This practical guide provides an essential toolkit for expectant parents from the moment you know you are pregnant right through to a successful return to work. Packed with tips, case studies and signposting, this guide helps you to plan your maternity leave and return to work.

Our thanks go to all those working mothers and fathers who have contributed to creating this guide. Thank you for your time and for sharing your experiences.
Contents

Introduction 3
I’m pregnant - what happens next? 4
How and when I should tell my line-manager? 6
Protecting your health during pregnancy 6
Handing over 7
Keeping in touch 8
Flexible working 9
Back to work 10
What if things go wrong? 12
FAQ 12
Checklist 14
Useful Contacts 15
Introduction

As a University we have a strong commitment to equal opportunities and this means actively helping staff to combine family life with a satisfying working life.

We have a number of policies to support staff who are parents or parents-to-be. These policies detail your entitlement to leave, the financial arrangements associated with that leave and the University’s responsibilities for the health and safety of pregnant workers. A list of these policies can be found at:
▶ [www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/](http://www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/)

But what about all the other questions you have when you first find out you are pregnant or your partner is pregnant and what about all the things you didn’t even know you needed to know? Although you are returning to a familiar place, returning to work can bring mixed emotions. This booklet is designed to help you as you embark on the next phase of your life as a parent and is packed with ‘top tips’, advice, signposting and experiences of members of staff who have recently become parents.

Whilst this booklet is not intended to cover Adoption Leave or Paternity Leave some of the information listed may still be useful. For full details of the University’s Adoption Leave and Paternity Leave policies please see:
▶ [www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/](http://www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/)
I’m pregnant - what happens next?

You are about to start on the next phase of your life. The more preparation you do before going on maternity leave, the easier it will be when you return.

To help you plan your maternity leave, it is important that you understand your rights and responsibilities. For more information, please see the University’s maternity leave and benefits information:

► www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/docs/HR_maternity_policy.pdf

Considering your options

Your options for maternity leave and working after your maternity leave can vary. What works for you will depend on your career ambitions and your family finances. It will also depend on the availability of childcare and your health. Working out potential options now will help you and your family achieve the right balance.

Here are some of the pros and cons to be considered when deciding the duration of your maternity leave. It is worth thinking about the importance you may attribute to each of these and the timescale you are thinking of. Only you will know what length of maternity leave is right for you.

**Shorter leave**

**Pros**
- Keeping skills fresh.
- Regaining visibility and profile at work.
- Keeping informal network at work alive.
- Maintaining level of financial income.

**Cons**
- Possible tiredness due to disturbed sleeping patterns.
- More difficult to continue breastfeeding.
- Possibly not fully physically recovered.
- May miss baby’s key developmental stages.
- Possible separation anxiety with baby or mother.

**Longer leave**

**Pros**
- Longer to support your baby through key developmental stages.
- Easier to continue breastfeeding.
- Fully, physically recovered.
- Less tired.
- Greater likelihood of baby sleeping.

**Cons**
- Reduction in financial income.
- Skills can degrade over time.
- May miss key personal development milestones or opportunities at work.
- More difficult to maintain relationships.

*Although the University offers 12 months maternity leave, I decided to return to work after 9 months to maintain my level of financial income as my statutory maternity pay had come to an end. Whilst the prospect of returning to work was a bit daunting, it was nice to get back and catch up with my friends and colleagues*.

Kate Shawcross, Occupational Health Assistant
**Annual leave**

Holiday continues to accrue over the maternity leave period; the amount depends on your employment contract and the start and end of the contractual holiday year. Many people use some of this annual leave before they start their maternity leave so that they get some time to relax and organise things before the baby arrives. Returning staff often use holiday to create a phased start.

“Because of when my due date fell I had a lot of annual leave left to use before my maternity leave started. I didn’t really want to take it in one block directly before my due date so it was agreed I would use my accrued annual leave to enable me to work shorter weeks on the run up to my maternity leave. This enabled me to gradually handover my workload and reduce my working hours when I really needed to”.

Lauren Lewis, Recruitment Officer

**Childcare**

It may seem too early to be thinking about childcare but it is worth investigating the options whilst you are pregnant as finding the right childcare is one of the common concerns of mothers when returning to work. Nurseries and child-minders are often restricted on availability of places, especially for very young babies, and these may have to be reserved well in advance.

