



# *Embracing Maternal Mental Health*



# *Welcome*

SUPPORT GROUPS



# About us

We're an award-winning not-for-profit organisation supporting women to be #HappyMums.

As part of our #HappyMumbria project, we offer peer-led support groups for perinatal women to reduce the impact of maternal mental health problems such as anxiety, low mood, and antenatal/ postnatal depression in north, west and east Cumbria.

We are guided in everything that we do by our values, which ensure that our organisation and support will always be:

- **Peer-led:** We have lived experience, either directly or through friends and family. As equals, we lead, teach and learn from that experience;
- **Inclusive:** We are positively inclusive of women from communities which are often marginalised, including those who experience racism. We are open to challenge about discrimination in any form and are responsive to the specific needs of individuals.
- **Safe:** We make it safe for women to share their experiences of maternal mental health in group settings by prioritising our team's wellbeing;
- **Empowering:** We help women to accept and own their maternal mental health experiences. We cultivate an atmosphere where individuals are valued and given autonomy to realise their goals.
- **Self-sustaining:** We maintain our independence from statutory bodies, and aspire to reduce our dependence on grant funding. We are proactive about our emotional and financial sustainability.

All support offered as part of our #HappyMumbria project is free.





# Where to get help in an emergency

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis or feeling like you want to die, it's important to tell someone.

- Samaritans – Phone: 116 123 Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)
- Contact your GP and ask for an emergency appointment
- Phone 111 out of hours and they will help you find the support and help you need
- Contact your local Access Liaison Integration Service (ALIS) team – Phone: 03001239015 or freephone: 08006522865

**If you need immediate help, and in the case of serious injury, call 999 or go straight to A&E**

**There are more resources available on our website [www.happymums.org.uk](http://www.happymums.org.uk)**





# You are not alone

Up to 20% of women will experience a mental health problem in pregnancy or in the first year after giving birth\*

Everyone at Happy Mums has their own experiences of maternal mental health problems, so you can be sure there will be no judgement and a warm welcome.

*Knowing that others are going through the same or similar situations as myself helps put my mood and feelings into perspective*

*I now have a space where people totally get what I'm saying and what I'm going through*



*I thought I was the worst person in the world, and certainly the worst mum.*





# What to expect at a support group

**Feeling nervous? That's totally normal. We felt the same before our first session too. It can help to know a bit more about what to expect.**



Each group lasts for 1 hour. The first 15 minutes is a chance to grab a cuppa and get settled in, or logged-on for online groups. Don't worry if you're running late - just join us when you can. There is no charge to attend, or for refreshments at face-to-face groups.



There will always be a trained group facilitator (usually two), who will be wearing a yellow 'Happy Mums' lanyard, or have a 'Happy Mums' background on their screen. Their job is to make you feel comfortable and safe during the group, so find them first and let them guide you.



One of the ways which we keep our online groups safe, is by asking you to register your interest via our website ([www.happymums.org.uk](http://www.happymums.org.uk)). You will receive an email on the morning of the group with the login details. At face-to-face groups you'll be asked to sign-in on our attendance sheet and provide some basic contact information (you don't need to register for these groups although you can if you wish).



There may be anywhere between 2 and 8 women in a group.





Most mums will have their babies, toddler and/or pre-school child(ren) with them. At face-to-face groups we provide toys to keep the little ones entertained!



Before starting, the facilitators will read through the 'Group Agreement', which is also displayed on the wall during face-to-face groups, and shared on screen when we're online. You will have the chance to add anything you think is missing, or ask for clarification about anything you don't understand. This agreement is a set of 'rules' which shapes how the support groups are run. Each group has a slightly different agreement because it is developed by the members and reflects their priorities. You can see an example of a support group agreement on our website [happymums.org.uk/support-groups-for-mums](http://happymums.org.uk/support-groups-for-mums)



When everyone is happy with the group agreement, the facilitators will invite someone to start the discussion. This will usually be a member of the group who has been attending for a while, or the facilitators themselves.



Each person who attends gets the chance to share with the group - as much or as little as they wish. Some women talk about what they've been doing since the last group, others will go into more detail about their mental health, feelings and challenges. You don't have to say anything if you don't want to! Sometimes just listening is enough, especially for your first few sessions. The facilitators are responsible for keeping to time.



Once everyone has had the chance to share their experiences, the facilitators will round-off the group by asking everyone to confirm they are OK to leave. The facilitators will be available for around 1 hour after the group (in person or by email/phone) to support anyone who feels the discussion has triggered something challenging for them. They will be able to signpost you to further support if necessary.



# How we measure our impact

From time-to-time we will ask you to complete a questionnaire. The information we collect is made anonymous and reported back to our grant-funders. It helps us to demonstrate the positive impact the support groups have for women who attend.

**Completing the questionnaires we send you is entirely optional.**

When you first start coming to a support group we will ask you to complete a 'mood survey' which uses questions from the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale to assess your feelings during the of the previous two weeks. We then ask you to complete this questionnaire again approximately every six weeks.

We will either give you a paper copy of the questionnaire at a support group, or send you a link via email to fill it in it online. Either way, it will take approximately five minutes to complete.

Additionally, every three months, we will send you a second questionnaire to complete which will ask for information relating to equality and diversity. There is also the opportunity to share your story to provide hope to other women, if this is something you would like to do.

If you have any questions or concerns about the questionnaires, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the team.

# Data and your privacy

In order to run support groups we need to collect some information about you (data). We are careful to only collect data that we really need, and to process, store and destroy it lawfully.

We ask for your basic details and contact information (eg. name, email, phone number etc) when you attend a support group for the first time, and record each time that you attend. This is so that we can contact you about the groups, and report anonymously on the number of women who receive our support.

Any information you choose to provide to us through additional surveys and questionnaires is only collected and processed with your consent. You can withdraw your consent at any time. This information is anonymised before being used to report to our funders about the impact we are having.

Our 'Privacy Notice (Beneficiaries)' provides more detail about how we manage the data and privacy of people who use our support groups. You can get a copy from our website **[www.happymums.org.uk/privacy](http://www.happymums.org.uk/privacy)** or ask your group facilitator.





# Happy Mums Shop



[happymums.org.uk/shop](http://happymums.org.uk/shop)



# Notes





# Notes

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## **The Happy Mums Foundation CIC**

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Carlisle CA4 8AD

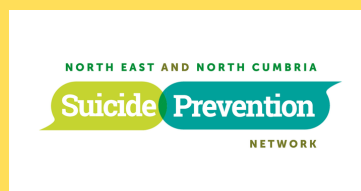
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