



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Aneurin Bevan
University Health Board



Gwneud i Bob Cyswllt Gyfrif
Making Every Contact Count



Making Every Contact Count: Best Start in Life



Information pack



Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

What is Making Every Contact Count? 3

Chapter 2: Health Behaviours

Information, support and signposting for:

	Eating well	5
	Healthy weight	13
	Physical activity	17
	Oral health	23
	Tobacco	25
	Alcohol and substance misuse	27
	Emotional wellbeing and mental health	31
	Immunisation	34
	Screening	36

Chapter 3: Motivational Interviewing 38

Chapter 4: References 42

This resource has been developed to support staff who have completed Best Start in Life MECC training. You will find messages on healthy behaviours, practical advice, information and guidance, to support behaviour change conversations.

Contact Information

MECC training is available via the
Aneurin Bevan Gwent
Public Health Team:

Tel: 01495 241208

Email: ABUHB.MECC@wales.nhs.uk

MECC ABUHB Intranet Link:
<http://howis.wales.nhs.uk/abuhb.mecc>

Aneurin Bevan Gwent
Public Health Team,
Llanarth House,
1 Newbridge Gateway,
Bridge Street,
Newbridge
NP11 5GH

Chapter 1

What is Making Every Contact Count?

Making Every Contact Count (MECC) is a behaviour change approach that puts the promotion of health and wellbeing at the heart of every contact. The aim is to use every opportunity with a person to improve health and well-being by; motivating changes in behaviour, offering advice and support and if appropriate, referral to well-being support.

Why use MECC to support Best Start in Life?

The early years' workforce across health, local authority and voluntary sectors, have thousands of contacts on a day-to-day basis with individuals and are ideally placed to promote behaviour change which in turn improves health and well-being for families.

The MECC approach involves the delivery of very brief or brief interventions and signposting by frontline professionals. This has been shown by NICE to be both effective and cost-effective in supporting people to reduce their tobacco and alcohol use, and in improving their physical activity levels and diet.

MECC consensus statement





Why should we focus on the Best Start in Life?

To reduce inequity across the life course, we need to consider healthy behaviours from preconception. The foundations for virtually every aspect of human development – physical, intellectual and emotional – are laid in early childhood. This is critical in the First 1000 days of life, from conception through to age two. What happens during these early years has lifelong effects on many aspects of health and well-being – from obesity, heart disease and mental health, to educational achievement and socioeconomic status.

During the First 1000 days parents are central to children's lives; shaping children's experiences and interactions with the world. Confident, resilient and positive parenting is associated with improved health, wellbeing and learning for children now and into their future. Action to support parents to thrive in their parenting role has the potential to break intergenerational cycles of disadvantage and support the wellbeing of future generations. The highest rate of return on investment in reducing inequity comes from investing as early as

possible in the quality of early childhood development, from birth to age five, through additional support proportionate to need. In order to reduce inequity, collective action from all public service partners needs to focus on ensuring a consistent universal offer of support, to ensure no families are left behind.

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) are working towards a position where all staff recognise the vital role, they can play in giving every child in Gwent the best start in life, and where discussion of key health behaviour across the life course is a routine part of all care. This whole system approach, is the beginning of a conversation and movement that will engage stakeholders and experts across a range of sectors whose input is essential to developing lasting, equitable solutions.

Chapter 2: Health Behaviours



Health Professionals Guide: Eating Well

Key Health Messages

Childhood is a rapid time of growth, development and activity. Eating patterns and preferences are formed from an early age, therefore good nutrition is important from pre-conception, through to pregnancy and across the early-years.

Children need regular meals and snacks to provide them with energy and nutrients to grow and stay healthy.

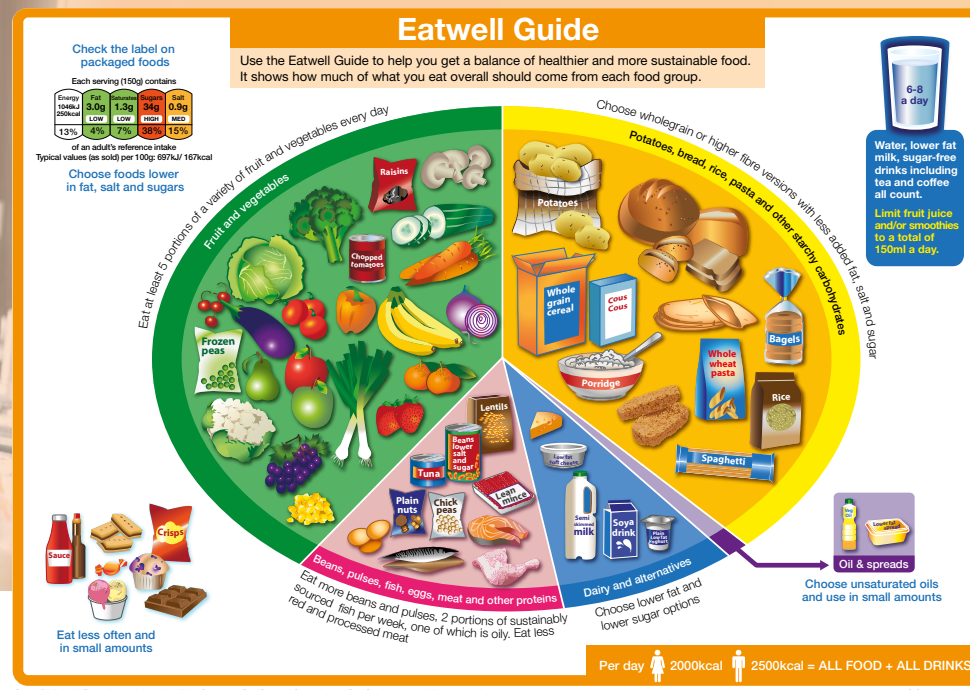
Eating well can support brain development, strengthen bones and muscles, support healthy digestive function and keep skin, teeth and eyes healthy. In addition, healthy eating will help children to achieve and maintain a healthy weight, protect teeth from decay and ensure they have all the nutrients they need for their development.

For adults, eating well can help us to feel better as well as reducing the risk of conditions such as; heart disease, stroke, some cancers, type 2 diabetes and osteoporosis in later life. Eating well supports healthy pregnancies and breastfeeding, as well as supporting digestive system function.



Healthy eating is not about cutting out foods or following a special diet, all foods can be included; you just need to get the balance right. Eating well is especially important while planning or during pregnancy for both men and women.

N.B. there are a list of foods which should be avoided during pregnancy: **Foods to avoid in pregnancy - NHS (www.nhs.uk)**



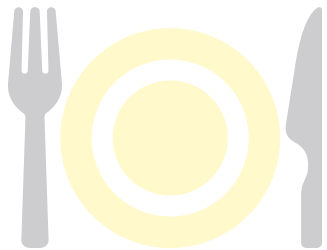
Top Tips for eating well:

- Base your meals on starchy foods, higher fibre options for older children and adults
- Eat lots of fruit and veg, aiming for at least 5 portions per day
- Eat more fish, including a portion of oily fish each week
- Cut down on saturated fat and sugar
- Eat less salt
- Get active and aim to be a healthy weight
- Stay hydrated
- Don't skip breakfast

The Eatwell Guide shows the proportions in which different types of foods are needed to have a well-balanced and healthy diet. The proportions shown are representative of your food consumption over the period of a day or even a week, not necessarily each meal time.

The Diverse Nutrition Association have developed an African & Caribbean Eatwell Guide, as well as a South Asian Eatwell Guide. Available here:

NHS Forth Valley – Multicultural Nutrition



Practical Advice

For adults and children over 2

- **Aim to have a regular eating pattern**, which includes breakfast, lunch and an evening meal each day
- **Starchy foods such as bread, pasta, rice and potatoes should make up about a third of your diet.** For adults and older children, choose wholegrain or wholemeal varieties where possible
- **Include fruit and vegetables at each meal** as well as snacks, aiming for at least 5 portions per day
- **Cut down on saturated fat** by having less hard cheese, cakes, biscuits, sausages, cream, pies and cutting off visible fat from meat. Instead of choosing butter or lard, opt for a small amount of vegetable oil or reduced-fat spread
- **Cut down on sugar** by reducing fizzy drinks, puddings, biscuits, sweets, pastries, sugary cereals and chocolates
- If you choose to snack between meals, **choose healthy options** such as low fat/ sugar yoghurts, vegetable sticks with hummus or salsa dip, rice cakes with low fat cream cheese, oatcakes, unsalted popcorn or a slice of toasted fruit loaf
- **Eat less salt**, by not adding salt to your meal and preparing food from scratch where possible
- **Stay hydrated by drinking 6-8 glasses of water** or sugar-free alternatives throughout the day. Plain water and milk are the only drinks children need



- **Aim to eat 2 portions of fish per week**, one of which should be oily. Oily fish include salmon, mackerel, trout, sardines and pilchards. Non-oily fish include haddock, plaice, tuna and hake
- **Aim to consume dairy or alternatives each day** to ensure the diet is rich in calcium. Examples include: milk, cheese and yoghurts. Unsweetened calcium fortified soya milk can also be used instead of cows' milk
- **Aim to consume adequate protein each day**, examples include pulses (beans, lentils, peas), nuts, Quorn, fish, eggs and meat
- **Aim to have a healthy breakfast** which is high in fibre and low in saturated fat, sugar and salt; this can form part of a balanced diet and provide energy throughout the morning
- **Get active and try to be a healthy weight.** This can be worked towards by focusing on both your food intake as well as your physical activity levels. To help with this:
 - **Look at traffic light labelling** on food and drink packaging. Having mainly green and amber products will help you to have a healthier diet
 - **Monitor your food and drink intake** by noting down your meals, snacks and drinks in a diary or by using an app, if you find this helpful



A healthy diet in pregnancy is an important part of a healthy lifestyle at any time but it is especially important if you're pregnant, or planning a pregnancy; eating well will help your baby to develop and grow.