**Some factors to consider when thinking about childcare include**

- How does the childcare provider meet with your working hours/demands of your job?
- What are the back-up options when your child is unwell and excluded from childcare?
- What are the financial implications?

The University also offers Childcare Vouchers. You can choose to take up to £243 per month of your salary as childcare vouchers and this will save you money because you will not have to pay tax or NI contributions on this amount. You can then use your childcare vouchers to pay for any childcare, as long as the carers have approved or registered status (registered childminders, nurseries or play schemes should qualify). For more information see:

[www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/childcare-vouchers.aspx](http://www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/childcare-vouchers.aspx)

From Autumn 2015, a new Government Tax-Free Childcare Scheme will be introduced, covering annual costs of up to £10,000. Further information can be obtained from your link HR Manager/Officer.

**Tips on choosing an appropriate childcare provider**

- **DO** look for a safe, clean & friendly environment with space to play outside.
- **DO** understand how communication is managed between parents and staff. Many childcare providers will have a diary in which they record feeding times, nappy changes and daily activities.
- **DO** read the OFSTED reports.
- **DO** visit the setting.
- **DO** ask around to get experiences and recommendations from friends and family.

**Baby ‘stuff’**

Staff and students can buy and sell items using the University’s ‘smallads’ service. To receive email notifications of items for sale, or to sell items, you need to subscribe to ‘smallads-staff’ and ‘smallads-student’. Smallads is not purely for baby and children-related items – you can find all sorts of things here.

[www.essex.ac.uk/contact/mailinglists/browse.aspx](http://www.essex.ac.uk/contact/mailinglists/browse.aspx)
How and when should I tell my line manager?

When the joy, excitement or shock of finding out you are pregnant has started to settle you may be wondering how and when to inform your manager and colleagues.

It is common to wait until after the first trimester, however, you may wish to tell your manager informally before this if you are experiencing difficulties with the pregnancy or there are health and safety concerns related to the nature of your work. The sooner you inform your manager the sooner you can start working together to plan a smooth transition. Remember, that this is a transition for your manager and colleagues as well as a change for you.

The University has a specific duty of care towards pregnant women but this can only be provided if you have told someone at work that you are pregnant.

If your pregnancy is difficult, for example if you are experiencing symptoms of morning sickness or you require time out of the working day to attend antenatal appointments the required level of support may be difficult to arrange if your line manager does not know you are pregnant.

You should normally discuss your pregnancy in confidence with your line manager. However, if you feel uneasy about this for whatever reason, you can speak to your link Human Resources Manager/Officer. He/she will discuss the matter with you and facilitate the necessary discussion with your line manager.

“With my second pregnancy I waited until the 12 week scan was over to tell my line manager. I told her at the end of one of our regular 1-2-1 meetings. We talked about the due date and attending antenatal appointments. I always tried to arrange my appointments at the start or end of the day to avoid too much disruption”.

Jo Carrington, Health and Safety Advisor

“The University has been really supportive in the run up to the due-date. I’ve been able to attend all of our anti-natal appointments and it’s really helped me have a better understanding of the pregnancy”.

James Lewis, Head of Market Intelligence

Protecting your health during pregnancy

You have a right to work in an environment that is safe for you and your baby whilst pregnant.

Most individuals will be working in low hazard environments, but it may be that you are carrying out work that puts you at greater risk of harm if pregnant. For example you may be working with substances or agents that are hazardous to an unborn child, or carrying out physically demanding work.

If you are planning to have a child, find out what the risks are early. The risk assessment guidance for new and expectant mothers at work will guide you on the kinds of work activities that can be hazardous to pregnant workers or their unborn or breastfeeding child. Please see:

▶ www.essex.ac.uk/ohsas/occ_hlth/services/pregnancy.htm
Tips

Areas of potential risk to think about are:
- Physical: manual handling, posture, movement, shocks and vibration, noise.
- Infection or biological hazards.
- Chemicals: pesticides, toxic chemicals, lead, mercury, asbestos, carbon monoxide.
- Working conditions: temperature; working at heights, rest rooms; mental and physical fatigue, stress, working alone.

