?





House of Commons
Education Committee

Tackling disadvantage in the early years

Ninth Report of Session 2017–19

*Report, together with formal minutes relating
to the report*

*Ordered by the House of Commons
to be printed 29 January 2019*

HC 1006
Published on 7 February 2019
by authority of the House of Commons



House of Commons
Health and Social Care
Committee

First 1000 days of life

Thirteenth Report of Session 2017–19

*Report, together with formal minutes relating
to the report*

*Ordered by the House of Commons
to be printed 12 February 2019*

HC 1496
Published on 26 February 2019
by authority of the House of Commons



House of Commons
Science and Technology
Committee

Evidence-based early years intervention

Eleventh Report of Session 2017–19

*Report, together with formal minutes relating
to the report*

*Ordered by the House of Commons
to be printed 30 October 2018*

HC 506
Published on 14 November 2018
by authority of the House of Commons





...the Prime Minister asked me to chair a cross-government inter ministerial group on family support from conception to age two. This will seek to identify gaps in available provision and make recommendations on how coordination across departments can be improved and explore what more the government can do to ensure we act early to help every child get the best possible start in life.” Andrea Leadsom, 2018

“The Inter-Ministerial Group on Early Years Family Support has concluded its work. The Government’s Prevention Green Paper ‘Advancing our health in the 2020s’ reflects the conclusions of the Group, that many long-term outcomes are improved by positive relationships between parents and infants from pregnancy onwards.” Jo Churchil, 2019





Conservative Manifesto 2019

[Nothing on a children's strategy, health visiting or public health.]

- We will make the NHS the best place in the world to give birth through **personalised, high-quality support**.
- We will improve **the Troubled Families programme and champion Family Hubs** to serve vulnerable families with the intensive, integrated support they need to care for children – from the early years and throughout their lives.

Dominic Cummings



“...Almost everybody naturally thinks that ‘the shared environment’ in the form of parental influence ‘obviously’ has a big impact on things like cognitive development. The science says this intuition is false...

...The political world is obsessed with ‘early years’ such as Sure Start (UK) and Head Start (US). Politicians latch onto any ‘studies’ that seem to justify it and few have any idea about the shocking state of the studies usually quoted to justify spending decisions...”





**What are we doing to
influence?**

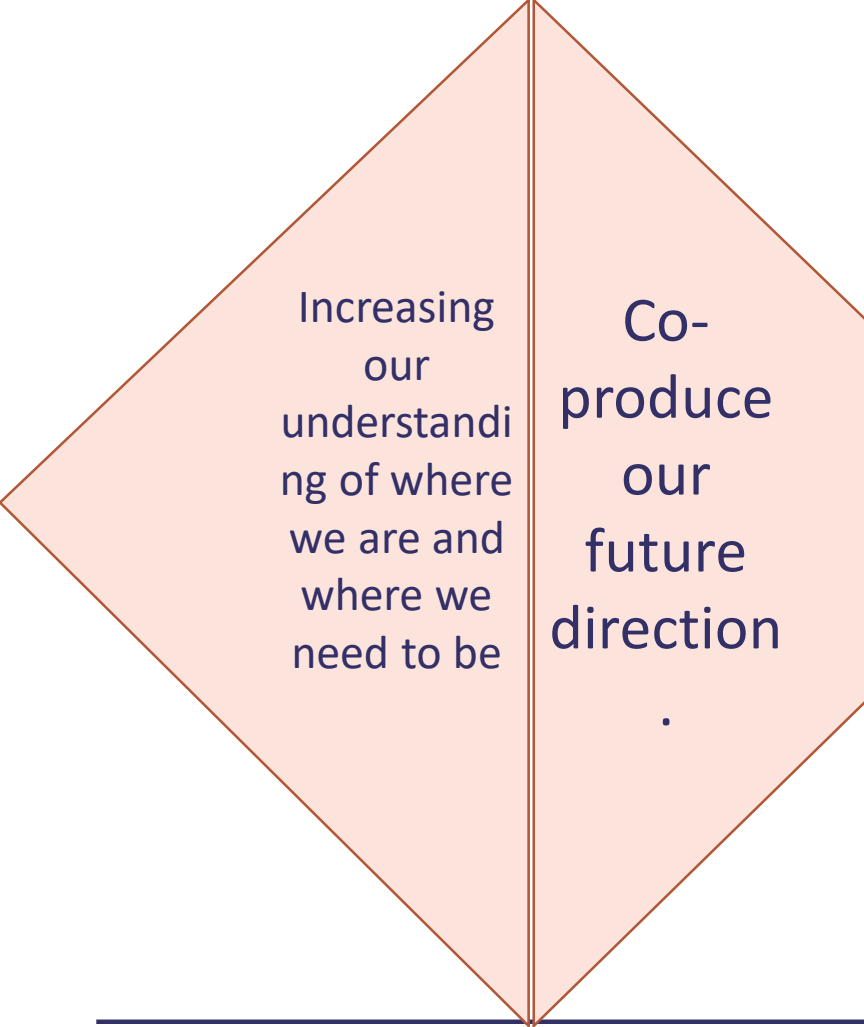




The 1001 Critical Days Movement

- An **alliance** of charities, academics, parliamentarians, practitioners and others
- We speak with a **united voice** about the importance of early relationships in giving every baby the best start in life
- We challenge **local and national decision** makers who are not doing enough for the youngest children.





Increasing
our
understandi
ng of where
we are and
where we
need to be

Co-
produce
our
future
direction

•

**Building the foundations that will enable the
1001 days movement to be more effective for
babies and their families.**

- A clear **vision and mission** for the movement, which has **buy-in** from stakeholders.
- Clear **objectives** for the next parliamentary period, **campaign calls** and a plan to support this.
- Clarify what it means to be **part of the movement** and how organisations will work together.
- Refresh the **brand and create new assets.**





The Conception to Age Two All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG)

- Parliamentarians from across the political spectrum with a shared passion for improving babies' early relationships, experiences and outcomes.
- **EGM on 4th Feb – encourage MPs to attend!**





The comprehensive spending review...





Parent-Infant
— FOUNDATION —