You do not need to go on a special diet during pregnancy but it is important to get a variety of foods each day, to ensure the baby is getting the nutrients they need.

Examples of healthy snack ideas during pregnancy:

- Small sandwiches or pitta bread with grated cheese, lean ham, tuna and salad
- Vegetables, such as carrots, peppers or cucumber with low fat cheese or salsa dip
- Low fat/ sugar fruit yoghurts or plain natural yoghurt
- Hummus with wholemeal pitta or vegetable sticks
- Fresh fruit
- A small bowl of unsweetened cereal or porridge
- A small slice of malt loaf or a toasted teacake
- A bowl of vegetable or bean soup

Further information and foods which should be avoided in pregnancy can be found here: [Have a healthy diet in pregnancy - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)



10 Steps for Healthy Pregnancy

- 1 Take a daily supplement of 10µg vitamin D throughout pregnancy and 400µg folic acid up until at least the 12th week of pregnancy. Women with certain health conditions or a BMI of 30 or more or will be prescribed 5mg folic acid per day instead of 400µg
- 2 Keep physically active throughout pregnancy, aiming for at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity on 5 or more days per week
- 3 A healthy weight gain in pregnancy for most people is around 5-16kg (11pounds-35pounds) and you can avoid putting on too much weight by eating a healthy balanced diet. If you are overweight at the start of pregnancy aim for the lower end of this range.
- 4 Choose nutritious foods. There is no need to eat extra food but some people may need an extra healthy snack in the last trimester (e.g., Half a sandwich a day)
- 5 Balance your diet, following guidance on eating well during pregnancy (see helpful services)
- 6 Eat fish twice a week with one serving of oily fish for omega 3 fats – if you don't eat fish take a daily supplement of 200mg DHA but avoid fish liver oil supplements which contain vitamin A. Ask for advice from your health care professional if you're not sure
- 7 Choose nutritious snacks such as fruit, nuts, yogurt, a sandwich or toast rather than food or drink high in added sugar or fat
- 8 Have about 6-8 drinks (1½-2 litres) per day for good hydration – water is a good choice. Limit caffeine to 200mg per day (about 1 shot of espresso or 2 mugs of instant coffee or 2½ mugs of tea) Alcohol should be avoided
- 9 Food Safety. Thoroughly cook meat, fish and eggs; wash all soil from vegetables and fruit and avoid vitamin A supplements, liver, liver pâté, all pate, unpasteurised dairy products, soft and blue cheeses, swordfish, marlin and shark; limit tinned tuna to 4 small servings per week
- 10 Seek support to stop smoking or misusing drugs or medication (see Tobacco and Alcohol/ Substance misuse sections)

Adapted from the BDA endorsed Infant and Toddler Forum; MECC, from pregnancy to pre-school, 2019

Infant Feeding

The importance of parental and baby's nutrition is widely recognised as a critical part of giving children the best start in life. The nutritional status of both parents is important at the time of conception. A pregnant woman's nutritional status influences the growth and development of her foetus and forms the foundations for the child's later health. The mother's own health, both in the short and long term, also depends on how well-nourished they are before, during and after pregnancy.

A child's diet and nutrition during the early years impacts on their growth and development; it is linked to the incidence of many common childhood conditions such as diarrhoeal disease, dental caries, as well as iron and vitamin D deficiencies. Poor nutrient intake may also influence the risk of conditions such as coronary heart disease, Type 2 diabetes and obesity.



Benefits of breastfeeding:

- Breast milk meets all of baby's nutritional needs
- Breast milk protects the baby from infections and diseases
- Breastfeeding provides health benefits for the mother
- Breast milk is available whenever the baby needs it
- Breastfeeding can build a strong emotional bond between mother and baby
- Formula milk does not provide the same protection from illness and does not give any health benefits to the mother
- Breastfeeding can help to save money. Having a baby can be expensive, so it is nice to know breast milk is free
- Breastfeeding is better for the planet as it does not involve any processing, chemical preservatives, packaging or waste



'Breastfeeding is the cornerstone of child survival, nutrition and development and maternal health. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life, followed by continued breastfeeding with appropriate complementary foods for up to 2 years or beyond' (WHO 2003).

With this ethos and the belief that every child in Wales should receive the best start in life (Wellbeing of Future Generation's act 2015), breastfeeding can enhance this start. It is acknowledged however that this method of feeding may not be every woman's choice.



As a professional working in Early Years, you have an important role in supporting families to have access to sufficient evidence-based information to make informed choices on Infant Feeding. The following 10 steps can be used to support those discussions.

10 Steps for Infant Feeding

- 1 Breastfeeding helps protect your baby from illness. It may take time for you both to learn how it works best for you - ask for help if you need it
- 2 Give breast milk, the best option, or infant formula for at least 12 months
- 3 Begin a vitamin D supplement from birth as milk and foods do not necessarily provide enough (unless on formula milk as this should be fortified)
- 4 Let your baby decide how much milk to drink. Offer a feed when your baby is hungry and remember babies cry for reasons other than hunger
- 5 Begin to offer food alongside their milk feeds, this is recommended around 6 months – speak to your Health Visitor if you need support
- 6 Offer high iron foods from beginning of complementary feeding (weaning) – meat, oily fish, eggs, pulses and nut butters
- 7 Offer spoon-feeding soft finger foods and a cup of water at all meals so that your baby develops all their feeding skills
- 8 Stop feeding when your baby shows you, they have had enough by keeping their mouth closed or turning away from food or milk
- 9 When weaning, introduce allergenic foods one at a time; yogurt, cheese, egg, nut butters, fish, wheat-based foods and foods with soya or sesame
- 10 Move onto thick mash with soft lumps between six and eight months and onto minced and chopped family foods and firm finger foods between nine and 12 months

Adapted from the BDA endorsed Infant and Toddler Forum; MECC, from pregnancy to pre-school, 2019



10 Steps for Healthy Toddlers

- 1 Eating together as a family can be a fun and enjoyable experience, promoting healthy eating habits
- 2 You decide which nutritious foods to offer but let your toddler decide how much to eat
- 3 Offer foods from all five food groups each day
- 4 Have a routine and offer three meals and two to three snacks each day
- 5 Offer six to eight drinks a day. Plain water is a good choice
- 6 The government recommends all children aged 6 months to 5 years are given vitamin supplements containing vitamins A, C and D every day. **(Vitamins and Minerals for children - NHS (www.nhs.uk))**
- 7 Respect your toddler's tastes and preferences
- 8 Reward your toddler with your attention – never give food and drink as a reward, treat or for comfort
- 9 Limit fried food, crisps, packet snacks, pastries, cakes and biscuits to very small amounts. Avoid sugary squash, fizzy drinks, fruit juice, tea and coffee, whole nuts and small, soft round foods which may cause choking
- 10 Encourage physical activity for at least three hours every day and about 12 hours sleep

Eating well on a budget



Top Tips:

- **Aim to plan meals ahead** and make a shopping list, this can help us in the supermarket to only buy the things we need
- **Batch cook where possible** – if you make extra meals, you can freeze them ahead of busy days, saving time and money
- **Read the food labels** to check the ingredients, as well as whether you're getting good value for money

Affordable ways to get in your 5 a day:

- **Aim to buy seasonal fruit and vegetables;** they are widely available and usually less expensive
- **Consider buying loose products,** they are often cheaper than the packaged varieties
- **Tinned fruit and veg** are cheap and quick options to add to meals. For the healthiest choice, opt for fruit in natural juices rather than syrups and vegetables without added salt
- **Frozen fruit and vegetables** are very nutritious and pre-prepared, making it easier when cooking and reducing food waste

Cooking tips and food waste

- **Cooking from scratch** can be cheap, tasty and fun, you could try cooking your favourite takeaway at home, such as curry or stir fry with noodles
- When cooking, aim to **leave the skins on fruit and veg**, they're high in fibre and it can save preparation time
- **Aim to have a mixture of herbs and spices** at home, this can make cooking meals at home more flavoursome



Support for eating well on a budget can be found here:
[Food budgeting - Healthy Weight Healthy You](#)
[Love Food Hate Waste | Food Waste prevention](#)
[Find a Food Bank - The Trussell Trust](#)
<https://www.gov.wales/help-cost-living>

Helpful Services

If you are more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under 4, you may be entitled to get help to buy fruit, vegetables, milk and free vitamins through the Healthy Start Scheme. Further information can be found here:

Get help to buy food and milk (Healthy Start) or

Tel: 0345 607 6823

Trusted NHS help and advice during pregnancy, birth and parenthood can be found here:

Start for Life (www.nhs.uk) – this includes information on infant feeding, as well as weaning recipes

Healthy recipes for the family and healthy snack ideas can be found here: **Healthier Families - Home - NHS (www.nhs.uk)**

Advice on food and nutrition for childcare settings, including menus and recipes can be found here:

34509 Food and Nutrition - Best Practice Guidance (gov.wales)



For Oral Health e-leaflets and information, follow this link:

Designed to Smile - Public Health Wales (nhs.wales)

For guidance on planning a pregnancy, further information can be found here:

Planning for pregnancy: Healthier Together (cymru.nhs.uk)

Information on eating well during pregnancy can be found here:

Eat well during pregnancy :: Healthier Together (cymru.nhs.uk)

Useful Healthy Eating information for adults and children over 2 can be found here: **Eatwell Guide (gov.wales)**





Health Professionals Guide: Healthy Weight



Key Health Messages

For preconception and pregnancy:

- Pregnant women should try not to lose weight but aim to be a healthy weight before pregnancy, and avoid gaining too much weight during pregnancy
- Pregnancy is not the time to try and lose weight but instead to focus on eating healthily and being active where possible
- Gaining too much weight can increase the risk of complications such as:
 - Gestational diabetes: too much glucose (sugar) in the blood which can increase the risk of having a large baby
 - Pre-eclampsia: a rise in blood pressure can be the first sign and whilst most cases are mild, it can be serious
- Staying active is important before and during pregnancy, as it will prepare your body for labour and birth (further information can be found in the Physical Activity section)

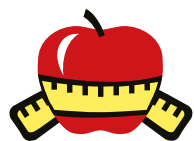


For children:

- Helping children to be a healthy weight is one of the best things we can do to set them up for life
- Research suggests children who are a healthy weight tend to be fitter, healthier, better able to learn and have more self-confidence
- Healthy eating and being active as a family can prevent excess weight gain in children
- Living with overweight or obesity as a child can lead to living with overweight or obesity as an adult, with very serious health consequences such as increased risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease and some cancers

For adults:

- Living with overweight and obesity increases the risk of developing chronic illnesses such as heart disease, some cancers, type 2 diabetes and can shorten life expectancy
- Having excess weight around the waist is more hazardous to health. There is an increased risk of health problems for men with a waist circumference of 94cm or more, and for a woman with a waist circumference of 88cm or more
- Losing just 5% of your overall body weight (for example, if you weigh 14 stone, losing 10 pounds) can make a big improvement to your health



Practical Advice

For adults:

- **Self-monitoring** can be a useful tool, for example checking your weight weekly (if you find this helpful)
- **A weight loss of between 0.5-2 pounds (or 0.25-1kg) a week is a safe and realistic target.** Achieving a healthier weight is a long-term goal that involves making realistic changes to your daily routine



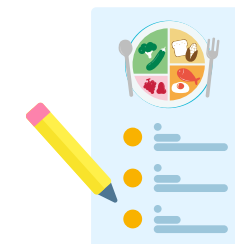
Focus on one change at a time, here are some ideas:

- **Don't skip breakfast**
- **Eat 3 meals a day** e.g., breakfast, lunch, an evening meal



- **Fill half of your plate with vegetables or salad** for your main meal every day
- **Reduce your portion sizes** by using a smaller plate
- **Keep healthy snacks within easy reach** e.g., fruit, low fat/sugar yogurts, vegetable sticks, rice cakes, oatcakes, plain popcorn or fruit bread

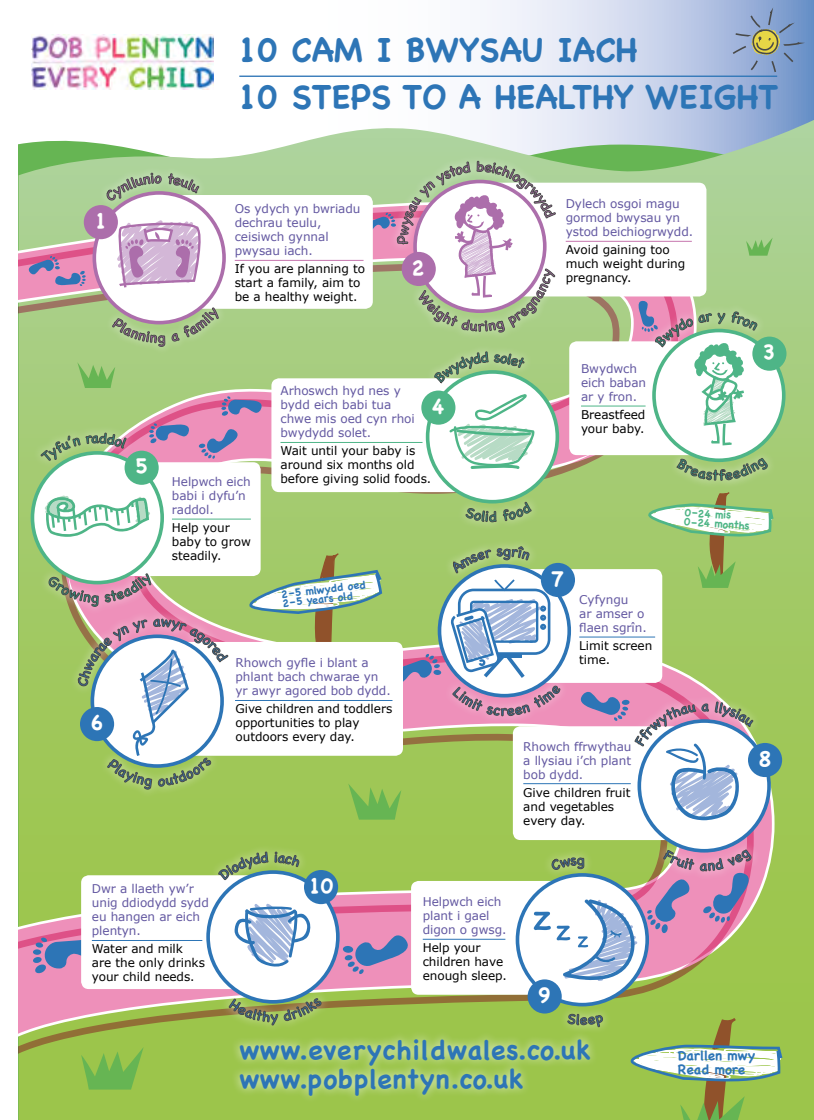
- **Try to limit snacks which are high in saturated fat, salt and sugar.** Eating straight out of a big bag of sweets or crisps can mean you eat more than you realise, change to a small packet or put a portion into a bowl
- **Choose plain water** and other sugar free drinks
- **Drink fewer alcoholic drinks** and make up drinks with low calorie/ sugar free mixers e.g., diet lemonade. Alcohol is high in calories and often dissolves your good intentions to eat well
- **Plan what you are going to eat in advance,** batch cooking can make it easier to have a balanced meal when you're limited on time
- **Eat slowly and concentrate on the food** you are eating, try to avoid distractions such as television
- **Think of non-food related activities** that will distract you from thinking about eating. For example, phoning a friend, going for a walk, reading a book or tidying 'that' drawer
- **Aim to be active daily** and reduce long periods of sitting down. Build activity into daily routines; take a lunchtime or evening walk, take the stairs instead of the lift, park your car further away from your destination, or tidy a room
- **Ask for the right support;** a friend, partner, health professional, or group (see helpful services section)



10 Steps to a Healthy Weight – Every Child Wales

This is a national programme to improve the number of children starting school a healthy weight and provides positive steps that families can do to help their children be a healthy weight.

- 1 Adults should **aim to be a healthy weight** when starting a family
- 2 **Avoid gaining too much weight during pregnancy**
- 3 **Breastfeed your baby** – breastfed babies are more likely to be a healthy weight by the time they start school. More information can be found in the Infant Feeding section
- 4 **Wait until your baby is 6 months old before giving solid foods.** In the first 6 months, babies get all the nutrients they need from breastmilk or infant formula
- 5 **Help your baby to grow steadily.** Encourage children to be active and be mindful of portion sizes
- 6 Give children and toddlers **opportunities to play outdoors every day.** Active Play, especially outdoors, helps your child develop physically, mentally and emotionally
- 7 **Limit screen time**
- 8 Give children **fruit and vegetables every day.** They are full of fibre, vitamins and minerals which can help to keep your child healthy
- 9 Help your child to **get enough sleep**, the amount they need will depend on their age. Aim to get into a routine and stick to it where possible, as well as making the child's room sleep-friendly
- 10 **Water and milk** are the only drinks children need; they do not contain any added sugar *Public Health Wales, 2023*



Helpful Services

Information on 10 steps to a healthy weight for children can be found here: **Professionals | Every Child (everychildwales.co.uk)**

Children who are >98th BMI centile, with a diagnosed weight related comorbidity or BMI Centile >+3.33SD can be referred to CONNECT the Level 3 Specialist weight management service for children and young people:

'Connect' Child and Young Person Weight Management Service - Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (nhs.wales)

Email Connect.abb@wales.nhs.uk or Tel 03003034906



Adults who are living with overweight can access support through commercial groups such as Slimming World or Weight Watchers, available here:

Welcome to Slimming World | Achieve your weight loss dreams
www.weightwatchers.com



Adults who are living with obesity can self-refer to the Adult Weight Management Service:

Weight Management Service - Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (nhs.wales)

Online NHS support can be found here:

12 tips to help you lose weight - NHS (www.nhs.uk) and
Weight Loss | British Dietetic Association (BDA)

For information and support through pregnancy, further information can be found here: **Weight gain in pregnancy - NHS (www.nhs.uk)**

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board has “Healthy Pregnancy” service for those women who are over-weight. Referral is via midwifery.

