

Issue No. 1 2008

THE YOUNG PARENT SURVIVAL GUIDE

Great information for young mums and dads

www.treoir.ie

Family Portrait Competition
Easy to Enter Draw inside

LIFE WITH BABY

10 SURVIVAL TIPS



HELPFUL HINTS FOR YOUNG DADS



Money for you and your baby



Are you pregnant and panicking?

Is there school after baby?



Funded by **crisispregnancyagency**



Treoir

is the Irish word for direction or guidance. We choose this word as a title for our organisation as we give clear and up-to-date information to parents who are not married to each other and those involved with them free of charge

It is essential that parents have accurate information in order to make the best decision they can on important issues concerning their children.

Treoir can give you information on:

- **Social Welfare entitlements**
 - a. One-Parent Family Payment
 - b. Rent Supplement
 - c. Family Income Supplement
 - d. Back to Work Allowance
 - e. Back to Education Allowance etc
 - f. Cohabitation
- **Registering the birth of your baby**
- **Legal issues**
 - a. Access
 - b. Custody
 - c. Guardianship (fathers' rights)
 - d. Maintenance of children
 - e. Passport applications
 - f. Establishing paternity
 - g. Cohabitation
- **The importance of both parents in the lives of their children**
- **Grandparents rights**

And lots more...

You can contact us by

phone: 1890 252 084

e-mail: info@treoir.ie

drop-in: 14 Gandon House,
IFSC, Dublin 1.

www.treoir.ie

St. Catherine's Moving On programme 2007-2008



Welcome!

Nobody is born with the skills and know-how to be a parent. But everyone has the potential to be a good enough parent. You don't have to be a super parent. However, all parents need support, information and advice, including young parents.

Whether you're a parent now or soon-to-be one, whether you're on your own, in a family, struggling to make ends meet or financially secure, this magazine is for you.

It has key information and good advice you may need from when you first suspect you're pregnant to when you're coping with raising your child.

It covers telling your family and friends that you're pregnant, going to the doctor and hospital and gives you social welfare and legal information.

It explains the key things you need to know in terms of the importance of looking after yourself and your baby, a place to live, the importance of dads in the life of babies, safer sex for the future and a host of other useful tips and contacts.

The Young Parent Survival Guide will be useful for this phase of your life so hold on to it. You can read it from cover to cover or just dip in and out of sections you're interested in.

I would like to thank everyone who helped put this magazine together: Margaret Acton, Deirdre Keegan, Margaret Morris, Maureen Murphy, Teresa McElhinney, Carlow Young Mothers in Employment, Darragh and Charlie at PCC and to the Crisis Pregnancy Agency for funding the magazine.

We hope you enjoy it!

**Love it? Hate it?
Let me know:
margot@treoir.ie**



contents

- 3 Welcome!
- 4 Are you pregnant and panicking?
- 5 Sharing your news
- 7 Dads care too
- 6 Coping with doctors, hospitals and clinics
- 8 Who's who and what's what
- 10 Coming home with your baby
- 11 Baby Blues
- 12 Life with baby – 10 survival tips for mums
- 14 10 top tips for brand new dads
- 16 Money for you and your baby
- 18 Safer sex
- 19 Difficult bits
- 20 A roof over your head
- 22 Legal jargon – what it means and how the law works
- 24 Is there school after baby?
- 26 Ask Joanne
- 28 Teen Parents Support Programme
- 29 Family Portrait Competition
- 31 Easy food for you and your baby

Are you pregnant and panicking?

So, it's really true. You've just found out. There's no doubt. You're pregnant. You'll always remember this moment. The rush of a thousand feelings. And the big question – **what now?**

Finding out that you're pregnant is a huge deal no matter who you are. So many questions come rushing into your head. Who do I tell? What do I do? Who can give me advice?

Your family and friends can be great, so let them know what's going on. But if you're worried or panicking about talking to them about your pregnancy, you have other choices. When you don't know who to turn to, that's where the Crisis Pregnancy Agency

can help. The Crisis Pregnancy Agency funds crisis pregnancy agencies around the country and promotes them through the Positive Options information campaign. Counsellors in these agencies can help you sort out your feelings about being pregnant and to look at all your future options. Counselling is free, trustworthy and they won't judge you.

If it's possible, talk to the baby's dad. Remember, it's his baby too. Even though you might both be very upset at first,

after the initial shock it may be possible to talk things through to arrive at the best decision for everybody. Your baby's father can also use the pregnancy counselling agencies mentioned previously.

Your GP/doctor can help with pregnancy counselling too.

Freetext 'list' to 50444 for a list of free, non-judgemental, trustworthy counselling agencies.

www.positiveoptions.ie

+OPTIONS
CRISIS PREGNANCY SERVICES



Pregnant, oh my God!

I wanted to die! What am I going to do, how can I have a baby at my age, what would my parents say? Amanda my best friend, I had to talk to her. She'll help me figure out what to do. I never meant for this to happen. It's the last thing I wanted. I couldn't eat or sleep. I cried all the time. I knew I needed to tell Mammy. There was so much I wanted to do with my life first. I kept thinking - will I be able to sit my exams and go to college, would it be for the best if I didn't have this baby. Right. I need to tell Mammy. "Please don't get mad, there's nothing I can do to change this" and before I could finish, "you're pregnant?" "Yeah Mammy, I'm so sorry, please don't think bad of me." What I thought would happen, shouting, screaming, crying, was completely the opposite. My mother hugged me, I felt just like a child when she whispered to

me, "it'll be ok love. It's not the end of the world". I still had to tell my boyfriend about the whole mess. I kept thinking horrible things. What if he leaves me. What if he wants nothing more to do with me or the baby.

(Beep beep) My phone! (Boyfriend) "Hey chick!" I just simply said, "Hey babe, we need to talk. I'm pregnant!" I got no text back. I just started crying. Then about half an hour later, there was a knock at the door. When I answered there he was standing there with flowers in his hands. I threw my arms around him and squeezed him so tight. All I heard was "it'll be ok baby. I'm going to be a daddy". At that moment I felt so excited and lucky.

Having Emma in my arms now, I just kept thinking how much I loved her. What I thought was going to be such a bad thing turned out to be the best thing in the world to me. It was the best thing that could have ever happened to me. I'll always remember how my mother was there for me and how she showed me just how much I was loved and cared for. I just hope I'll be half as good a mother as she is, because if so, I'll do just fine!

So in conclusion, finding out I was pregnant at only 17 was not as big a mistake as I first thought. Instead I find myself very lucky and happy now, as I am a mother to a beautiful little girl.

Lyndsey, young mother

Sharing your news



Now, how are you going to tell people?

Have you told anyone yet? Remember, while you might be slow to tell, you can get a lot of support from those around you. The dad might find it difficult to accept that you're pregnant, or he might be thrilled. You won't know until you tell him. He could surprise you! Whatever the reaction, at least you'll know where you stand.

Your Mam and Dad will nearly always come around after the initial shock. Just give them a chance. They care about you and that you're ok.

Tell a friend or two because sooner or later it's going to become obvious. And its better if you decide when to tell people rather than people finding out through gossip. Friends know you and love you. They will just want to support you.

It might be hard to get the words out, but generally the sooner you tell, the better.

Once they know, people can give you the on-going support you really need.

Give them time and a chance to help and support you.

Coping with doctors, hospitals & clinics

Don't worry, the doctors are there to look after you and your health. So, as soon as you know you're pregnant, make an appointment with your GP. Ask her or him as many questions as you like and discuss your options for antenatal care (care for you while you are pregnant). Your GP can contact the hospital and make arrangements, or you can just go to the hospital yourself. **Remember, the earlier you start your antenatal care the better for you and your baby.**

Antenatal Clinic (first appointment)

Your first appointment at the antenatal clinic is going to be a long one. The doctors will want to know about your health, previous pregnancies and any medical problems you may have. Remember, they're not being nosy. They just want to give you the best care possible. Also, this would be a good time to check in with the social work department if you've stuff you need to talk about – like issues at home, working out the situation with the baby's dad, money and so on.

BE SURE TO ASK FOR INFORMATION IF YOU NEED IT.

DON'T FORGET, MATERNITY CARE IS FREE TO EVERYONE IN IRELAND AND IF YOU'RE WORKING YOU CAN TAKE PAID TIME OFF TO GO TO ANTENATAL APPOINTMENTS (BOTH MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS AND ANTENATAL CLASSES).

"I'm a bit worried about going to the doctor and hospitals and everything...."



What am I entitled to during pregnancy?

Just as you're getting used to the idea that you're having a baby, you may start to worry about how you'll manage to buy the things you're going to need for yourself and the baby each week. You may be wondering... What am I entitled to? How do I go about applying?

If you have a job when pregnant you may be entitled to

- **Maternity Benefit** (if you have the right number of Social Insurance Contributions)
Contact: Maternity Benefit
LoCall: 1890 690 690
www.welfare.ie
- **Maternity Leave** – 26 weeks paid leave and 16 weeks unpaid leave
Contact: Maternity Leave
LoCall: 1890 24 55 45
www.equality.ie



Survival tips for coping at the clinic:

Waiting around at the clinic can be extremely boring so - Be Prepared!

- Take along a friend or a good book or magazine to keep you company
- Take along a snack in case there's a delay and you feel hungry
- Make a list of the questions and concerns you may have as you will probably forget to ask some of them once you get inside
- If you've another child it would be best to get somebody else to mind him or her while you're at the clinic.

DADS CARE TOO

There is one common misconception about young fathers. This is that we were only interested in having sex and not taking the responsibility. These misconceptions are also held by the professionals who also deal with young fathers and

young mothers as we are often ignored at doctors, midwives and other appointments. When the young mother gets her bounty pack about 20 leaflets fall out – but not one is for the young father.

(Sean, young father)



**HELPFUL
HINTS FOR
DADS**

If you don't have a job you may be entitled to

- **Exceptional Needs Payments** - help towards the cost of clothes and the things you need for going into hospital to have your baby
Contact: Community Welfare Officer at your local Health Centre

Ask mother if she would like you to go with her for her tests and scans.

Think about whether you want to be at the birth or not and talk it through with mother. Remember, you don't have to be – it doesn't suit every dad. Talk it over and find out what is right for both of you.

If you are going to be at the birth, try to meet all the people who will be helping beforehand – the doctor and/or midwife. They can often assume that dads, particularly young dads, are not interested or will be useless to have around so you may need to be a bit persistent.

who's who and what's what

A simple guide to the people and services you'll come into contact with.

Being a parent – or about to become one – means that you may need different services or people at different times for help and support.

Figuring out who's who and what exactly they do can be quite confusing. Here's a guide to the maze of medical people and other services you might come across.



General Practitioner (GP)/Family Doctor.

A GP or doctor is usually your first port of call when you are pregnant. S/he will give you personal and continuing care. If you haven't got a GP of your own already, when you're looking for a new one, make sure you get a GP whose surgery is easy to travel to – you'll have a small baby in tow. Ask someone to recommend a doctor or look in the Golden Pages. You should contact the doctor's surgery to ask to go on her/his patient list.

Antenatal Clinic

This is the clinic in the maternity hospital where you'll go for check-ups during your pregnancy. Your doctor will usually make the first appointment for you, or you can do it yourself by phone or by dropping in as soon as you know you're pregnant.

Antenatal Classes

These are special classes usually run by the maternity hospital to help you prepare for the birth of your baby. They are usually free and can be booked through the hospital or the antenatal clinic. Ask at the hospital if they offer special classes for young parents. You'd usually go near the end of your pregnancy for about 4 to 6 classes and you can go to these without losing any pay if you are working.

Obstetrician/Consultant

An obstetrician is the doctor in charge of your care at the maternity hospital during pregnancy and the birth of your baby. Your GP will usually book you into the maternity hospital under the care of a particular obstetrician and her/his team.

Midwife

These are the nurses in the maternity hospital and antenatal clinics. They will care for you during your pregnancy, while your baby is being born and afterwards while you're still in hospital.

Social Welfare Officers

Social Welfare Officers (SWO) are part of the Department of Social and Family Affairs and are based at the Social Welfare Local Office. You can apply to them for payments such as Jobseekers Assistance/Benefit, Maternity Benefit, One-Parent Family Payment (OFP) and Family Income Supplement. You can also pick up application forms for Maternity Benefit and One-Parent Family Payment at your local post office and send them in directly.

Public Health Nurse

These nurses are based in local health centres and are a fantastic help for new mothers. They can give you lots of advice about feeding and caring for your baby. A public health nurse will visit you when you get home from hospital with your baby. She will do regular check-ups on your baby to make sure s/he is doing okay. You can also bring your baby to the public health nurse in your local health centre if you need some support or information.

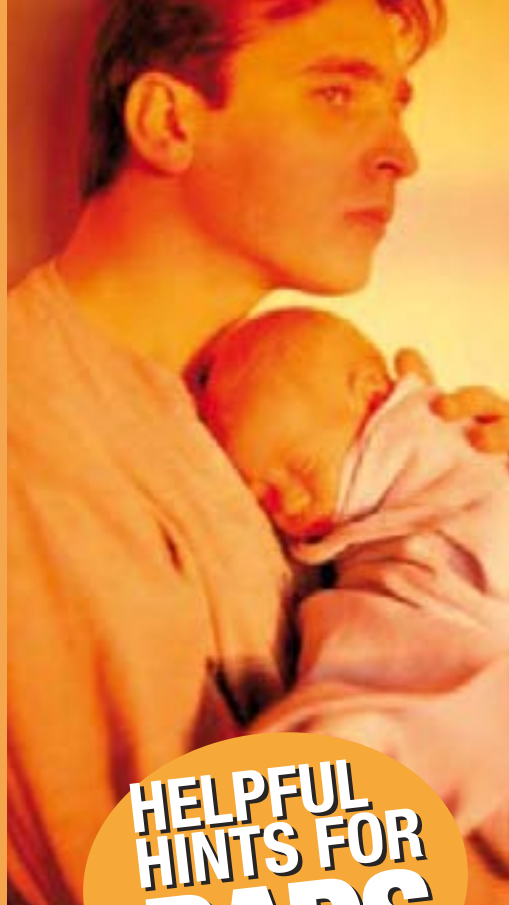
Social Worker

Health Service Executive (HSE) social workers are part of the health service and they work with families who are having difficulties. They are there to work with you and provide help and support if you need it.

