

Factoid: Practitioners find it difficult to represent the voice of the child in assessments and decision-making processes, perhaps more so in infants as they are unable to verbalise their feelings.



Top Tips for Clinicians

Specialist	Dr Clare Randall (Clinical Psychologist: Little Minds Matter)
Subject	Prioritising Infant Mental Health
Date	March 2021 / Review date 12m later
Disclaimer	These are intended only as good practice prompts. Use your clinical judgement.
Top Tip 1	<p>The first 1001 days are critical for future health and mental health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first 1001 days, from conception to a child's second birthday, represent a critical period of development, with more than one million new neural connections forming every second (Center on the Developing Child, 2017) Babies need good quality and reliable relationships with their caregivers for optimal brain architecture to develop (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2004) Unsatisfying or absent early relationships are a primary chronic stressor, which dysregulate both psychological and biological processes (Institute of Medicine, 2000) <p>More information Rare Jewels - Parent-Infant Foundation</p>
Top Tip 2	<p>Don't be afraid to ask parents about their relationship with their baby</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many practitioners struggle to talk about distress in infants or how parents feel about their relationship with their baby Problems in the parent-infant relationship may arise due to difficulties in pregnancy, maternal mental health, domestic abuse, difficult experiences of being parented Babies may show their distress by being difficult to soothe, sleeping or feeding problems, prolonged crying, little eye contact GPs are an important part of the infant mental health pathway <p>More information CQC Not seen not heard report</p>
Top Tip 3	<p>Infant mental health services can provide a source of training and support to frontline practitioners</p> <p>Little Minds Matter: Bradford's Infant Mental Health Service supports families from conception until the child's second birthday.</p> <p>If you have concerns about the parent-infant relationship, consider a referral to Little Minds Matter. Here is a link to a short referral form or it can be found on SystmOne. If you would like to speak to someone from the team, please call the number below.</p> <p>More information Little Minds Matter Bradford Infant Mental Health service BDCT Little Minds Matter patient leaflet Little Minds Matter GP leaflet</p>
Information	<p>Tel. 01274 251298 Littlemindsmatter@bdct.nhs.uk</p> <p>See also ICON – Babies Cry You Can Cope</p>
My QI	Take action, then document a simple Quality Improvement for my next appraisal