The **'Healthy Weight Healthy You'** website is for adults in Wales, providing self-directed support for achieving or maintaining a healthy weight, with tailored information and support.



Health Professionals Guide: Physical Activity

Key Health Messages

Being active has benefits for physical and mental health, including:

- Reducing stress, depression, anxiety and improving self-esteem
- Improving sleep quality
- Strengthening bones and muscles
- Helping to maintain a healthy weight
- Reducing the risk of developing a number of diseases including heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes
- Development of social skills and improved cognitive function

For pregnant women:

Physical activity is important during pregnancy, some of the key benefits include:

- Improved fitness
- Improved sleep
- Improved mood and emotional well-being
- A reduction in hypertensive disorders
- Improved cardiorespiratory fitness
- Lower gestational weight gain
- A reduction in risk of developing gestational diabetes



- Exercise through pregnancy can help your muscles to carry the extra weight, make your joints stronger, improve circulation, ease backache and generally help you to feel well
- NHS guidance suggests active women are less likely to experience problems in later pregnancy and labour

Keeping up with normal daily physical activity is encouraged for as long as you feel comfortable.

Exercise does not have to be expensive, see Helpful Services for what is available in your local area. Walking is free and a great way to be physically active daily.

As a general rule, you should be able to have a conversation as you exercise, whilst pregnant.

Exercises in pregnancy may need to be slowed down and if in any doubt, you can contact your maternity team.

If you are attending exercise classes ensure the fitness instructor is qualified and inform them you are pregnant so they can adapt the exercises for you appropriately.



Exercise tips for pregnancy:

- Always warm up before exercising and cool down afterwards
- Try to keep active on a daily basis, this may be going out for a walk
- Avoid any strenuous exercise in hot weather
- Drink plenty of water
- Most exercises, including walking, jogging, pregnancy specific Pilates and Yoga are safe during pregnancy
- Swimming can be a great option as the water can support your increased weight
- Antenatal exercise classes are a great way to meet other mums to be and build up a support network
- The recommendation is to aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity every week. This doesn't need to be done all in one go – try sessions of 10 or 15 minutes at a time
- Try to limit the amount of time you are sedentary by breaking up long periods of time you are sitting down



The benefits of physical activity in the postpartum period (up to one year) include:

- Improved emotional wellbeing
- Improved physical fitness
- A reduction in postpartum weight
- A faster return to pre-pregnancy weight
- Better sleep quality

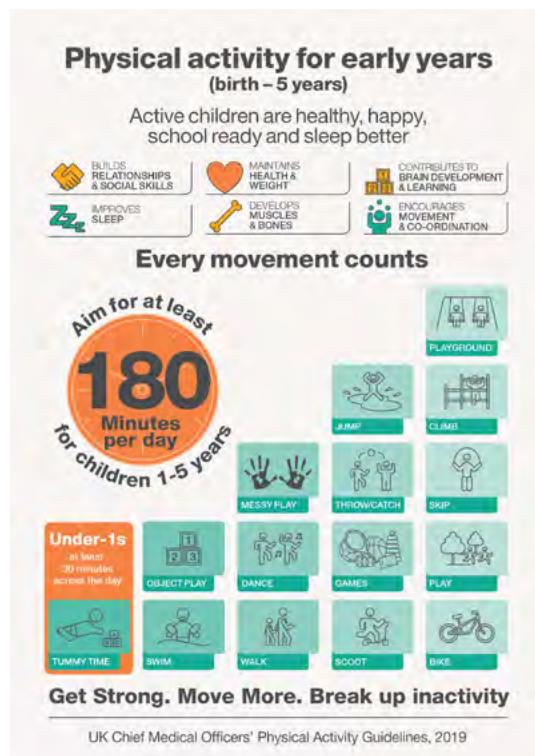
Physical activity for women after childbirth:

- Can be safely recommended after the six-to-eight-week postnatal check, depending on how the individual feels and what is right for them
- Intensity should be built up slowly over a period of at least 3 months
- Has no negative impact on breastfeeding postpartum
- Should be built into the day such as walking instead of using the car for short journeys
- Pelvic floor exercises can be started as soon as comfortably possible and continued daily
- Exercising with your baby is a good way to bond, meet other new parents and socialise for example Buggyfit or your local Parkrun
- Exercising with others can increase your motivation and mental wellbeing



For Children, physical activity can:

- Increase energy levels and support positive mental well-being
- Build confidence, reduce anxiety and improve self-esteem
- Improve overall health and fitness
- Improve sleep and energy levels
- Positive attitudes towards physical activity have also been associated with children being happier.
- Help children maintain a healthy weight to prevent childhood obesity



Under 1's

- Infants (less than 1 year) should be physically active several times every day in a variety of ways, including interactive floor-based activities, such as crawling
- For infants not yet mobile, this includes at least 30 minutes of tummy time spread throughout the day and other movements such as reaching, pushing and pulling themselves independently, or rolling over; more is better
- Once babies can move around, they should be encouraged to be as active as possible in a safe and supervised play environment

NB: Tummy time may be unfamiliar to babies at first but can be increased gradually, starting from a minute or two at a time, as the baby becomes used to it. Babies should not sleep on their tummies

Toddlers (1-2 years):

- Toddlers should be physically active for at least 180 minutes (3 hours) per day. This can be achieved at any intensity throughout the day and includes a wide variety of activities such as outdoor play; more is better
- The 180 minutes can include light activity such as standing up and moving around, as well as more energetic activities such as skipping, hopping, running and jumping and active play
- Active play for children is physical activity with regular bursts of a moderate to vigorous pace, such as crawling, jumping, or running. Playing actively raises children's heart rate and makes them 'huff and puff'

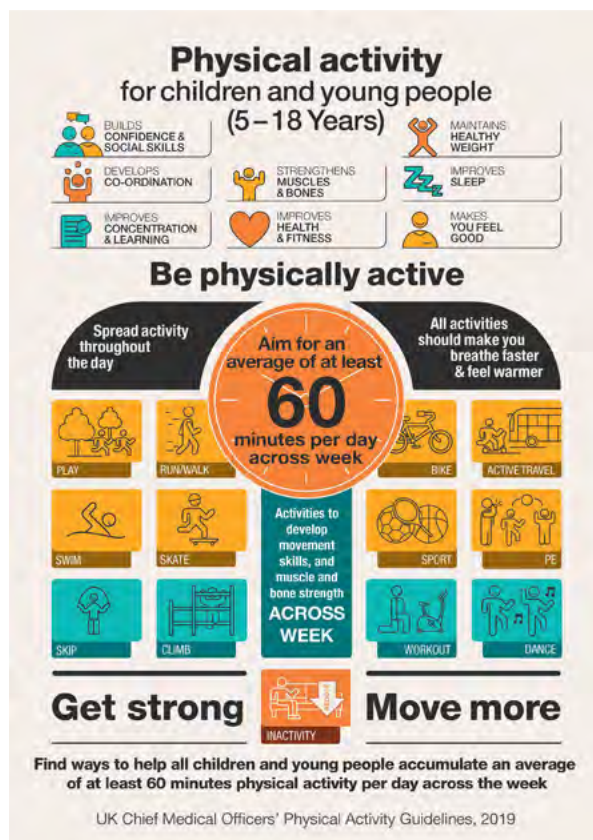


Pre-schoolers (3-4 years):

- Pre-schoolers should be physically active for at least 180 minutes (3 hours) per day in a variety of activities spread throughout the day, including active and outdoor play. More is better
- The 180 minutes should include at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity
- All under 5's should minimise the amount of time being sedentary (sitting or being restrained) for extended periods (except time sleeping)

Children and young people (5-18 years)

- Children and young people should aim to do 2 types of physical activity each week: aerobic exercise and exercises to strengthen their muscles and bones
- Children and young people should engage in moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity for an average at least 60 minutes per day across the week
- This can include all forms of activity such as physical education, active travel, after-school activities, play and sports
- This will help children and young people to improve movement skills, muscular fitness, bone strength as well as improved sleep
- Children and young people should aim to minimise the amount of time spent being sedentary and when possible, should break up long periods of not moving with at least light physical activity



Tips on how to be active as a family:

- Going on a family nature walk
- Walking instead of taking public transport or the car – or get off the bus a stop or two early and walk from there
- Giving gardening a go as a family
- Walking together as a family to school or to the park
- Going out for a family bike ride



For physical activity options available in your local area see Helpful Services

Helpful Services

For ways to keep your baby or toddler active:

How to keep your baby or toddler active - NHS (www.nhs.uk)



For family physically activity options, further information can be found here: **Activities for kids - Healthier Families - NHS (www.nhs.uk)**

Local opportunities to be physically active, including local sports centres and details for the National Exercise Referral Scheme:

Blaenau Gwent: **Aneurin Leisure Trust**

Caerphilly: **Caerphilly - Caerphilly County Borough**

Newport: **Newport Live |
The first choice for sport and leisure in Newport**

Monmouthshire: **MonActive - Monlife**

Torfaen: **TLT - Torfaen Leisure Trust**



For physical activity guidance during pregnancy, further information can be found here:
Exercise in pregnancy - NHS (www.nhs.uk)



The Ramblers is a charity dedicated to removing barriers so everyone can enjoy walking in green spaces, further information can be found here: **Home - Ramblers**