“Because I was having twins I developed a sore back during my pregnancy. My line manager referred me to Occupational Health and I was given a special chair which eased my back pain.”

Lucy Brown, Marketing Officer

“I took short rest breaks at my desk, especially in the afternoon. Towards the end of my pregnancy, I made sure I took my full lunch hour to rest and eat my lunch. That helped with the heart burn!”

Jo Carrington, Health and Safety Advisor

If you have specific health concerns relating to your pregnancy, you can contact our Occupational Health Service for advice:
General Enquiries
T 01206 872944.

Handing over

It is useful to develop a handover timetable with your manager well in advance of your maternity leave.

As it is likely that your manager will recruit someone to cover your role during leave or disperse responsibilities across the team a handover list would be very helpful. It also helps to minimise the impact if you need to start your Maternity Leave earlier than originally planned. Making a detailed account of what your job involves will also help you resume your responsibilities when you return to work. Taking a proactive role in the handover process will make it easier for your manager and colleagues to support you.

“As I was expecting twins I had to do handover notes early and be super organised as I could have delivered any time after 24 weeks”.

Lucy Brown, Marketing Officer
Keeping in touch
Your return to work may seem a long way off but starting to prepare for your return sooner will make things much easier.

Communication
Before you go on maternity leave discuss and agree with your line manager how you want to keep in touch. Be proactive and consider the frequency of contact, what you would like to know, who will initiate the contact and how the contact will be made. This could be a phone call every few months or it could be popping into work to show them your new baby.

Keeping in Touch (KIT) Days
Another way of managing a smooth return to work is to use Keeping In Touch (KIT) days to refresh your skills, relationships and build your confidence. There is no legal obligation on you or the University to use KIT days, however you can use up to 10 KIT days without bringing your maternity leave to an end. You may wish to use KIT days throughout your maternity leave to attend training courses or meetings. Alternatively, you may wish to use them towards the end of your maternity leave to create a phased return to work.

Post natal depression
Some people have postnatal depression after the birth of their baby. Members of staff who have postnatal depression may be eligible for confidential counselling through the University Occupational Health Service. Please visit: www.essex.ac.uk/ohsas/
or General Enquires T 01206 872944.

“It felt really odd going back to work, I was really nervous as I knew it would be completely different from being at home with my child. However, my KIT days really helped me to keep up to date with what had been happening whilst I had been on maternity leave. After a few days it was like I had never been away”.

Julia Greenwood, HR Policy & Projects Officer
Flexible working

Our need for flexibility changes with different life-stages and/or interests. It can be related to family responsibilities or driven by the pursuit of another passion.

Expecting your first child is often the time when people think about how to review their lives to achieve a balance between childcare and employment. It is increasingly common for men, as well as women, to work flexibly in order to be a hands-on parent.

The term ‘Flexible working’ covers any variation to the existing timing, hours or location of your job. Flexible working can be temporary or an on-going arrangement. It allows you to balance your work and family commitments and gives your line manager the opportunity to arrange work to suit the business needs. Flexible working is an approach, an attitude and a behaviour which allows you to take responsibility for work and family and how they fit together. Common types of flexible working include part-time working and compressed hours.

Once you have assessed your role and your needs, you are ready to take the next step. Talk things through with your line manager as adjustments may be required elsewhere in your team. Having the support of your manager will make the process much easier. To make a formal request for flexible working please see the University Flexible Working Policy:

▶ www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/docs/flexible-working-policy.pdf

It is important to understand that a change granted under the statutory right to request flexibility is permanent.

Tips

- **DO** work collaboratively with your manager to find a solution that suits you both.
- **DO** be flexible and open minded about the possible solutions.
- **DO** recognise that you are employed to enable the University to meet its objectives.
- **DO** think strategically about how flexible working will help you to reach your life and career goals.

*On return from maternity leave I wanted to reduce my hours so that I could spend part of my week working at the University and the other half of my week caring for my child. I prepared a business case and worked out what hours would suit me and my role. My manager supported my request and my new hours were agreed*.

Julia Greenwood, HR Policy & Projects Officer

*Before returning, I wondered how I would cope with having to leave at a fixed time every day to manage childcare as I used to find that little bit of space at the end of the day invaluable for keeping on top of things, especially as my return to work included a move to part-time working. I soon learned my own strategies for being efficient and became better at managing my diary and email, and saying “no” on occasions! Strangely, I now find that I switch much more easily into and out of work, I think the contrast between work and mum-mode helps me to give my best in each capacity*.

