

# Your Essential Guide to SAM

SAM is the School Age  
Mothers Programme



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SCHOOL AGE MOTHERS PROGRAMME



# Your Essential Guide to SAM



Discovering that you are pregnant can often come as a shock. You'll probably have questions and want to know what your options are. If your pregnancy is unplanned try to talk to someone as soon as possible, if you can't talk to friends or family have a look at our contacts list at the back of this booklet.

It is normal to feel a bit anxious about being pregnant however most young women manage really well. It's just a question of getting the right kind of help at the right time.





# What is SAM?



SAM is the School Age Mothers Programme. If you are a young woman who is attending school and you are pregnant or a young mother, you can use the SAM Programme to ensure that you have the assistance you need to continue your education, and the support to meet your needs as a new mother.

SAM offers you different types of support. The type of support you get will depend on your individual needs and requirements. There is help and advice available on lots of different issues including:

- Continuing at School/getting back into education
- Jobs and training
- Problems with housing
- Benefits and money advice
- Relationships
- Pregnancy and parenting
- Childcare
- Further education/training



There are also personal development and health programmes where you can meet other young mums in your situation, where you can make friends, swap information and support each other.

You might be able to get home tuition, childcare or transport if that's what's necessary to complete your education.



# People who can help

The Department of Education SAM Programme is available in the five Education and Library Boards throughout Northern Ireland. It can provide support to young women like you to continue your education. You can build relationships with people you trust who will help you to make decisions about you and your baby's future.

The **Community Midwife** is based at your Health Centre. She has been specially trained to look after women during pregnancy, labour and afterwards.

A **Health Visitor** is a qualified nurse who will support you in keeping yourself and your baby healthy.

A **Social Worker** can support you with the day to day routine of looking after your baby and give you information on relationships, benefits, childminders/mother and toddler groups, etc.

A SAM Project Worker, SAM Co-ordinator or **Education Welfare Officer (EWO)** will work on your behalf to ensure you have as much additional support with your education as possible both before and after the baby is born.

The Pastoral Care Teacher, Form Tutor and School Counsellor can provide for you in school.

A **SureStart Worker** can help with health and family support and will keep you up to date with what's going on in your area.

You can ask any one of the above people to help you take part in the SAM Programme. Health workers, other organisations, you and your parents/carers can also contact any of the above who will have information on support for school age mothers and young parents.

See useful contacts on page 14





## **I'm under 16 and Pregnant, can I stay in education?**

- You should continue to go to school for as long as possible before your baby is born and return when you feel you are able. Your School, the EWO or SAM worker will provide support.
- Home tuition may be available for a short time. This tuition can take place in your own home or in small groups that are available in some areas.

### **Did you know that ???**

- Young people may leave school in their 16th year so long as they were born on or before June 30th. If they were born on or after July 1st they must remain in school until the following year.
- If you are in good health you should be able to attend school until your doctor advises you to stop.





## **I am aged 16 to 19, I am pregnant/a mother and want to stay on in education, what options do I have?**

### **■ Continue at school**

Your form teacher or year head will work with you and your SAM worker or EWO to draw up a personal education plan that will provide support to assist you to continue your education.

### **■ Go to a Further and Higher Education College (Tech)**

If you are interested in continuing your education after you have left school speak with your careers teacher/advisor who will inform you about the choices open to you.



## **I am over 19 and pregnant/a mother, can I continue my education?**

- You can continue your education by attending a college or institute of further and higher education (Tech) and by attending university. This is called third level or higher education. You should speak with your form teacher, year head or careers adviser in school about the range of courses available to you.

### **Did you know that???**

- You may be entitled to a childcare grant. The EWO or SAM worker will provide you with information.

## **I have been told that social services will be informed of my pregnancy because I am under 16, What will they do?**

- A Social Worker will talk to you about your particular circumstances to make sure you have not been harmed and that you are safe.

## Did you know that???

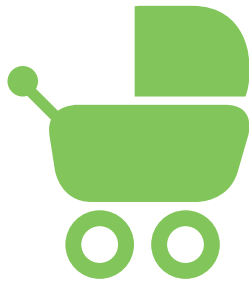
- You can ask to speak to a hospital social worker about any worries/concerns you may be having regarding your family life and how you are feeling about your pregnancy. You can also get advice about benefits and housing and the social worker can put you in contact with a SAM Co-ordinator, SAM Project Worker or EWO for further support or advice.





For advice on social security benefits, education, employment, childcare, health, housing or debt – please contact the SAM Co-ordinator or EWO. Or you could also contact your local Citizens Advice or Benefits Office and speak to a qualified Benefits Advisor who can help you decide who is best claiming for you and your baby, help with filling in benefit application forms and tell you about certain grants you may be able to get.





## Quotes

“It has helped me to know that I will be able to give my child what it needs from the early months and I’ll be a good parent.”

(Shannon, Year 11)

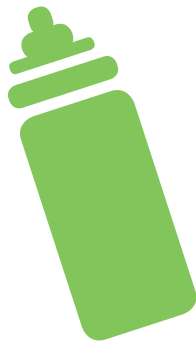
“SAM made it possible for me to continue with my studies and motivated me to achieve a better life for myself and my baby.”