Parkrun is a free community event where you can walk, jog, run volunteer or spectate. Parkrun is 5k and takes place every Saturday morning, junior parkrun is 2km dedicated to 4 -14-year-olds and their families every Sunday morning. Further information can be found here: **home | parkrun UK**



Buggyfit is a postnatal exercise class
**Postnatal Exercise Classes - BuggyFit
helps you get back in shape**

Sustrans is the charity which makes it easier for people to walk and cycle. Further information can be found here:
Home - Sustrans.org.uk





Health Professionals Guide: Oral health



Key Health Messages

- Good oral health is essential in our daily lives
- Our teeth have such an important role; they help us to chew and digest food, to talk and speak clearly and give our face its shape.
- Poor oral health can lead to pain, infections, altered sleep and eating patterns, school absence, decreased wellbeing and dental extractions due to tooth decay
- The latest child oral health survey (2016) shows that 35% of 5-year-old children in Wales are affected by dental decay

- Encourage families to sign up to **Designed to Smile** in their nursery or school
- Adults should **avoid tobacco use and/or drinking alcohol** as it increases the risk of developing mouth cancer and gum disease

Prevention is the key to good oral health:

- **Brushing twice daily** with a fluoride toothpaste for at least 2 minutes, especially last thing before bed
- Spit out excess toothpaste but **don't rinse with water** after brushing
- **Maintain a low sugar diet**, avoiding sugary snacks and drinks between meals
- **Plain water and milk** are the only safe drinks for young children
- **Visit the dentist** regularly as advised



Prevent oral diseases

 Daily tooth brushing with fluoride toothpaste	 Limit free sugar intake
 Stopping the use of all forms of tobacco	 Reducing alcohol consumption
 World Health Organization	

Practical Advice

Pregnancy

- You may notice that your gums bleed and become inflamed during pregnancy, which may be due to changing hormone levels, but you should still continue to brush as normal and seek advice from your dentist
- If you are suffering from vomiting, rinse your mouth out with plain water, but do not brush your teeth straight away, as the stomach acid can soften the teeth

Children

- Start brushing your baby's teeth as soon as the first tooth appears
- Start using a free-flow cup from 6 months old
- Try to stop using a bottle or dummy (if using) by baby's first birthday
- Children under 8 will need help to brush their teeth effectively
- Toothpaste guidance: children can use a fluoride toothpaste up to 1450ppm (parts per million fluoride)

For children under 3, use only a thin smear of toothpaste



For children over 3, use a pea-sized amount



Helpful Services

You are entitled to free NHS treatment if you are:

- Pregnant when you start your treatment and for 12 months after your baby is born
- Under 18 or under 19 and in full time education
- Receiving low-income benefits (if you're unsure of eligibility ask at your local dental surgery)

For help finding a dentist in ABUHB, visit:

[NHS 111 help finding a dentist](#)

If you require urgent dental treatment, please contact Aneurin Bevan Dental Helpline on [01633 744387](tel:01633744387)

Oral health advice e-leaflets for keeping your smile healthy in pregnancy and looking after baby's teeth:

[Early years health services - Public Health Wales \(nhs.wales\)](https://nhs.uk/early-years-health-services)



Health Professionals Guide: Tobacco

Key Health Messages

Stopping Smoking is the most important thing you can do to benefit your health and the health of your baby.

It's never too late to stop. Giving up smoking can be hard, but if you're pregnant, now is definitely the time to quit. The benefits of quitting start straight away:

- After 24 hours, carbon monoxide is eliminated from the body and lungs start to clear out mucus and smoking debris
- After 48 hours, the ability to taste and smell is greatly improved
- Within 3 days, breathing will become easier and energy levels increase
- After 1 year, the risk of having a heart attack will fall to half that of a smoker
- Stopping smoking 20 cigarettes a day will save you £3796 a year
- People who breathe second-hand smoke are at risk of many of the same diseases as smokers, including cancer and heart disease



Smoking and pregnancy

- Smoking when you're pregnant can harm your unborn baby. Therefore, quitting as early as possible with Help Me Quit support will benefit you and your unborn baby
- It's never too late to quit, whether you're planning a pregnancy or are pregnant, the sooner you quit, the better. There is lots of help available, so you don't have to do this alone

Reasons to stop smoking include:

- You're doing the best thing for your baby's health
- The chances of having a miscarriage or still birth are reduced
- You'll minimise the risk of cot death (SIDS)
- Your baby is less likely to be born early (premature) or underweight
- Stopping smoking will help your baby in later life – some people suffer from asthma and other serious illnesses if their mother smoked while pregnant

Second-hand smoke

- Children who live with a smoker are more likely to start smoking themselves in adolescence (around 23, 000 young people each year in England and Wales start smoking by the age of 15, as a result of exposure to smoking in the home)
- Smoke Free Spaces came into force from March 2021 which made it illegal to smoke on hospital grounds, children's playgrounds, holiday accommodations and school grounds, to protect the public from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke

Practical advice

Advise smokers that:

- The best way to quit smoking is with **FREE** NHS stop smoking support offered through **Help Me Quit**.
- NHS Stop smoking services offer smokers the greatest chances of success by providing:
 - Structured, tailored and expert support
 - Carbon monoxide monitoring for motivation
 - Access to free licenced stop smoking medication e.g., Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)
- Smokers are **four times more likely** to successfully quit smoking with NHS stop smoking support, than going it alone.



Ewch i helpafistopio.cymru
neu tecstiwch HMQ i 80818.
Visit helpmequit.wales
or text HMQ to 80818.
0800 085 2219

Professionals should refer smokers by:

- Using the professional referral short-form:
www.helpmequit.wales/professional-referrer/
- Using existing referral routes such as the web-based referral platform: QuitManager,
- Email: ABB.Helpmequit@wales.nhs.uk or our dedicated maternity inbox: ABB.HMQMaternity@wales.nhs.uk
- Telephone Help Me Quit (with client permission):
0800 085 2219

For further information and training visit the **National Centre for Smoking Cessation and Training (NCSCT)** website.

Helpful Services

NHS Stop Smoking Services – Help Me Quit

- The single point of access for all NHS stop smoking services in Wales
- Making it easier for smokers to choose the best NHS stop smoking support for them
- Recognising that not all smokers are the same and their support needs differ
- Support is available in:
 - Meetings with other smokers
 - One-to-one appointments, face-to-face, over the telephone or virtual
 - Community Venues
 - Community Pharmacies
 - Hospitals
 - Antenatal Clinics

Smokers can get support directly by:

- Calling: **0800 085 2219**, or
- Texting: **HMQ to 80818** (to get a call back), or
- Visiting: www.helpmequit.wales to request a call back, or
- Asking: their local pharmacist (where services are available)



Health Professionals Guide: Alcohol and substance misuse

Key Health Messages

The UK Chief Medical Officers (CMOs) have agreed that there is no 'safe' drinking level. Drinking any amount of alcohol carries a risk. The effects of alcohol on your health and wellbeing will depend on how much drink, and the period of time you drink it over. The less alcohol you drink, the lower the risk to your health.

There is no safe limit, but if you want to keep your health risks low:

- Drink less than 14 units a week
- Spread your drinking over three or more days
- Avoid harmful regular heavy drinking episodes

The risk to your health increases when you drink any amount of alcohol on a regular basis. The less alcohol you drink, the lower the risk to your health. Drinking too much on any single occasion (a binge) can carry additional risks.

Specialist advice should be sought for anyone with alcohol dependency. Please see the section on Helpful Services.

Alcohol and pregnancy

CMO advice is that if you are pregnant or are planning a pregnancy, it is safest not to drink at all.

Pregnant women using alcohol, illicit drugs and other psychoactive substances can lead to multiple health and social problems for both mother and child. Use of alcohol during pregnancy can lead to fetal alcohol syndrome and other harms such as spontaneous abortion, stillbirth, low birthweight, prematurity and birth defects.

Consumption of alcohol and other drugs can also severely impair an individual's functioning as a parent, spouse or partner, and trigger gender-based and domestic violence, thus significantly affecting the physical, mental and emotional development of children. Injecting drug use is also associated with an increased risk of transmission of HIV and viral hepatitis to pregnant women and their infants.

WHO guidelines suggest pregnancy may be an opportunity for women, their partners and other people living in their household to change their patterns of alcohol and other substance use. Health workers providing care for women with substance use disorders during pregnancy need to understand the complexity of the woman's social, mental and physical problems and to provide the right advice and support throughout pregnancy and the postpartum period.

Women who misuse substances during pregnancy may be anxious about the attitudes of healthcare staff and the potential role of social services. They may also be overwhelmed by the involvement of multiple agencies.



Professionals across health and social care need to provide supportive and coordinated care during pregnancy to overcome barriers for women who misuse substances. NICE guidance (2020) suggests particular attention should be paid to:

- integrating care from multi-agency services including third sector organisations
- ensuring that the attitudes of staff do not prevent women from using services
- addressing women's fears about the involvement of children's services and potential removal of their child, by providing information tailored to their needs
- addressing women's feelings of guilt about their misuse of substances and the potential effects on their baby

Children and young people

The CMO guidance for children and young people is that:

- Children under 15 should not drink alcohol at all. There is clear evidence that alcohol can harm the developing brain, bones and hormones
- Drinking at age 15 and older can be hazardous to health. Binge drinking and heavy alcohol use puts young people at risk – from injuries, fights, regretted sexual activity, and other substance misuse



New research has increased our understanding of the link between alcohol and some diseases.