Nicola East, Assistant Registrar
Back to work

It is very normal to take a few weeks to get back ‘up to speed’.

The demands of caring for a baby at home are often very different from the work environment, so allow yourself time to adjust and remind yourself of all the reasons you have chosen to come back to work.

As with all change there is an emotional and psychological adjustment. The first few days can be difficult. You may feel comfortable being back in a familiar environment while at other times it may feel like it will take ages to settle in again.

“I was anxious about my return to work, feeling guilty about returning and not spending all of my time caring for my child, but knew I needed to return to my career and find a balance of working and being Mummy. Although some things had changed, it was like I’d never left. The biggest challenge was managing my own expectations about what is and isn’t achievable within my new hours. After a few months, I got into a routine and found you re-adjust to life back at work, just as you do when you first go on maternity leave and wonder how you’ll adjust to not working”.

Laura Ruddick, Head of Registry

A back to work plan agreed by your line manager, including a planned handover period, will provide the framework to get you back ‘up to speed’. You may find the plan needs to be altered depending on how quickly you are adjusting. It is OK to speed things up or slow things down if that feels right to you and your line manager.

If you kept in touch during your maternity leave, this will also be useful. Remember this is a transition period for your line manager and colleagues as well.

“There is something about the University that makes you feel as if you have never been away, it’s very supportive and familiar. Despite the new faces, organisational structures and working practices that you are bound to encounter when you return to work, there is something about looking at the ducks on the lake which is very reassuring and gives you confidence that you can make it work”.

Nicola East, Assistant Registrar

“I have two children now, and was able to spend time at home with both of them after their births. It meant a lot to me to be able to there for my wife, and to get to know them in those early days. The University’s paternity leave provision enabled me to take two weeks of leave with ‘full pay’ (rather than just the statutory pay) so I didn’t need to worry about the financial implications of being away. My line manager was very supportive of my wish to take paternity leave which meant that I was able to enjoy my time off without feeling guilty about not being in the office”.

Maxwell Stevenson, Learning and Development Manager

Involving your partner

Sharing responsibilities with your partner is a great way to develop and strengthen family bonds. Recent changes have made it possible for mothers to share maternity leave with their partners through the use of Additional Paternity Leave. Legislation is changing rapidly, so visit the Working Families website

▶ www.workingfamilies.org.uk
**Tips**

- **DO** plan regular reviews with your line manager. A weekly update with your manager during the first month is useful for reporting on what is working well and to raise issues.
- **DO** agree a date for an objectives setting meeting in your first week back. A good time for this will be about two months after your return to work. Use this meeting to agree short-term objectives and also talk about your career plan.
- **DO** ask for help. It is very easy for those you work with to assume everything is OK if you don't say anything.
- **DO** review your life and career goals after you have been back for a couple of months.

---

"I always knew that I would be back to work after nine months so I was prepared (i.e. sorting out nursery, baby sleeping issues etc.). As a matter of fact I was looking forward to coming back to work as dealing with a young baby didn't give me the intellectual stimuli. A lot of things had changed so it's not like I picked up where I had left off. I found myself in a new room, due to office re-organisation, and there had been some new recruits as well. I was lucky to have some time with my maternity replacement who filled me in with all the developments. The first few months were difficult, as babies tend to pick up all sorts of virus, and I was called to collect my daughter from nursery quite often. The nursery is literally next door to the University so I never felt that I was too far away. Soon we all settled into the new routine and it has been working perfectly for us".

Sujun Fieldhouse Research and Business Development Officer

---

**Breastfeeding**

You can continue to breastfeed after you return to work. If you are going to continue to breastfeed and you would like your manager to enable you to do this, then you need to inform your manager in writing. Writing to your employer will trigger their obligation under Health and Safety legislation to ensure that your work environment is safe and healthy for you and your baby. It is advisable to inform your manager before your return to work so that they can prepare.

