

## Your feelings during pregnancy

The thought of becoming a parent can produce very mixed feelings. People can feel a whole range of emotions from joy and excitement to fear and panic. Making a decision to have a baby may be an individual choice or could involve other people.

Many people look forward to the birth of their baby while at the same time finding it difficult to adjust to the idea of their new role as a parent. Becoming a mother feels like a very natural experience for some people – some women feel a true sense of identity for the first time when they become a mother. For other people, the thought of having another person totally dependent on them for all their needs may be a frightening and difficult prospect. These mixed emotions may also be experienced by fathers.

Feelings can also change at different times during your pregnancy. You might sometimes feel close to your baby and at other times you may be preoccupied with how having a baby will affect you.

How parents feel about their baby is different for everyone. Here are some of the feelings that parents have had.



It may be helpful to think about who will be able to offer you emotional support and practical support – during the pregnancy and after your baby is born. There are many people who can help you think about your feelings about becoming a parent and any experiences of pregnancy or birth you have already had. These might include your family and friends, your GP, your midwife or your health visitor.

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Getting to know your baby can begin when you are pregnant or even from before your baby is conceived. As with all relationships, your relationship with your baby needs to be nurtured

As your baby grows inside you, you may feel you are gradually able to get to know him or her. You will be able to recognise when your baby is very active or asleep. You may notice a rhythm to their waking and resting. You may begin to recognise different parts of your baby's body and how they move at different times. While you are pregnant your baby will also hear your voice – babies can recognise their mother's voice and other voices that they hear frequently before and after they are born. So talking to your baby while you are pregnant is not silly but an important part of developing a relationship with him or her.

**NOTE:** This leaflet is designed to be used as part of a wider conversation with your practitioner. If you want to take an online course for parents, visit [www.inourplace.co.uk](http://www.inourplace.co.uk).