Drinking alcohol increases the risk of a range of illnesses, including breast and bowel cancer. We also now know that drinking has no health benefits for most people.

The benefits of drinking less alcohol:

- You will reduce the risk of heart disease and cancer
- Your liver will be able to recover and repair damage
- Your energy levels will increase
- You will sleep better and feel more rested/ refreshed when you awake
- You are less likely to suffer from alcohol related depression
- You are less likely to have an accident
- You are less likely to engage in any risky behaviour, for example unprotected sex
- You are less likely to upset family and friends
- You will save money
- You will be able to concentrate better

Practical advice

- If you are trying to reduce the amount of alcohol you drink, having several alcohol-free days each week is a good start. Just make sure you do not increase the amount you drink on the days you do drink
- Know how many alcohol units you are drinking.
Use the alcohol unit checker tool - www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/LiveWell/AlcoholUnitsChecker/
- Keep a track of how much you are drinking, by using an alcohol diary: **NHS alcohol diary**

To reduce your health risks on any single drinking session:

- **Go low** – choose lower alcohol drinks or have more soft drink
- **Go slow** – drink more slowly or with food
- **Go small** – choose smaller glasses, bottles rather than pints.
Avoid multi-buy offers

If you are having difficulty cutting down on your drinking you can consult with a health professional, local alcohol service or visit recognised websites (see see helpful services). If you are a very heavy drinker, and drink every day, do not try to cut down on your own as you might get withdrawal symptoms. It is best to contact your GP or local alcohol services to seek advice before you stop drinking.

Using the AUDIT-C tool will provide an indication of the level of alcohol a patient is drinking. It can be followed by the full AUDIT screening tool if appropriate and time allows. The full AUDIT specifically identifies one of four main drinking categories: low risk, increasing risk (hazardous), higher risk (harmful) or possible dependence.

Lager, beer or cider



440ml can of regular lager, beer or cider (ABV 4.5%)	2 units
330ml bottle of regular lager, beer or cider (ABV 4.5%)	1.5 units
500ml bottle of stronger cider (ABV 7.5%)	3.8 units
Pint of strong lager, beer or cider (ABV 5.2%)	3 units
Pint of extra strong lager, beer or cider (ABV 8%)	4.5 units

Glass of red, white or rosé wine (ABV 13%)



Small 125ml	1.6 units
Standard 175ml	2.3 units
Large 250ml	3.3 units
750ml bottle of red, white or rosé wine (ABV 13.5%)	10 units

Other Drinks



25ml single spirit and mixer (ABV 40%)	1 unit
50ml glass of sherry or othered fortified (ABV 20%)	1 unit
50ml glass of liqueur (ABV 20%)	1 unit
275ml bottle of alcopop (ABV 5.5%)	1.5 units

Audit C
Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test

Think About Your Drink with Audit-C

Click on your responses to each question, answering as honestly as possible. Your result will appear in the grid below:

Questions	0	1	2	3	4	Your score
How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?	Never	Monthly or less	2-3 times per month	2-3 times per week	4+ times per week	
How many units of alcohol do you drink on a typical day when you are drinking?	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-9	10+	
How often have you had 6 or more units if female, or 8 or more if male, on a single occasion in the last year?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily	

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

If you scored...
1-4 = Well done, you are a lower risk drinker. There is still a health risk especially if your drinking increases
5-10 = You are potentially drinking at hazardous levels. Follow the advice to the right.

What does 1 unit of alcohol look like?

GUIDELINE
Men and women are advised not to regularly drink more than 16 units a week.

SMALL CHANGES = BIG BENEFITS
• Have drink free days every week
• Keep track of how much you drink

REDUCE THE RISK

Helpful Services

Gwent N-gage

The Gwent N-gage service is for young people aged under 18 years, living in Gwent, that are needing support, information or advice regarding their own or someone else's substance use. This is a fully integrated team between Barod and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board S-CAMHS services.

Gwent N-gage provides a range of services from 1:1 support, diversionary activities, family interventions, professionals training, consultancy, Mental Health assessment, prescribing and Nurse/medical input.

Contact: 0333 320 2751

gwentn-gage@drugaidcymru.com

<https://barod.cymru/where-to-get-help/service-2/gwent-n-gage/>



Gwent Drug and Alcohol Service (GDAS)

If people are concerned about their or someone else's drinking, then help is available from GDAS.

The aim of GDAS is to engage drug and/or alcohol users and/or their concerned others in a continuum service provision, in order to reduce substance related harm; physical dependence, related health problems and improve psychological, family and social functioning in all domains of the service users, carers and concerned others lives.

Contact: 0333 999 3577

info@gdas.wales

www.gdas.wales

Useful information can be found from:

Support with alcohol and substance misuse in pregnancy can be found here:

Drugs and alcohol in pregnancy: Healthier Together
cymru.nhs.uk

Alcohol Change UK

at: alcoholchange.org.uk/

DAN24/7

which is a free and bilingual telephone helpline providing information on alcohol and drugs. The Freephone number is 0808 808 2234 or text DAN to: 81066. You can also access information via their website:
DAN 247 – Wales Drug and Alcohol Helpline

Cyfannol Women's Aid

If you are experiencing any form of domestic abuse or violence, support and advice can be found here:

<https://cyfannol.org.uk/>

If you are in immediate danger dial 999



Health Professionals Guide:

Emotional and mental wellbeing



Key Health Messages

- Emotional and mental wellbeing can mean different things to different people; each person will have their own view on what it means for them to be mentally well
- Mental wellbeing influences how we cope with normal everyday life and stresses and how we take part in family and community life
- Lots of factors influence our mental health and wellbeing – social, environmental and economic. Some are out of our control
- Increasing our understanding of mental health and resilience can help us cope with these factors
- There are things we can all do on a daily basis to help improve and protect our own mental wellbeing and the wellbeing of the people we support
- Everyone experiences ups and downs. However, if the 'downs' are persistent and/or severe and affect your daily living, you should seek help (see helpful information)
- To find out more visit the Melo website, which includes a wide range of approved information, advice and self-help resources. It also includes information on how we can implement the Five Ways to Wellbeing

Antenatal and postnatal

Professionals working in early years have a key role in supporting families emotional wellbeing. If you can support pregnant and post-natal women, this will have a positive impact on their relationship with their baby and how well they are able to care for them and themselves.

According to the Royal College of Midwives (2021), mental illness is the most common serious health complication associated with pregnancy and early motherhood. If left untreated, it can have a devastating impact on women and their families.

Having a baby is a big life event. It's natural for women to experience a range of emotions during pregnancy and after giving birth.

Post-natal depression is a type of depression that many parents experience after having a baby; it is a common problem, affecting more than 1 in 10 women within a year of giving birth. It can also affect fathers and partners. For support [Perinatal depression - Mind](#)

As a professional, there are a range of services to support pregnancy and parenthood which can be found here: [Melo Cymru - Mental Health & Wellbeing Resources, Courses & Support](#)

There is further information on pregnancy which can be found on the ABUHB website: [Pregnancy - Aneurin Bevan University Health Board](#) Or alternatively contact another approved [helpline](#) listed below. Some services are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Practical advice

There are a range of things everyone can do to improve well-being and resilience. The 'Five Ways to Well-being' are five simple evidence-based ways in which everyone can protect and improve their own well-being (New Economics Foundation, 2008). The Five Ways provide a useful tool for personal action planning, thereby supporting people to make positive behaviour changes. Children's well-being can be supported by using the Five Ways to Well-being and involving the whole family.

Pum Ffordd at Les Gwent



Gwent Five Ways to Well-being



Be active...

Go for a walk or run, step outside, cycle, play a game, garden, dance, exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity that you enjoy, and that suits your level of mobility and fitness.



Give...

Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you.



Keep learning...

Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being fun.



Take notice...

Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are walking to work, eating lunch or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters



Connect...

With the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.

For more information on the Five Ways to Wellbeing and to download digital materials or order printed resources visit our [Melo website](#).

ABUHB have developed the **Melo website** with partners to help people living and working in Gwent to improve their mental wellbeing.



On **Melo** you will find the best available free, self-help resources in one place. You will find free courses, apps, videos, audio and books. There is information on **helplines and further sources of support** too. All resources are free and in Welsh where available. The resources will help you develop new skills that support you when life is difficult.

The website's content is wide ranging, from:

- Enjoy your bump/pregnancy a self-help course for mums and parents to get the most out of their pre-natal experience
- Enjoy your baby course for new parents
- Top tips for mental wellbeing such as the Five Ways to Wellbeing
- To information on common mental health problems and difficult feelings such as anxiety and depression
- To information/advice on coping with life and difficult situations such as financial worries and suicidal feelings.

As well as being bilingual, Melo includes an accessibility tool. The ReachDeck toolbar converts text into over 100 different languages, enables 'text-to-speech' so you can click on the text to hear it read out loud and includes a webpage simplifier removing clutter from the screen.

