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Being or becoming a parent

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Expecting a baby? Already have children? We are here for you whenever you need us. Being and becoming a parent can be exciting, worrying and scary all at the same time! We are here to help and support you on your journey into parenthood whatever that may entail. If you want us to take you to appointments or attend groups, let your PA know.

Family hubs

There are lots of activities in our family hubs that you can attend before your baby arrives and if you already have children. Ask your PA to make sure that you are registered and able to access these. From Baby Steps, the Well Baby Clinic, Stay and Play and Messy Play the Family Hubs have lots on offer for you and your children. Your midwife will also be able to support you so just ask.

[Check out the timetable's for the Family Hubs Blackpool Family Hub locations](#)

They can also help with claiming Healthy Start.

The children's core

Bring your children to our children's core activities, check out the CORE app to see when the next event is. We do a range of activities such as trampolining at Ascent, bouncy castle madness at Bounce Play Centre, pumpkin carving and arts and crafts. Let us know what your children would like to do and we can look at ways to make it happen.

Social worker if you are pregnant and/or have children

We know that because you have been in our care that you might be worried about your unborn baby or your child having a social worker. We want children to remain with their families where it is safe for them to do so.

We know that sometimes things can be tough and you might need some extra help and support and this might mean that your child or unborn child has a social worker. Your PA will be there to support you and will attend any meetings or sessions you want them to.

Healthy Start?

If you're more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under 4, you may be entitled to get help to buy healthy food and milk.

If you're eligible, you'll be sent a Healthy Start card with money on it that you can use in some UK shops. We'll add your benefit onto this card every 4 weeks.

You can use your card to buy:

- Plain liquid cow's milk
- Fresh, frozen, and tinned fruit and vegetables
- Fresh, dried, and tinned pulses
- Infant formula milk based on cow's milk

You can also use your card to collect:

- Healthy Start vitamins – these support you during pregnancy and breastfeeding
- vitamin drops for babies and young children – these are suitable from birth to 4 years old

Applying

If you're receiving a qualifying benefit and are pregnant or have parental responsibility for at least one child under the age of 4, you can [apply online now for the NHS Healthy Start card \(opens in a new tab\)](#).

You will receive:

- £4.25 each week of your pregnancy (from the 10th week of your pregnancy)
- £8.50 each week for children from birth to 1 year old
- £4.25 each week for children between 1 and 4 years old

Your money will stop after your child's 4th birthday, or if you no longer receive benefits.

You can also get free Healthy Start vitamins. These are important to support your pregnancy and if you chose to breast feed. The vitamin drops for you child will also support thier growth and development.

Under 18 and on benefits

If you're under 18 and more than 10 weeks pregnant, you qualify for Healthy Start until your baby is born. You do not need to receive any of the qualifying benefits or be getting tax credits. To apply, you need to call us on 0300 330 7010 and provide:

- Your baby's due date
- A copy of your birth certificate
- Your NHS number
- Your National Insurance number

[Find out about call charges \(opens in a new tab\)](#).

After your baby is born, you will only continue to qualify for Healthy Start if you get the qualifying benefits or tax credits. To make sure you continue to receive Healthy Start vouchers once your baby is born, you should:

- Call us on 0300 330 7010
- Apply for Child Tax Credits as soon as you can
- Inform Universal Credit by updating your online account
- Reapply online and make a new claim

If you do not do this, your payment will stop 4 weeks after your baby's due date.

Working Tax Credit

If you, your partner, or your carer get Working Tax Credit (WTC), you do not qualify for Healthy Start unless you're under 18 and pregnant or you're only getting the WTC 4 week run-on. WTC run-on is what you receive in the 4 weeks immediately after you have stopped working for 16 hours or more per week.

Unable to register your child's birth

You should speak to HMRC or DWP to ensure your child is included on your benefit claim so that your payment can be issued.

If you're on Universal Credit you also need to phone 0300 330 7010 and tell them your baby's name and date of birth. Without this, your payments may stop and you will need to reapply.

Child care

[Check out what support you can get around childcare via the Childcare Choices website](#)

[More information about your childcare options](#)

Blackpool Council

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