---

**Working Parents Support Groups**

The University recognises that being a working parent brings challenges and it hopes to provide a supportive environment which will allow your to flourish as a parent and as a member of the University. There are several schemes to provide help and advice including a Parents’ Support Network and a Parent Mentoring Scheme. Our Parents’ Support Network runs regular informal lunchtime sessions, allowing parents to find out how other parents are managing the transition back to work and how they are facing the challenges of being a working parent. The aim of the Network is to offer advice and support, to share experiences and to learn from others. Our Parent Mentors are University staff who have volunteered to share their experiences should you wish to talk to someone on an individual basis.

[www.essex.ac.uk/equality/forums/support-for-parents.aspx](http://www.essex.ac.uk/equality/forums/support-for-parents.aspx)
What if things go wrong?
If things go wrong during your pregnancy or whilst you are on maternity leave it’s always useful to get some advice to make sure you know what your rights are.

Miscarriage, still birth and neo-natal death
Under the law, if your baby is still born before the end of the 24th week of pregnancy it is called a miscarriage. If your baby is born dead after the 24th week of pregnancy it is called a stillbirth. Women who have miscarriages are not entitled to their maternity rights. Women who have stillbirths have all the rights they would have had if their baby had been born alive. If your baby is born alive at any stage of the pregnancy, even if he or she dies an instant later, you are entitled to all your maternity rights.

Having the option to talk to someone different
In any of the above circumstances you may wish to talk to someone other than your line manager about your situation and intentions on returning to work. If this is the case, you may wish to contact your link HR Manager/Officer or the Equality and Diversity Manager for a confidential discussion. In addition, individuals may be eligible for confidential counselling through the University Occupational Health Service. Please visit:

.www.essex.ac.uk/ohsas/
or General Enquires
T 01206 87294

FAQs

What if I am uncomfortable telling my line manager that I am pregnant?
You should normally discuss your pregnancy in confidence with your line manager. However, if you feel uneasy about this for whatever reason, you can speak to your link Human Resources Manager/Officer. He/she will discuss the matter with you and facilitate the necessary discussion with your line manager. The University has a specific duty of care towards pregnant women but this can only be provided if you have told someone at work that you are pregnant.

What if I don’t want other people to know I’m pregnant straight away?
You can tell your line manager that you want this information to be kept confidential for the time being but there will come a time when it’s not possible to hide your bump.

When do I have to notify to my line manager?
Legally, you do not need to inform your line manager of your pregnancy and of your intention to take maternity until the 15th week before your baby is due:

.www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/docs/HR_maternity_policy.pdf

Do I have the right to work flexibly in the way which fits in with my chosen childcare arrangements?
You have the right to request flexible working and the University has a duty to consider it. Your line manager may refuse your request if it will adversely impact on the University. You can appeal this decision.

I feel I have been unfairly discriminated against during my pregnancy/maternity period?
The University takes complaints of discrimination very seriously. An individual who has a concern should contact their line manager or link Human Resources Manager/Officer in the first instance.
Pregnancy, first days, and beyond

And so you are expecting. It is the most intense and wonderful state of anticipation you have ever experienced, nothing comparable to the pleasures of mind you’re accustomed to such as study and teaching. While busying yourself with research on the topic (for you cannot escape the predicament of being a researcher at all times!), you suddenly realise that some down-to-earth practicalities escape you, precisely those technicalities that somehow necessarily concern the precious burden you’re carrying: when you should go on maternity leave and for how long, what financial provision there is to support you, and in what form, what choice you have for returning to work, and, not to forget, what options for childcare there might be around once you do decide to return to work. Likelihood is that you don’t really want to distract yourself from researching on the specifics of the antenatal development between 19th and 20th week of pregnancy, but my advice is - book an appointment with Human Resources promptly! It is both useful and reassuring to speak about these matters with their personnel.

It is also helpful to keep in touch with them once you have brought your little treasure into the world. Your circumstances may have changed, and/or you may have changed. And this is not a small matter if your daily bread is earned by advanced research. One of the widely acknowledged difficulties that academic researchers and teachers experience is the struggle to disentangle their “professional time” from their private time: we continue to read, we continue to write, and, in all honesty, research inspiration does not ask you for permission when to announce itself: an idea for a new book may strike you just as you are expecting your baby to be delivered (as it did to me!), or in those long nights full of wonder and exhaustion that accompany the first weeks of your and your child’s life together.