Please replace with: Information on a wide range of helplines/ support services, as well as digital and printed Melo and Five Ways to Wellbeing resources, can be found on here: **Melo Cymru - Mental Health & Wellbeing Resources, Courses & Support**

Helpful Services:

- If you are over 18 and experiencing mild to moderate mental health problems, contact a **Psychological Health Practitioner (PHP)**. PHPs are experienced mental health practitioners and there is one in every GP surgery in Gwent.
- Or contact **SPACE Wellbeing** if you are under 18 and/or concerned about someone's mental health who is under 18.
- You can also contact your Midwife, Health Visitor or GP.
- Or call **NHS 111 (Option 2)** to access urgent mental health and wellbeing support and advice. Additional support can be found here: <https://www.melo.cymru/get-urgent-help-now/experiencing-a-mental-health-crisis/>
- Samaritans offer 24 hours a day, 365 days a year service. Call 116 123 (free from any phone) or email: jo@samaritans.org or visit their website: www.samaritans.org
- C.A.L.L Mental Health Listening Line provides a confidential mental health listening and emotional support line which is open 24/7. <http://www.callhelpline.org.uk/> 0800 132 737 or text 'help' to 81066
- MEIC is a helpline service for children and young people up to the age of 25 in Wales. **Meic** (meiccymru.org)



Health Professionals Guide: Immunisation

Key Health Messages

Immunisation saves lives: The World Health Organisation estimates that 3.5 - 5 million lives are saved every year worldwide through immunisation.

Vaccination is safe and important because:

- Protects you and your child from many serious and potentially deadly diseases
 - Protects other people in your community – by helping to stop diseases spreading to people who cannot have vaccines
 - Giving your child a number of vaccinations at the same time is safe and is also very effective because protecting them as soon as possible is better than waiting
 - Vaccines can sometimes cause mild side effects that will not last long – some children may feel a bit unwell and have a sore arm for 2 or 3 days
 - It is important that all children and babies are immunised (unless this is medically contraindicated)
 - The risks of vaccination are very small compared to the risks of getting the diseases themselves; vaccines undergo rigorous safety testing before being introduced – they're also constantly monitored for side effects after being introduced
- Deferring vaccination in a child without clinical contraindications carries risks of diseases which are far greater than the risk of immunising
 - Vaccination of pregnant women protects both mother and baby. This includes Covid, Flu and Whooping Cough vaccinations
 - For optimal protection, get the vaccination at the earliest opportunity once you receive an invitation for scheduled vaccines



Mae Brechu yn achub bywydau
Vaccination saves lives

Childhood Immunisation schedule for Wales

From May 2022

Age due	How	Protects against
8 weeks old	Two injections and one oral vaccine (drops by mouth)	Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio, Hib & Hepatitis B (one injection) Rotavirus (oral vaccine), Men B
12 weeks old	Two injections and one oral vaccine (drops by mouth)	Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio, Hib & Hepatitis B (one injection) Rotavirus (oral vaccine), PCV
16 weeks old	Two injections	Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio, Hib & Hepatitis B (one injection) Meningococcal – MenB (one injection)
12-13 months old	Four injections	Hib & Meningitis C (one injection) Pneumococcal (one injection) Measles, Mumps and Rubella – MMR (one injection) Meningococcal – MenB (one injection)
3 years 4 months old	Two injections	Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis and Polio (one injection) Measles, Mumps and Rubella – MMR (one injection)
2- and 3-year-olds and all school age children	One nasal spray yearly	Flu (nasal spray)
Secondary school Year 8 and 9	One injection each year	Human papillomavirus (HPV)
Secondary School Year 9	Two injections	Tetanus, diphtheria and polio (teenage booster – one injection) Meningococcal groups A,C,W and Y disease (MenACWY – one injection)
<p>This list is not exhaustive, for the complete route immunisation schedule, including selective immunisation programmes and additional vaccines for individuals with underlying medical conditions follow this link:</p> <p>Wales complete routine immunisation schedule</p>		

Practical advice

- Ask people 'Are you and your baby/child up to date with your immunisations?'
- It is never too late to catch up on missed immunisations, speak to your doctor or nurse if you think you or your child have missed an immunisation and they can check your records
- Keep a record of your child's vaccinations
- If you have any queries regarding vaccinations please speak with your GP, practice nurse or health visitor who will be able to help

Helpful Services

For more information on what immunisations are needed and when visit: [A-Z Vaccination Information - Public Health Wales \(nhs.wales\)](#)

Check if you or your child are eligible for the flu vaccine this autumn at: [Eligibility for the vaccine - Public Health Wales \(nhs.wales\)](#)

If you are pregnant, it is important to stay up-to-date with your immunisations. Further information can be found here: [Information about vaccinations in pregnancy - Public Health Wales \(nhs.wales\)](#)

Up-to-date information on Covid-19 vaccinations can be found here: [COVID-19 vaccination information - Public Health Wales \(nhs.wales\)](#)

It's important that vaccines are given on time for the best protection, but if you or your child missed a vaccine, contact your GP to catch up



Health Professionals Guide:

Screening – tests for you and your baby

Key Health Messages

Screening is a process of identifying apparently healthy people who may be at increased risk of a disease or condition.

You can choose if you want to have the test.

They can then be offered information, further tests and appropriate treatment to reduce their risk and/or any complications arising from the disease or condition.

Some screening programmes save lives.

Finding a condition early gives you the best chance of early and more effective treatment.

- You may feel well even if you have early signs of a condition
- No screening test is 100% accurate
- You can discuss any aspect of the screening test with your health professional

Further information, including what to do if you miss a test, is available from: **Screening - Public Health Wales ([nhs.wales](https://nhs.uk))**

Practical advice

The table shows when screening is undertaken in pregnancy and for babies:

Programme	Who	When	Test
Maternal and child			
Antenatal	All pregnant women	During pregnancy	Blood tests and ultrasound
New-born bloodspot	All new-born babies	5 days after birth	Heel-prick
New-born hearing	All new-born babies	Within 4 weeks of birth	Hearing test

Tests will be offered at different stages during your pregnancy.

Antenatal screening includes:

- Down's syndrome, Edwards' syndrome and Patau's syndrome screening
- Blood tests look for:
 - Infections (HIV, hepatitis B, syphilis)
 - Blood disorders (sickle cell and thalassaemia)
 - Blood group and antibodies
- Ultrasound scans look for:
 - Date of pregnancy and development of the baby

Most women will not need further tests. However, if your screening test suggests you, or your baby have a higher chance of having a certain condition, further tests will be offered.



Helpful Services

Public Health Wales manages the following population based national screening programmes across Wales:

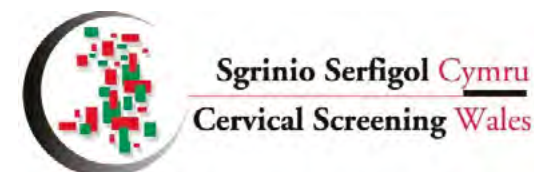


Maternal and child programmes

Sgrinio Cyn Geni Cymru
Antenatal Screening Wales



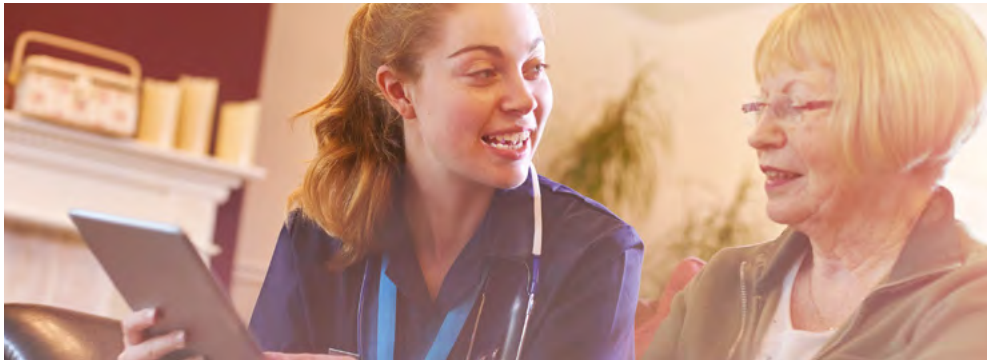
Adult Cancer programmes



Non-cancer programmes



Chapter 3: Motivational Interviewing (MI)



Brief interventions use motivational interviewing (MI) techniques. MI is an approach that believes that a patient has within themselves the ability to change.

Build confidence (self-efficacy):

For a person to make a change, they need to believe they can take the necessary action required to succeed (self-efficacy).

Patients have often tried and been unable to achieve or maintain the desired change, creating doubt about their ability to succeed. Health professionals using motivational interviewing techniques support self-efficacy by focusing on previous successes and highlighting the skills and strengths that the patient already has.

You should help individuals to see that they are in control of their own life and help them develop the confidence to change their own health behaviour.

Express empathy:

Empathy is the ability to identify with someone else's feelings or beliefs. Expressing empathy during a conversation can build trust and a rapport with a patient.

It is reported that people respond positively to advice from someone with whom they have developed a relationship and connection. Developing and maintaining this connection during behaviour change interventions can seem like a challenge and a change from typical practice. It requires assisting the patient to seek out solutions to current or potential health problems rather than prescribe a course of action.

Many people confuse the words empathy and sympathy. Sympathy is where you feel sorry for someone but you may not be able to completely understand their situation, whereas, empathy is recognising and understanding the perspective and emotions experienced by another. **Empathy is more about understanding exactly what the other person is going through.**

Displaying empathy allows you to build trust and generate useful information about the patient which will assist with the intervention.

Roll with resistance:

If you encounter resistance it is an indication that you need to change course to re-establish rapport. Using persuasion may encourage the patient to defend their behaviour so should be avoided.

These experiences are often based in the patient's uncertainty about change. Similarly, asking people 'why' they behave in a certain way can invite defence and justification for their behaviour.

You should avoid presenting an argument for change, instead allow the patient to control the direction of the discussion, and present their own arguments for change.