Medical Social Workers are social workers based in maternity hospitals. It can be really useful to check in with them as they can offer important information and advice on money matters, form filling, birth registration etc.

Community Welfare Officers

Community Welfare Officers (CWO) are part of the local Health Service Executive (HSE) and are based in Local Health Centres. You can apply to your local CWO for Rent Supplement, Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance, Supplementary Welfare Allowance and/or Exceptional Needs Payments (for example for a cot or buggy for the baby). You may need to apply for Supplementary Welfare to keep you going after the baby is born while you wait for your One-Parent Family Payment to come through. Contact your Local Health Centre to find out when the CWO is available.



HELPFUL HINTS FOR DADS

“I want to remind those people who work with young fathers and families that they need to work together so that young fathers are supported to be with their children every step of the way”

(Brian, young father)

Expecting a baby can be a stressful, confusing and emotional time for dads too. Sometimes it is hard to know where you fit in. What's the right thing to do? Don't be afraid to ask questions and get advice.

- **Talk to each other about how you are both feeling.**
- **The baby will seriously disrupt your love life. Talk about this now**
- **You can hear the baby's heartbeat when it's big enough by placing your ear against the mother's lower belly.**
- **Talk to your baby during the pregnancy. The baby will then recognize your voice when s/he is born.**
- **Learn good lifting technique. Your back is the first thing that will go. A squirming 10 pound baby is harder on your back than a 25 pound toddler who knows how to keep its balance.**
- **Stay close. Only 5% of women have their babies on the due date so, if you are the one taking mother to hospital, in the last month stay close, don't go to any away game.**
- **Make sure your mobile is working and stay off alcohol if you are driving her to hospital.**
- **You could help out with buying or contributing to the cost of some of the things your baby will need.**

Coming home with your baby



Nobody is born with parenting skills. Everybody has to learn how to feed, bathe, and generally take care of her/his baby.

While you are in hospital the nurses will prepare you on how to care for your child when you both go home.

Remember it's a learning process and it's something you'll be learning for the rest of your life! Don't stress about being the 'perfect' parent (there's no such thing!). Its okay to be 'good

enough'. Just take it one step at a time and enjoy this special time in your and your baby's life.

The Public Health Nurse (PHN) will visit you soon after you come home and she can be a great help in advising you about caring for yourself and your baby. Don't be afraid to tell her anything that you are worried

about. She has seen it all before and is there to help and support you.

The first few months can be difficult as you lose sleep and have no life of your own but when your little one eventually smiles up at you it makes it all worthwhile.



WAYS TO COPE WITH A CRYING BABY

- Check if the nappy needs changing
- Is your baby hungry?
- Is your baby lonely?
- Gently hug and cuddle your child so that s/he is close to your body. This may help soothe her/him
- Use eye contact, smiling and talking to communicate with your baby
- Take your baby for a walk or a drive to help her/him sleep
- If necessary, make sure baby is safe and walk out of the room for a short time, making sure that you are nearby. Count to ten and allow yourself to calm down
- Ask someone else you trust to take over for a while
- Contact your public health nurse or community mother for advice
- Never slap or shake your baby

Baby blues

It's perfectly normal to feel a bit weepy or a bit low after the birth of your baby.

Remember, your body has been through a lot of changes and your hormones are all over the place. You are likely to be exhausted physically and emotionally.

A new baby is a challenge for a woman of any age so ask for help when you need it. Talk to your family and friends and accept their offers of help – time off from baby, help with shopping, a cup of coffee, a chat. Chatting to other mums who have had similar experiences sometimes helps. There may be a postnatal support group in some areas.

If the 'feeling low' goes on a bit long – for more than 2 weeks - contact your GP or the Public Health Nurse as you may be suffering from postnatal depression and need some professional treatment. Remember, this is a very common condition that lots of mums (and even dads) get and help is available. You could also log onto **www.pnd.ie** for an interactive website where you can chat online to other mothers and professionals who have an understanding of how you feel. You can ring **Aware**, an organisation who helps those suffering with depression, on its LoCall number 1890-303 302 for support and advice about postnatal depression or visit their website at **www.aware.ie**.

There is a more extreme form of post-natal depression which is fairly rare, affecting 1 in 500 new mothers. If you feel extreme restlessness, mild confusion, inability to sleep, and generally out of it, medical intervention is vital. Don't be afraid to ask for help.

- Ask the public health nurse.
- Phone Treoir's National Information Centre for parents who are not married to each other, at LoCall 1890 252 084, www.treoir.ie
- One Parent Exchange and Network (OPEN) at 01 814 8860, www.oneparent.ie is a network of lone parent groups and may be able to put you in touch with one in your area.
- One Family, LoCall 1890 66 22 12, www.onefamily.ie who offer counselling, support, courses for parents, information and lots more to all members of one parent families.

"When my baby was born I was so proud of myself he was perfect. My boyfriend was actually so proud, he loved his little son. I loved this. I was so thrilled it was perfect for us. In the following weeks I started getting all these bad feelings, they were so horrific I wasn't happy. I didn't want this. I was so young with such a beautiful son I just couldn't bring myself to bond with my son. I couldn't connect. Eventually my Mam persuaded me to go to the doctor and she was great".



LIFE WITH BABY-

Having a baby is a life-changing experience. Give yourself time to adjust to this change. Being a new mum can be exciting, exhausting, scary, and everything else in between. Our survival guide to Life with Baby might help you handle the early months of being a mum.

1

Don't try to be Supermum.

It takes time to learn how to look after your baby. You might make mistakes to start with, you may not be able to always get your baby to settle or stop crying. You might know other mothers whose babies sleep through the night, never seem to cry and the mother has got back into her jeans within a month or two! Every baby is different and so is every mother. Take time to get to know your baby and to get into a routine. And don't knock yourself out trying to be Supermum.

Get some clothes that don't need ironing

2

Be prepared

Babies don't wait for anything! It'll save your nerves and your baby's if you try to get into the habit of preparing in advance. If you're bottle feeding, having the bottles sterilised and ready to use is important. Make sure you always have enough formula milk and nappies etc. in the house. Keep your baby bag full of the stuff you'll need when you go out. Think about what your baby needs and plan ahead. It really does help.

3

Taking care of you

Looking after your baby is a full time job in the early weeks and months, but you need to look after yourself as well. You might not be getting very much sleep at night so try to take a nap during the day when your baby sleeps. Try to eat regularly. Keep food in the house for sandwiches, and quick meals like eggs or beans on toast or salads as it may be difficult to get time to cook, especially if you live on your own. It's important to look after yourself as well as your baby.

Get an easy-to-manage hair-cut

4

Say yes!

If your family or friends offer to help, say yes. If they offer to look after the baby for an hour or two so you can sleep or have a break, take them up on it. In the beginning you mightn't want anyone else to do things for your baby, but do try to let them, as long as you know and trust them. A short break from your baby can help you relax and have more energy and patience to look after the baby when you come back.

5

See people when you want

You might find people want to call to see the baby after s/he born. This can be lovely but it can also be very tiring for you and the baby. Don't cut yourself off from other people but arrange for them to visit or to visit them when it suits you and the baby.

6

Get out and about

It's too easy to stay in the house when you've a baby or small child, as it might seem like such a hassle to get organised to go out. It can be good to get out and about even for a walk to the shops. Just a change of scenery can cheer you up. Wrap your baby up well if it's cold outside and make sure to bring a rain-cover for the buggy. Fresh air is good for you and your baby and the exercise can help you stay in shape.

You do get a bit lonely

7

Play with your baby

You might think there's no point in talking much to your baby or playing with her in the early days, but it really is worthwhile. Your baby will react to your voice and your face. Don't forget, from very early on, your baby may try to copy your smiles and frowns, and will respond to toys and sounds - like you singing a nursery rhyme. Your baby doesn't care if you sing like a blocked drain or if you're listing out your shopping, s/he will still be entertained!

8

Talk about it

Sometimes after having a baby or even later when your baby is older you may feel down in the dumps, stressed or find it hard to cope. Don't keep this all to yourself. Do talk to someone, maybe your boyfriend, mum or friend. If this doesn't help, have a chat with your doctor or the Public Health Nurse. It's ok to say that you are finding things tough. It's normal. Talking can help. Sometimes it helps to meet and talk to other young mothers, as friends without babies may not be all that interested.

That's why we set up our young mother's group. It's just like having somewhere else to go and actually getting out of your house and having a chat.

10 SURVIVAL TIPS FOR MUMS


9 **Make time for you.**

There's less free time when you are a mum but it's important to try to make some time for yourself. If you are in a relationship, try to get out together sometimes, text or talk on the phone often if you don't live together. Small treats like sitting down with a magazine, painting your toenails or watching your favourite TV programme can recharge your batteries. As your baby gets into some sort of a routine (and it may take a while), try to pick out a half hour that's just for you.

I'd just like a little time for myself – a bit of a break.

10 **Don't Give Up on Your Dreams.**

If you didn't plan to have a baby at a young age it might seem that your life is not working out the way you wanted. Having your baby doesn't mean that you still can't do what you hoped. You might have to slow your plans down or change the way you were going to do things but it doesn't mean that you have to give them up. You can still do things in your life and be a good mum. Check out if there is a Teen Parents Support Programme (see page 28) in your area or go to your local family centre, library or FÁS office to see what's on offer. Go for it!



“Being a dad is the best thing that’s happened to me, I said ‘Dadadada’ to Emily for months and when she finally did say ‘Dada’, that was just fantastic.”

10 top tips for b

So, you’re a dad! Your life has changed. It can be exciting. It can be a bit frightening. It can be both of these and more. It can certainly be an amazing experience for you and your child. You’ll be learning lots of new stuff. It’s the same for any new dad.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR DADS

1 Parenthood is no walk in the park – it's tough - babies either want to be fed, have their nappy changed, have their soother back or they want a cuddle. But don't worry, you eventually learn what your baby wants.

2 Make time to spend with your new baby as she or he grows up. You'll be glad now and in years to come. And so will your child. There are many ways to spend time with your baby and to show that you are interested in what s/he is doing. For instance, when your baby is very small, bath-time can be very special.

3 Learn how to give your baby a massage.

4 Talk to your baby's mother about how much it's actually costing her to provide for the baby. Babies are expensive so try and work out as best you can what's a fair amount for you to contribute every week. Treoir has a sample "Expenses Sheet" to help with this that can be downloaded from Treoir.ie or from LoCall 1890 252 084.

5 Don't smoke in front of your baby

6 Manage your drinking as looking after a baby with a hangover is dangerous and not at all pleasant.

7 Baby carriers that you can strap on to your front are brilliant. Your baby can feel your warmth and hear your voice and the rocking movement while you move is very soothing.

8 And, if you have a car, don't forget - get that baby seat for the car sooner rather than later.

9 Sorry Dad, if you are working, no paid Paternity Leave for you. There is Parental Leave but it is unpaid. Each parent is entitled to 14 weeks unpaid Parental Leave which must be taken before the child is 8 (or 16 if the child has a disability). Contact the Equality Authority: LoCall 1890 245 545, www.equality.ie for more information.

10 All children need lots of love and support. You, as Dad, play a big part in providing that love and support. Where Dads take an interest in their children's lives, they are telling them they are valued, cared for and important. Spending time with your children gives them a better chance of growing up to be happy adults.

rand new dads

"Babies are productive members of society. They spread optimism and good cheer more effectively than any adult. Help them do their work"

Alan (father of a 6 year old)



Money for

After the baby is born

If you are rearing your child/ children on your own you may be entitled to some of the following:

Child Benefit and Early Childcare Supplement.

You don't need to apply once the birth of your baby is registered. Contact: Child Benefit Section:
LoCall 1890 400 400.

One-Parent Family Payment as long as you are not cohabiting or earning more than €400 per week.
Contact: One-Parent Family Section:
LoCall 1890 500 000, press 7

Family Income Supplement - if you are working over 19 hours a week and are on low pay. Contact: Family Income Supplement Section 01 704 3000, (043) 45211

Income Tax Relief if you are parenting on your own
Contact: Your local tax office

Where a parent doesn't live with a child but has the child overnight, that parent can also claim Income Tax Relief.

Supplementary Welfare Allowance – while you are waiting for your One-Parent Family Payment to come through. Contact: Community Welfare Officer (CWO) at your local Health Centre

Exceptional Needs Payment – for items that you cannot afford to buy yourself, for example, a cot, buggy etc.
Contact: Community Welfare Officer (CWO) at your local Health Centre

Rent Supplement – if you are paying rent or need to find a place of your own. Contact: Community Welfare Officer (CWO) at your local Health Centre

Medical Card / GP Visit Card

You are very likely to get the Medical Card if you are getting all or some of One-Parent Family Payment. The GP Visit Card allows you to visit your GP for free. You pay for your medicines.

Contact: Your HSE local Office or the HSE National Information Line: Callsave 1850 241 850.

Talk to the other parent about paying a share towards the cost of rearing the child you have had together. Remember, the money is for your child and can be a great help.

you and your baby

If you are living together as a couple, married or not, you will get **Child Benefit** and **Early Childcare Supplement**. You might also qualify for a **Medical Card/GP Visit Card** depending on your income.

If you are not working you can claim **Jobseekers Allowance** as a couple and you may also qualify for **Rent Supplement**.

You could be entitled to **Family Income Supplement** if either of you is working and on low pay.

THE GOLDEN RULE ABOUT APPLYING FOR ENTITLEMENTS IS – IF IN DOUBT, APPLY.

This is all extremely complicated information and it depends on your individual circumstances whether you qualify for a payment or not. Help is at hand!

Contact:

- **Treoir, LoCall 1890 252 084**
- **Askonefamily, LoCall 1980 66 22 12**
- Your local **Citizens Information Centre** or national LoCall 1890 777 12
- **Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS)**, LoCall 1890 283 438. MABS is a national, free, confidential and independent service for people in debt or in danger of getting into debt.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q If my boyfriend's name is on the Birth Certificate, am I still entitled to One-Parent Family Payment?

A Yes - having the name of the father of the baby on your baby's Birth Certificate will not stop you getting the One-Parent Family Payment. **The Department of Social and Family Affairs** will ask that you look for maintenance (child support) from the father of the baby, regardless of whether or not his name is on the baby's Birth Certificate.

Q Will my mother still get Child Benefit for me?

A Yes, if you are still in full time education, your mother will continue to receive Child Benefit until you reach your 19th birthday.

Q How much is maintenance?

A There's no set amount of maintenance. It is best if you can work out together how much Dad can contribute given his income and other commitments. **Treoir** has a sample "Expenses Sheet" to help work out the actual cost of the child which can be downloaded from www.treoir.ie or from LoCall 1890 252 084. If you can't agree you could try mediation (see page 22) which is where you sit down with a mediator who'll try and help the two of you to arrive at a solution that works for both of you, and more importantly for your child. Try and keep out of court as this can often make things worse between parents. If you do opt to go to court the maximum amount that can be awarded in the District Court is €150 per week per child.

Q There are so many forms, what if I need help filling them out?

A If there's a social worker in the hospital you are attending during your pregnancy, s/he may be able to help you with all the forms.

You could also visit your local **Citizens Information Centre**. As well as having many of the forms you'll need, they may also be able to help you fill them out. Citizens Information Centres also often have information about other supports for young parents in your local area, e.g. young parents' groups, youth services etc. LoCall 1890 777 12

Q I don't know how I'm going to manage my money every week – what can I do?

A If you think you might need help managing your money each week, **MABS (Money, Advice and Budgeting Service)**, www.mabs.ie, is a free and confidential budgeting advice service available nationwide. A trained Money Advisor will help you to make out a weekly budget or look at your weekly income and make sure that there aren't any entitlements you're missing out on. LoCall 1890 283 438

Safer sex

If you're pregnant right now or have recently had your baby, sex or contraception might be the last thing on your mind. However, once your baby is born it is possible to become pregnant even before your periods start again or even if you are still breastfeeding, so read on!



- 1. Think about it!** It's never too early to think about contraception if there's any chance that you might become pregnant again, unless of course, you want to.
- 2. Talk about it!** If you are in a relationship it is a good idea to have a chat with your partner to work out what kind of contraception to use. It can be a bit embarrassing to talk about it at first, but not having to worry about becoming pregnant again before you're ready, will make it worthwhile. It's easier to be rational and reasonable before you're in the "heat of the moment". If you feel uncomfortable discussing safe sex with your partner, then maybe you should wait until you know each other better.
- 4. Get in the know!** Maybe you were using contraception when you became pregnant and it didn't work properly for you so you might need more information. Or maybe you have never used any kind of contraception before and don't know much about it. There are various kinds of contraception and not every type of contraception might suit you and your circumstances. So there is a lot to consider in order to make the correct choice.
- 5. Get it!** Don't put off getting your contraception any longer.
- 6. Don't get it!** The rate of sexually transmitted infections is soaring in Ireland. Always use a condom (keep a supply handy) and take responsibility for your sexual behaviour.

Talk to your doctor or check if there is a Family Planning Clinic near you to help you decide what suits you. Or log on to www.ifpa.ie or www.thinkcontraception.ie for more information.



difficult bits

Smoking, alcohol and drugs will greatly harm your baby. It won't be easy to give them up but do your best. At least cut down on the amount you're taking. Many people use their pregnancies as the push they need to give up, or reduce – so why not take the opportunity?

Get whatever help you need to do this from the medical staff at the hospital or check out the information in the antenatal pack you'll get at the hospital.

Giving up smoking

You and your baby are two good reasons to give up smoking. It isn't easy but the following reasons show why it's definitely worth the effort:

- A** Quitting is the best single thing you can do for the health of your new baby
- B** You increase your chances of a healthy full term pregnancy and having a healthy baby
- C** And you'll have more money to spend on you and your baby!



So if you're thinking of quitting, help is at hand. To find out what services are available for you, contact your GP or your local HSE Office. You can also ring the National Smokers Quitline on Callsave 1850-201203.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR DADS

Give her a hand and encouragement to give up smoking. And if you smoke yourself, maybe it's an opportunity for you to give up too! At the very least don't smoke in front of your pregnant partner - passive smoking is bad for the baby too! Well done.

drugs

This is really important –

If you're using illegal drugs or overdoing prescribed drugs and alcohol, then you need to let the clinic know what you're taking – how much, and how often. It's about your health and the health of your baby. It's extremely vital that you get the professional help you need to quit or reduce. People are there for you. Talk to the doctor or mid-wife in the clinic about where you can get help.

A roof over your head

Living with your family

Living with your family can be really helpful and supportive with the family mucking in to give you a hand. And sometimes the family can help with looking after your baby while you go back to school, training, work or even taking the odd break. Having your family's support can make all the difference in making your life more manageable and enjoyable. It's also cheaper than living on your own!

Just a note of warning though. Be careful not to take your family for granted. Sort out with your folks how much you'll contribute towards the cost of running the house and don't assume they'll always be able to babysit. If they are minding your child while you are studying or at work sort out how much you can pay them for it. Don't forget that they have a life as well!

But sometimes living with the family isn't the best idea

For some young mothers, living with the family can be difficult. It can add to the stress instead of relieving it. Some families are not good at knowing when to stop giving advice or trying to take over looking after the baby. This can be very annoying when you're trying to work out for yourself how to be a parent and be the most important person to your baby. Or maybe they won't babysit to let you out. Some grandparents may not like to have the child's father around seeing him as 'bad news' in the situation. Or some families just don't get on. All these issues can lead to rows and anxiety.





Living on your own

If you need to move out of home, and you are over 18, you basically have two choices:

- Apply to your local authority (City Council or County Council) to go on their housing list
- Look for a place of your own to rent and apply for Rent Supplement to your Local Health Office (HSE)

Either way you need to contact your local authority as you need to show that you are in need of housing before you'll get Rent Supplement for private accommodation.

Remember, once you get on the 'housing list' it usually takes a long time to get housed so be prepared to wait. It can be worth the wait as once you get it, it's very secure and cheap whether you are working or not.

If you plan to rent a place, once you spot accommodation that might suit you, contact the Community Welfare officer (CWO) in the local health centre (HSE) (where the accommodation is) about getting Rent Supplement. CWOs can help with a deposit as well, so ask about that too.

Very important: If you become homeless then you should contact your Local Authority (City or County Council) immediately or call Freephone 1800 724 724 for advice, information and access to emergency accommodation.

Dads and a home for your baby

If you're not living with the mother of your baby you might want to bring your baby home to your place. You will need a set-up that has enough room and is clean. This may be manageable if you live at home with your parents and hopefully they will help you with this – s/he is their grandchild and they are probably bursting to have her/him around.

However, it can be difficult if you are sharing a house or flat to have enough space for baby. You may need to negotiate with your house/flatmates to make space for your baby to live in rather than a space where s/he can just 'stay'.

If you're moving house/flat, be sure to get somewhere near your child and with space for her/him. Remember, it's going to be your child's 'other home'.

Legal jargon what it means

Here are some legal words you might come across as a parent and need to understand:

- 1. GUARDIANSHIP** is having the right to make decisions about your baby – where your baby lives, what religion s/he has, what school s/he'll attend, consenting to medical treatment, applying for a passport etc.
- 2. CUSTODY** is who your baby lives with.
- 3. ACCESS** is visiting your baby or having contact with her/him, where you are not living with your child.
- 4. MAINTENANCE** is a payment to the other parent towards the cost of rearing your child.



Common mistake

The most common mistake people make is thinking that where a father's name is on his child's birth certificate that this gives him guardianship rights in respect of his child. It doesn't. An unmarried father has to take action in order to get his guardianship rights. He can get these rights fairly easily if mother agrees by signing a **statutory instrument** with the mother in front of a Peace Commissioner. This Statutory Instrument (S.I.5 form) can be downloaded from www.treoir.ie. Where the mother doesn't agree the father can apply to the local District Court for guardianship rights.

Working things out

There are two ways of working out parenting arrangements where parents find this difficult:

Mediation

Mediation is sitting down with a trained independent person who can help you to talk to each other and work out good decisions together about your child and which will work towards your child's best interest. The Government provides an excellent, free and confidential mediation service. Contact them at 01 6344 320, www.fsa.ie

Going to Court

Try to avoid going to court if possible. This is not the best place to be sorting out family issues regarding your children. Tensions can get very high and often bitter. However, in some cases this is the only option.

You don't need to get a solicitor to go to court. Either parent can go to the court clerk in the local District Court and start the process. You must have an address for the other parent. However, you need to be comfortable about speaking up for yourself. Court clerks can be very helpful and will guide you through the paperwork. You might be entitled to Legal Aid. The **Legal Aid Board** provides legal advice and legal aid in relation to civil law matters to people whose disposable income is less than €18,000. To find your local Centre ring LoCall: **1890 615 200**



Frequently asked questions



Q

If me and my boyfriend split up and his name is on the Birth Certificate, will it make it more difficult for me to get a passport for the baby?

A

No, the father's signature is only required on a Passport Application form when he has been appointed a legal guardian of his child either by agreement with mother or through the court. See page 22

Q

My sister is a drug user and my Mam looks after her son. Can my Mam become a guardian of the child? She has to get a passport soon and who will sign the application form?

A

Only parents can be guardians and even though your nephew lives with your Mam she cannot be made a guardian of her grandchild while your sister is alive. When the time comes to apply for the passport your Mam can go to the local District Court to get the passport without your sister's consent.

Q

I am worried in case I die before my child reaches 18. What can I do?

A

It is very important that you make a will appointing a guardian to take your place. It would be very useful if you also say in your will where you would like your child to live and with whom. It is usually best to do this through a solicitor.

Q

I am worried about all these legal issues, who can tell me more?

A

If you want further information about any of these issues contact **Treoir**, LoCall 1890 252 084, who run the National Information Centre for parents who are not married to each other and for those involved with them. You can also contact your local **Citizens Information Centre** or their national helpline 1890 777 121 (or check your local Golden Pages for your nearest Centre.)

If you need legal advice, you can contact **Free Legal Advice Centres** (FLAC 01 - 874 5690 or www.flac.ie for your nearest Centre).

If you need a solicitor you may qualify for Legal Aid so contact the **Legal Aid Board** LoCall 1890 615 200 or www.legalaidboard.ie for your nearest Centre.

Family Law Courts are not open to the general public as hearings are held in private. Only parents and witnesses are allowed in.

Get a copy of **Taking the Stand** from Treoir which has lots of helpful hints on resolving disputes regarding children, on representing yourself in court and what it is like going to court.



Remember that it is much better for children if both parents are involved in their lives.

Is there school after baby?



Of course studying or training with a young baby will not be as easy as when there was only yourself to think about. But it's not impossible. It's hard work – but worth it. With a qualification, you can get the kind of work you enjoy and both yourself and your baby will be better off.

Are you still in school?

By law you must remain in school until you're 16 years of age. If you do not attend, the school principal will ask an Education Welfare Officer to contact you. Explain to the **Education Welfare Officer** about what you find difficult about school. S/he will talk to the school to see how they can make it easier for you. If you've no contact with an Education Welfare Officer, think of teachers within the school that you like – someone you can talk to.

The **Home School Liaison Co-ordinator** or the **School Completion Co-ordinator** are well used to talking to students who find school difficult for any reason. Your **SPHE teacher** and the **Career Guidance teacher** also have special roles in looking after students who need extra support. So try to find a teacher that you are comfortable talking to.

What if you miss school due to your pregnancy?

You will probably miss school for at least some time before and after the birth of your baby. Ask your school about the **Home Tuition Scheme**. This scheme means that a teacher can come to your home to keep you up to date with your class work. You

can get 9 hours tuition per week for at least 10 weeks and it's free. By doing this, you will not have fallen behind when you do return to school.

Is your baby due around exam times?

Don't give up if your baby is due in June. **The Department of Education & Science** will do everything possible to make you comfortable during your exams. You may be given a room to yourself with your own supervisor and be allowed to take a break unlike the other students. Some young mums have even done their exams in the maternity hospital!

It's still your life and your choice.

Always remember that what you do after your baby is born is your choice. A new baby will bring a lot of changes to your life and you'll need plenty of energy. You may decide to remain at home full time with him or her. Or you may decide to combine being a parent with school or training. Look for advice - but don't feel under pressure to do anything which you believe is not best for yourself and your baby at that time. Remember you can always go back to education or training when you feel more ready.

Your education does not have to end because you have become a mother



Returning to Education or Training

If you decide to return to school you'll have lots to think about. What course will suit you best? Should you go part-time or full time? Will you be able to afford it? Who will look after your baby? Can you get help with childcare and other costs?

The Government has schemes to help people like yourself finish school and get training. Phone one of the organisations listed below to help you work out which of these schemes best match your situation.

Who will mind my baby?

Sometimes this is the hardest decision of all. You'll want to be sure that your baby is getting the best possible care when you're not there. And, if you have no one within your family willing to mind your baby, childcare is very expensive. If you think you'll need a place in a crèche put your baby's name on the waiting list as soon as s/he is born.

You will receive the **Early Childcare**

Supplement of €1,100 a year for each of your children but this will cover only a small part of your costs.

Community Crèches are less expensive than a private crèches so check out if there is one in your area. Ask the manager of the community crèche if you can get a childcare supplement. Some third level colleges also have crèches which are subsidised and you should contact them as soon as you make your decision to go to college. Ask your college about **Student Access Funds** and ask if there are any special funds to help you with childcare. If you live in a **Partnership Area** you may be able to get a **Millenium Grant**. Some charities such as the **Society of St. Vincent de Paul** may also be able to help.

You can talk to these organisations about where you might get help with the cost of childcare.

Teen Parents Support Programmes
(look at page 28)

Information Officer at Treoir LoCall:
1890 252 084.

Employment Service (LES) through
FÁS Head Office (0)1 607 0500,
www.fas.ie

Waterford Student Mother's Project
051-8442200,

Galway Young Mothers in Education
093 28494

ask joanne

My mother bosses me around

Dear Joanne,
I had a baby last month and I am living with my parents. My mother keeps bossing me around and even though I'm 17 and a half she takes over completely with the baby. My friends say I'm lucky to get this help, but I feel very down and don't know what to do and don't want to start a row with my mam. Tara.

Dear Tara,
It's perfectly normal to feel down after the birth of your baby. If your Mam is not letting you care for the baby that can add to your feeling low. Your Mam probably still thinks of you as her baby and hasn't grasped the fact that you are now a mother yourself. At a quiet time of the day when the baby is settled, tell your Mam calmly how you feel. You could suggest that if she taught you how to look after the baby it would be great. Pick your time carefully and avoid getting into an argument.



My baby's dad won't visit

Dear Joanne,
I had a baby 3 months ago and everything was ok with the baby's Dad until he wanted to go out with his friends every night and doesn't want to visit me or the baby in my house any more. He says that my mother gives him dirty looks and doesn't make him feel welcome but that he loves me and the baby. I don't want to lose him but what can I do? Emily

Dear Emily,
Fathers can feel very left out when the babies arrive, and this applies especially to young fathers when they are not made welcome. However, it is important for your baby that her Dad is around as much as possible. You could try talking to your mother about how important it is for your baby to have Dad around. Remember that it is not adding people to children's lives that is difficult but taking important people away. Gently encourage her to welcome Dad to the house as it is important for your baby to have him on board. Talk to Dad about seeing the baby away from your house – maybe in his house. That way your baby could get to know Dad and his family as well. Set times for visiting and encourage him to make the effort.

I'm lonely away from home

Dear Joanne,
I'm a mother of twin girls and moved from the city where I was near my own family to the suburbs and don't know anyone here. What can I do? Natalie.

Dear Natalie,
It is understandable that you would feel isolated and lonely in your new place. Meeting new people can be quite an effort and you need to feel positive about yourself to make a start. It can be very supportive to chat to other young mothers. Why not phone **Treoir** at LoCall 1890252084

or look at the website – www.treoir.ie – in the **Useful Services** section where you might find a local group to contact. You could also contact **One Parent Exchange and Network (OPEN)** at 01 814 8860 www.oneparent.ie or **One Family** at LoCall 1890 662212 www.onefamily.ie. Ask your **Public Health Nurse** if there is a local support group in your area. You may find training courses you could do through **FÁS** or your local **VEC** or **Youth Service**. Some of these provide childcare as well as training.



got a baby/pregnancy/life question?

How can I see my baby?

Dear Joanne
My girlfriend's parents don't want me to be involved, so how can I see my baby? *Paul*

Dear Paul
It can be very difficult if you and the baby's mother are no longer together and the grandparents don't want you to be around or involved in the baby's (or their daughter's) life. These situations can cause a lot of distress and heartache for any father being prevented from seeing his child. Remember, more than anything else it is important to first think about what would be in your child's best interests. And it is generally in a child's interest to be in touch with both parents.

If you aren't able to see your child, you can apply to your local District Court for access (see page 22). Unless there is a really good reason why you should not have contact, the judge will decide where and when the access will take place.



How do I manage my daughter's behaviour?

Dear Joanne,
My daughter Chloe is 3 and a half. Recently I met a great guy who is 22 and has a daughter with his previous girlfriend. Everything is fine until he gives out to Chloe when she pulls at things or answers me back. We had a row about it and he said he would deal with her as he does his own daughter, if I won't. I don't really know how to manage her and I'm not really sure if she is being bold or not. What should I do? *Catherine.*

Dear Catherine,
It is very difficult to manage a child consistently and it

can be even more difficult when someone who is not her parent starts doing it. Your boyfriend is not Chloe's Dad so he doesn't really have the authority to deal with her. This does not mean that he has nothing to do with her. He can be her friend but he needs to take a back seat in this particular aspect of parenting. Explain this to your boyfriend and agree how to address the issues at a time when Chloe is not listening.

Chloe is not bold, she is just behaving normally for her age. She is exploring her boundaries – seeing how far you will let her go. It is a sign that she is alert

and alive. So you need to learn how to set limits, how to show Chloe in a respectful way how far she can go and where to draw the line in showing respect to you and to others. Children who learn this early are generally more secure in themselves.

You could check through your local school, clinic or public health nurse to see if there are courses on parenting you could do which should be of some help. Parenting courses can be useful for parents of all ages, not just young families.

Teen Parents Support Programme



teenparents
support programme

Are you pregnant and under 20 years of age? Were you a teenager when you had your baby and is he or she still under 2 years of age? Then the Teen Parents Support Programme may be for you! The TPSP (as it is known) was set up especially to support young parents (both mums and dads) like yourself. The workers in the TPSP will give you one-to-one support to deal with your own individual situation. For example, you may want to talk about how you are feeling and how your pregnancy is affecting those around you – your own parents and the other parent of your baby. Or you may need information about how to care for yourself and your baby, on Social Welfare, housing and childcare. The TPSP may also be able to give you some financial support to remain in school or training and, if you are interested, can link you in with other young parents in your area. At the moment you can contact TPSPs in the following areas:

Location	Contact No.
Carlow & Kilkenny	059-913 8711
Cork City & County	021-496 6780
Donegal includes Letterkenny, Inishowen and the Finn Valley area	074-9190141
Dublin Ballyfermot, Bluebell, Inchicore Drimnagh, Crumlin, Dublin 24 Parts of Dublin 8 Dublin 13, 7 & 5 Parts of Dublin 9 & 3 Finglas	087 9950439 01-403 2081 01-848 4811 01-864 1989
Galway City & County	091-544 960
Limerick City & County	061-411 643
Louth	041-987 5273
North Wexford includes Gorey, Courtown, Camolin, Coolgreany, Ferns, Kilmuckridge, Bunclody	053-9481014
Margaret Morris National Co-ordinator	01-670 0167



Family Portrait Competition

Help us to make the magazine better. What did YOU think?