You may experience simultaneous urges to continue with your research as soon as possible and to avoid it completely, dedicating yourself to the care for your newborn; or to be tremendously inspired yet unable to concentrate on that thick book on your shelf. Whatever the case, give yourself the right to feel contradictory about it. If you desire so, allow yourself a little time off to browse through that thick book; but avoid feeling pressurized to read it through, or to produce a rejoinder. Most importantly, avoid feeling guilty for succumbing to the research drive every now and then: it is as a complete and fulfilled individual that you are best parent. Be self-reflexive and examine your experience as you’re going through it, having in mind also the very flexible leave schemes the University has to offer: so if you feel you would need more – or less – time on leave, or that you’d like to shift to part-time, don’t hesitate to say it to yourself or to others (make sure you honour the Human Resources deadlines and regulations, though!)

Once back to work, be patient: you will doubtlessly notice that the quandary of job versus private time somehow both reasserts and rearranges itself, and you will find the model that suits you best. In my case, it meant relegating my entire research activity from my study to my office, and having my child at the University Day Nursery from an early age: first one day a week (just to go through that thick book), then twice a week (to write a rejoinder, too), then three times a week (to develop new research-led modules). He is two and half now and I let him “read” and scribble over the pages of my own thick book; for he, too, has contributed to its making.

Dr Sanja Bahun, Senior Lecturer
Checklist

Pre-maternity leave

☐ Maternity policy and other relevant policies and procedures reviewed

☐ Manager informed of maternity leave start date

☐ Flexible working policy and Keeping In Touch (KIT) day information reviewed

☐ Handover completed

☐ Potential keeping in touch days discussed and agreed

Return to work checklist

☐ KIT days completed (if applicable)

☐ Childcare identified and confirmed

☐ Return date agreed

☐ Flexible working approved (if applicable)

☐ Induction/handover plan discussed

☐ Arrangements in place to support breastfeeding/expressing if required
Useful Contacts

**University webpages:**
- Adoption Leave
  - [www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/adoption-leave.aspx](http://www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/adoption-leave.aspx)
- Childcare Vouchers
  - [www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/childcare-vouchers.aspx](http://www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/childcare-vouchers.aspx)
- Day Nursery (Colchester campus)
  - [www.essex.ac.uk/nursery](http://www.essex.ac.uk/nursery)
- Equality and Diversity
  - [www.essex.ac.uk/equality/](http://www.essex.ac.uk/equality/)
- Flexible Working
  - [www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/docs/flexible-working.pdf](http://www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/docs/flexible-working.pdf)
- Keeping In Touch Days (KIT) Information
  - [www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/KITdays.aspx](http://www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/KITdays.aspx)
- Maternity Leave
  - [www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/docs/HR_maternity_policy.pdf](http://www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/docs/HR_maternity_policy.pdf)
- Paternity Leave
  - [www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/docs/HR_paternity_policy.pdf](http://www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/docs/HR_paternity_policy.pdf)
- Parental Leave
  - [www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/docs/HR_parental_leave_policy.pdf](http://www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/docs/HR_parental_leave_policy.pdf)
- Protection During Pregnancy
  - [www.essex.ac.uk/ohsas/occ_hlth/services/pregnancy.htm](http://www.essex.ac.uk/ohsas/occ_hlth/services/pregnancy.htm)
- Time off for Dependents
  - [www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/docs/HR_time_off_for_dependants.pdf](http://www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/docs/HR_time_off_for_dependants.pdf)

**External websites:**
- Benefits Calculator
  - [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)
- Citizens Advice
  - (Helping to solve legal, money and other problems through free, confidential advice)
  - [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)
- Directgov
  - [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)
- Family and Childcare Trust (Advice on finding day care for your child)
  - [www.familyandchildcaretrust.org.uk](http://www.familyandchildcaretrust.org.uk)
- Gingerbread (a charity supporting single parents)
  - [www.gingerbread.org.uk](http://www.gingerbread.org.uk)
- Maternity Action
  - [www.maternityaction.org.uk](http://www.maternityaction.org.uk)
- National Childbirth Trust (NCT) Organisation
  - [www.nct.org.uk](http://www.nct.org.uk)
- Working Families
  - [www.workingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk)