



Good Beginnings

An Infant Mental Health Strategy for the Southern Area: 2026 to 2030

What?

This Strategy is a commitment by statutory, voluntary and community organisations to promote positive infant mental health from before birth through to children aged three years of age.

Why?

"At least one loving, sensitive, responsive relationship with an adult caregiver teaches the baby to believe that the world is a good place and reduces the risk of them facing disruptive issues in later life."

(The 1001 Critical Days, 2013)

How?

This Strategy is about:

Evidence and Policy: Everything we do will be based on up to date research.

Workforce Development: Those who work with children and families will have knowledge of the importance of infant mental health and how best to support families.

Service Development: Appropriate services will be available for families at the right time.

For further information Email:

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Find the full Strategy:

<https://southerntrust.hscni.net/service/southern-area-infant-mental-health-strategy/>

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Vision

That **all** children have the best start in life by prioritising and supporting the development of positive, social and emotional wellbeing.

Aims

- Children will have the best start in life and the wellbeing of their parents/carers is central to this.
- Parents and those who work with families in the Southern area recognise the importance of infant mental health and how to best respond to the young child's needs.
- Parents are informed, feel able to ask questions and can put the parenting advice they are given in place to support the development of their child.
- Future parents and other family members know the importance of baby brain development and responsive nurturing care.



'Infant mental health is everybody's business'