By rolling with any resistance the consultation does not resemble an argument or the patient needing to play "devil's advocate" or reply "Yes, but" to your suggestions.

The motivational value of having the patient identify the problem and develop their own solutions will help to encourage a change.

Use reflective listening to explore patients concerns, invite them to examine new points of view and be careful not to impose on their way of thinking.

Reflective listening:

Reflective listening is an important skill that helps to; engage patients, build trust and help motivate them to change. Reflective listening helps the patient feel they're being understood and helps the interviewer clarify details.

There are different ways that reflective listening can be demonstrated:

- 1. Repeating:** The listener repeats phrases, staying close to what the speaker has said.
- 2. Paraphrasing:** the listener uses different words to say the same thing as the speaker, asking if this is what they meant.
- 3. Complex reflections:** The listener emphasises emotional aspects of communication through statements that express feelings; this is the deepest form of listening.

What you think a person means may not necessarily be what they really mean, this could be because:

- The speaker does not say what is meant.
- The listener does not hear correctly.
- The listener gives a different interpretation to what the words mean.

Reflecting back to the patient what you think you've heard helps to clarify things and leads to greater exploration. Some people find it helpful to use some standard phrases like the following:

- So you feel.....
- It sounds like you.....
- You're wondering if.....

Ensure that your reflection does not sound like a question by making sure your voice turns down at the end of a reflective listening statement.

Develop discrepancy:

Motivation for change occurs when people see a mismatch between where they are now, and where they would like to be.

When patients recognise their current behaviours are in conflict with their values or interfere with their goals, they are more likely to feel increased motivation to make important life changes.

To help develop discrepancy, ask about the positives such as;

- What are some of the good things about.....?
- What would you miss about.....?
- Is there anything else?

Ask about the negatives such as;

- Can you tell me about a downside of.....?
- What are some aspects you are not happy about?
- What else is negative about...?

Ask open questions:

Open questions encourage people to talk about what is important to them. They help gather information and provide knowledge about the patient and their situation.

Closed questions are the opposite; they require only limited responses such as “Yes” or “No” and therefore give little information.

Open questions should be used frequently in conversation with patients.

- Would you like to tell me about.....?
- Would you help me understand.....?
- How would you like things to be different?
- What are the positive things and what are the less good things about.....?
- What do you think you'll miss if you give up...?
- What have you tried before?
- What do you want to do next?

Affirmations:

Affirmations are encouraging statements and gestures that recognise people's strengths and acknowledge small steps towards positive change. When these are made in response to what the patient has said these will help to build confidence in their ability to change.

To be effective, affirmations must always be genuine. Examples of affirmations:

- I'm really impressed with the way you...
- That's great how you've reached your goal of cutting back on...
- You have quite a gift for....
- Your commitment really shows by....
- You showed a lot of (courage, strength, determination) by doing that.
- It's clear you're really trying to change by....

Summarise:

A summary is a reflection of a number of statements covered in the conversation.

Begin with a statement indicating that you are making a summary, for example:

- Let me see if I understand so far....
- Here is what I've heard. Tell me if I've missed anything....

If the patient is in 'two minds' about making a change, it is useful to express both sides of the argument in a summary statement. For example:

- "On the one hand, it seems that....
While on the other hand, it sounds like....."

Summarising can help guide the conversation by first reflecting back the patients arguments against change but by ending with the patients arguments for change.

Recognise change talk:

Give special attention to "CHANGE TALK" these are statements that a person makes that point toward a willingness to change.

There are four types of change talk to look out for:

Recognising the disadvantages of staying the same

"I guess this is more serious than I thought ..."

Recognising the advantages of change

"I'd probably feel a lot better if..."

Expressing optimism about change

"I think I could probably do that if I decided to..."

Expressing intention to change

"I've got to do something..."

Methods for encouraging change talk:

Asking relevant and significant questions: "What worries you most about your current situation?"

Using the importance / confidence ruler: "On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is not important at all, and 10 is extremely important, how important is it for you to.... "

Capitalise on the patients 'change talk' and use these statements to help the patient make steps towards setting a behaviour change goal.

Chapter 4: References

Ash Wales Cymru, 2023. Action on smoking and health: cost of smoking. Available at: [Cost of Smoking - Action on Smoking and Health \(ash.wales\)](#) [Accessed online 02/03/2023]

Bartle, N. and Harvey, K. 2017. Explaining infant feeding: The role of previous personal and vicarious experience on attitudes, subjective norms, self-efficacy, and breastfeeding outcomes. *British Journal Health Psychology*. doi: [10.1111/bjhp.12254](#)

British Dietetic Association, 2021. *Food facts - eat well spend less*. Available at: [Eat well, spend less | British Dietetic Association \(BDA\)](#) [Accessed on 07/03/2023]

Cardiff University, 2016. *Dental Epidemiology Survey of 5-year-olds*. Available at: [Picture-of-Oral-Health-2016.pdf \(cardiff.ac.uk\)](#) [Accessed on 08/03/2023]

Department for Health and Social Care, 2022. *Physical activity guidelines*. Available at: [Physical activity guidelines - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) [Accessed on 08/03/2023]

Director of Public Health Annual Report 2022: Building a Fairer Gwent: why Gwent is a Marmot region, Aneurin Bevan Gwent Public Health Team. Available at: [https://abuhb.nhs.wales/files/building-a-healthier-gwent/building-a-fairer-gwent/](#)

Gwent PSB (2022) Proposal – Gwent becoming a Marmot region. Accessed 31/10/2022. Available at: [https://www.gwentpsb.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/03-Proposal-Gwent-Becoming-a-Marmot-Region.pdf](#)

Infant and toddler forum, 2019. *Making Every Contact Count from Pregnancy to Preschool*. Available at: [ITF212_Factsheet_1_10_MECC.pdf \(infantandtoddlerforum.org\)](#) [Accessed on 07/03/2023]

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (2010), Pregnancy and complex social factors: a model for service provision for pregnant women with complex social factors. Available at: [https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg110/chapter/Introduction#young-pregnant-women-aged-under-20](#)

NHS, 2020. *Exercise in pregnancy*. Available at: [Exercise in pregnancy - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#) [Accessed on 08/03/2023]

NHS, 2021. *Exercise guidelines*. Available at: [Exercise guidelines - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#) [Accessed on 08/03/2023]

NHS, 2022. *8 tips for healthy eating*. Available at: [8 tips for healthy eating - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#) [Accessed on 07/03/2023]

NHS, 2023. *Obesity*. Available at: [Obesity - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#) [Accessed on 08/03/2023]

NHS, 2023. Smoking (quitting) with Help me Quit. Available at: [NHS 111 Wales - Health A-Z : Smoking \(quitting\) with Help me Quit](#) [Accessed online 05/03/2023]

NICE, 2014. Behaviour change: individual approaches. Public health guideline [PH49] Available at: [Overview | Behaviour change: individual approaches | Guidance | NICE](#)

NICE, 2021. Tobacco: preventing uptake, promoting quitting and treating dependence. Available at: [Overview | Tobacco: preventing uptake, promoting quitting and treating dependence | Guidance | NICE](#) [Accessed 04/03/2023]

Office for Health Improvement & Disparities, 2022. *Childhood obesity: applying All Our Health*. Available at: [Childhood obesity: applying All Our Health - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) [Accessed on 07/03/2023]

Public Health England, 2018. *The Eatwell Guide*. Available at: [The Eatwell Guide \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) [Accessed on 07/03/2023]

Public Health England (2018) Guidance - Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children affected by parental alcohol and drug use: a guide for local authorities. Available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-affected-by-parental-alcohol-and-drug-use/safeguarding-and-promoting-the-welfare-of-children-affected-by-parental-alcohol-and-drug-use-a-guide-for-local-authorities](#)

Public Health Wales, 2023. *10 steps to a healthy weight*. Available at: [Professionals | Every Child \(everychildwales.co.uk\)](#) [Accessed on 08/03/2023]

Public Health Wales, 2023. Making Every Contact Count. Available at: [Making Every Contact Count - Public Health Wales \(nhs.wales\)](#) [Accessed online 08/03/2023]

Royal College of Midwives, 2021. *Pregnant women need more mental health support says RCM*. Available at: [Pregnant women need more mental health support says RCM](#) [Accessed on 08/03/2023]

Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists, 2022. *Being overweight in pregnancy and after birth, patient information leaflet*. Available at: [Being overweight in pregnancy and after birth patient information leaflet | RCOG](#) [Accessed on 07/03/2023]

Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, 2020. *Oral Health - State of Child Health*. Available at: [Oral health - RCPCH - State of Child Health](#) [Accessed on 08/03/2023]

Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative (2012) The evidence and rationale for the Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative Standards (visit [www.babyfriendly.org.uk](#))

Vasiliki, E.L. Hosier, S.G. Cox, W.M. 2006. The efficacy of motivational interviewing as a brief intervention for excessive drinking: a meta-analytic review. *Alcohol*. doi.org/10.1093/alcalc/agl016

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Available at: [http://futuregenerations.wales/about-us/future-generations-act/](#) [Accessed on 10/03/23]

World Health Organisation (2014), Guidelines for the identification and management of substance use and substance use disorders in pregnancy. Available at: [https://www.who.int/publications/item/9789241548731](#)

World Health Organization, 2023. *Vaccines and immunisation*. Available at: [Vaccines and immunization \(who.int\)](#) [Accessed on 08/03/2023]