Fill in the survey below and *post it before June 1st 2008* to:

**Treoir Family Portrait Competition,
Treoir, 14 Gandon House,
Custom House Square, IFSC,
Dublin 1**

or phone Margot in Treoir on LoCall 1890 252 084 before June 1st 2008
and she will enter you in the draw for a Family Portrait.

	YES	NO
It was easy to read	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would read the next edition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has your child's other parent read it?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What did you learn from the magazine?

Where did you get the magazine? _____

What was good about the magazine? _____

How could we improve the magazine? _____

What articles would you like in the next edition? _____

Your age _____ The age of your child _____

Would you be interested in meeting with other young parents to tell us more about what you think of the magazine? (Your expenses will be covered) Yes No

Please tell us your name and contact number to be entered into the draw for a Family Portrait.

Name _____

Address _____

Contact Ph. No. _____



A close-up photograph of a woman with long brown hair kissing a baby on the cheek. The woman's eyes are closed, and the baby is also looking down with its eyes closed. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

THE YOUNG PARENT SURVIVAL GUIDE

Great information for young mums and dads

www.treoir.ie

Family Portrait Competition

**Help us to make the magazine better.
What did YOU think?**

Fill in the survey on the previous page and
post it before June 1st 2008 to:

**Treoir Family Portrait Competition,
Treoir, 14 Gandon House,
Custom House Square, IFSC,
Dublin 1**

or phone Margot in Treoir on
LoCall 1890 252 084
before June 1st 2008
and she will enter you in the draw
for a Family Portrait.

Easy Food for baby and you

It can be difficult to always have good food ready for yourself and your baby. Here are a few simple recipes for you to try:



Quick Burgers for 4

1lb/450g mincedbeef/lamb4oz/
110g breadcrumbs(4 slices)
pinch mixed herbs
1 small onion - finely chopped
a little beaten egg
salt and pepper
a little flour

1 Mix all the ingredients together in a bowl. **2** Bind with a little beaten egg. **3** Shape mixture into round shapes with a little flour. **4** Fry or grill gently on both sides over a low heat until well cooked. **5** Serve in bread buns or with mashed potato.

Tea-Time Scramble for 2

3 eggs
2 dessertspoons of milk
1/4oz/5g butter or margarine
1 tomato, chopped
2oz/50g cooked ham, chopped
2oz/50g cheddar cheese, grated
salt and pepper
2 slices hot buttered toast
parsley to garnish

1 Beat eggs and milk together. Pour into a saucepan. **2** Add butter, chopped tomato and ham, grated cheese and seasoning. **3** Cook over

a low heat until creamy, stirring all the time. **4** Spoon equal portions on to the toast. **5** Sprinkle with chopped parsley and serve

Queen Cakes makes 20

8oz/225g soft margarine
4 eggs
16oz/450g self-raising flour
8oz/225g caster sugar
a little milk

1 Pre-heat the oven to 200°C / 400°F / Gas Mark 6. **2** Sieve flour into bowl. **3** Cream the margarine and sugar together. **4** Beat the eggs. **5** Add the flour and eggs gradually to the creamed margarine and sugar, beating well to avoid curdling. **6** If the mixture is dry add a little milk. **7** Divide the mixture into bun cases. **8** Bake in the pre-heated oven for 20 minutes.

101 Square Meals, published by Limerick MABS and the Mid-Western Health Board, is a practical guide to low cost meals and is available free from the many MABS offices throughout the country



Suggested Guide to Weaning

	6 months	7-9 months	9-12 months
Cereal	Start with 1 teaspoon of baby rice. It should be of a thick liquid consistency and easy for the baby to swallow.	Mixed cereal based on wheat,oats, rye and barley.	Regular cereals, i.e., wheatbiscuit. Avoid sugar-coated cereals.
Bread		Fingers of toast/bread, rusks.	Fingers of toast/bread, rusks.
Vegetables	Carrot, potato, cauliflower: simmer them and then liquidise or sieve them. (Avoid tinned vegetable).	Stronger flavoured vegetable: cabbage, sprouts, turnips.Simmer them, then mash or mince them.	Mash, mince or chop vegetables at this stage. Baked beans can be introduced.
Fruit	Mash bananas, stew fresh fruit and liquidise or sieve them, i.e., apples, pears. Tinned fruit in juice can also be used	Mash raw fruit.	Mince or chop fruit finely at this age.
Eggs		Scrambled or hard boiled eggs. Add to vegetables or cereal.	Scrambled or hard boiled eggs. Add to vegetables or cereal.
Yoghurt		Plain yoghurts with a little pureed fruit.	Plain yoghurts with a little pureed fruit.
Cheese		Soft cheese or grated mild cheese.	Soft cheese or grated mild cheese.
Meat Poultry		Finely chopped meat without salt or spice. Moisten with home-made stock.	Mince or chop.
Fish		White fish grilled, baked or steamed. Always remove the bones.	Fish fingers or other frozen fish products. Tinned salmon or tuna could be tried. Remove bones.

Get a copy of our publications:

- **Being there for them** - for grandparents of children whose parents are not married to each other
- **Bulletin** - regular information for unmarried parents and those involved with them
- **Family Links** steps and stages – shared parenting, step-families
- **Information for young parents in education**
- **Information Pack for Parents who are not married to each other**
- **Reproductive Health Information for Migrant Women**
Available in Arabic, Chinese, French, Polish, Romanian and Russian (Manual and/or CD)
- **Newsletter** – for those working with young parents
- **Taking the Stand** – a guide for unmarried parents resolving disputes regarding care of their children
- **Work it Out** – a guide for parents on One-Parent Family Payment (re) entering the workforce

Information Leaflets

1. Children Act 1997 (guardianship by agreement, access by family members)
 2. Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act 1997 (harassment, child abduction)
 3. Guardianship
 4. Access, Custody
 5. Shared Parenting
 6. Rights of Unmarried Fathers
 7. Maintenance of Children
 8. Family Adoption
 9. Passport Applications
 10. Birth Registration
 11. Cohabitation
 12. Unmarried parents and equality legislation
 13. Establishing Paternity
- Births to women under 20 (statistics)
- Births outside marriage (statistics)

Treoir has translated legal information into Arabic, Chinese, French, Polish, Romanian and Russian. Available on www.treoir.ie



Treoir

National Information Centre
for Unmarried Parents,
14 Gandon House,
Custom House Square,
IFSC,
Dublin 1

www.treoir.ie

Funded by
crisispregnancyagency



The **Crisis Pregnancy Agency** is a statutory body set up to formulate and implement a strategy to address the issue of crisis pregnancy in Ireland.

Visit www.crisispregnancy.ie for more information