(Colleen, Year 14)

“Before I was pregnant my attitude to education was maybe a 1 or 2, now after getting pregnant and having Alice, it’s a 5.”

(Jane, Year 12)

Just because you are a young mother does not mean that you shouldn’t have the same opportunities as anyone else your age.



# Useful contacts

(Some of these work throughout Northern Ireland)

## **Education:**

### **Belfast Education & Library Board:**

Education Welfare Service: 02890 564000  
SAM Co-ordinator: 02890 236817  
[www.belb.org.uk](http://www.belb.org.uk)

### **South Eastern Education & Library Board:**

Education Welfare Service: 02890 566941  
Deputy-Chief Education Welfare Officer:  
02890 566498  
[www.seelb.org.uk](http://www.seelb.org.uk)

### **Southern Education & Library Board:**

Education Welfare Service: 02837 512386  
SAM Programme Officer: 02837 523158  
[www.selb.org](http://www.selb.org)

### **North Eastern Education & Library Board:**

Education Welfare Service: 02825 662563  
**SAM Co-ordinator:**  
Northern Area                      02870 357290  
Central Area                        02894 463512  
Southern Area                      02890 862568  
[www.neelb.org.uk](http://www.neelb.org.uk)

### **Western Education & Library Board:**

Education Welfare Service: 02882 411289  
**SAM Co-ordinator:**  
Derry                                    02871 272349  
Derry /Limavady                    02877 760932  
Strabane/Castledearg            02871 884027  
Omagh                                 02882 411289  
Enniskillen                         02866 343921  
[www.welbni.org](http://www.welbni.org)



## **Advice/information :**

### **The Benefit Shop**

*(benefits information)*

Castle Court

Royal Avenue

BELFAST BT1 1DF

Tel: 02890 336958

### **Brook Advisory Clinic**

*(free and confidential sexual health advice and contraception to young people)*

29a North Street

BELFAST BT1 1NA

Tel: 02890 328866

Helpline: 0800 0185 023

### **Childline**

*(counselling for children and young people)*

1st Floor, Queen's House, 14 Queen Street,

BELFAST BT1 6ED

Tel: 0800 1111

### **Children's Law Centre**

*(information about the law and children and young people)*

Philip House 3rd Floor

123 -137 York Street

BELFAST BT15 1AB

Tel: freephone Advice Line 0808 808 5678

# Useful contacts

## Citizen's Advice

*(help with legal, money and other problems)*

(Regional Headquarters)

46 Donegall Pass

BELFAST BT7 1BS

Tel: 02890 231120

## Contact Youth

*(counselling services for young people)*

North Derby Street

BELFAST BT1 2LB

Tel: 02890 744499

Youthline: 0808 808 8000

## CURA-Derry

*(pregnancy information/counselling services)*

Colmcille House

1a Miller Street

DERRY BT48 6SU

Tel: 02871 268467

## Family Planning Association

*(sexual health advice and information)*

3rd Floor Ascot House

24 - 31 Shaftesbury Square

BELFAST BT2 7DB

Tel: 0845 122 8687

### Derry Office:

Tel: 02871 260016

Helpline: 0845 122 8687







### Gingerbread

*(supports lone parents and their children)*

Tel: 02890 231417

Free Helpline: 0808 808 8090

### Life Pregnancy Care Services

*(pregnancy information/advice)*

28 Bedford Street

BELFAST BT2 7FE

Tel. 02890 438339

Tel: 02871 264751

Helpline: 0800 915 4600

### NCT Breastfeeding

Helpline

*(advice/information/support on breastfeeding)*

Tel: 0870 444 870

### NIPPA - the Early Years Organisation

*(for day care and crèches)*

6c Wildflower Way

Apollo Road

BELFAST BT12 6TA

Tel: 02890 662825



# Useful contacts

## Northern Ireland Childminding Association (NICMA)

*(promotes home-based childcare & learning for children, families and communities)*

16-18 Mill Street  
Newtownards BT23 4LU  
Tel: 02891 811015

## Northern Ireland Housing Executive

*(information and advice on housing)*

The Housing Centre  
2 Adelaide Street  
Belfast BT2 8PB  
Tel: 0344 892 0900  
Tel: 0845 122 8687

## NSPCC 24 hour helpline

*(advice/information if you are concerned about the safety or welfare of a child)*

Tel: 0808 800 5000

## Parents' Advice Centre

*(help and support for parents)*

1st Floor  
Andras House  
60 Gt. Victoria Street  
BELFAST BT2 7BB  
Tel: 02890 310891  
Freephone: 0808 801 0722  
(Office also in Derry)



### Relate NI

*(relationship counselling)*

Glengall Exchange  
3rd & 4th Floors  
3 Glengall Street  
BELFAST BT12 5AB  
Tel: 02890 323454

### Samaritans

*(confidential emotional support for those experiencing distress and despair)*

Lo-call: 0845 790 9090

### Surestart Northern Ireland

*(health/education support for children 0-4 yrs)*

[www.familysupportni.gov.uk](http://www.familysupportni.gov.uk) (Search Surestart, Northern Ireland)

### Women's Aid

*(for anyone affected by domestic violence)*

129 University Street  
BELFAST BT7 1HP  
Tel: 02890 249041  
Helpline: 0800 917 1414

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