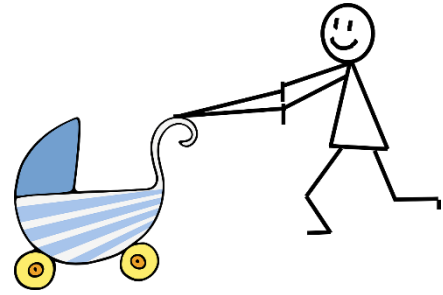


Bumps and Babies

Nurturing mums and infants through pregnancy and the first year of the baby's life



Bumps and Babies groups are significantly different to toddler groups. Here the focus is primarily on the needs of the mother during this significant time in the life of both developing child and parent. They are particularly valuable for first time mums, especially where modern-day living often means that extended family are far away and expectant parents may find themselves with a very limited support network. Some bumps and babies groups include dads and carers, some focus only on the new mum.



The environment should be calm and relaxing, encouraging mums to talk and listen to one another and develop a friendship group who mutually support one another. Often a circle of chairs is put around a central soft area for babies. It is usual for the group only to have babies/under 1s present as toddlers bring a very different dynamic to the group.



It is a perfect opportunity to involve some of the older members of the church community as unlimited baby-cuddlers and grandparent-figures who can offer a listening ear and maybe even some wisdom if approached. It is also good to provide drinks – hot drinks should be away from the babies, obviously, or in non-spill cups – and biscuits. Facilities should be made available for parents to change their babies safely and hygienically and they should be encouraged that this is a safe place to feed the baby too. It's a good idea to have some

spares for nappy changes and some spare clothes in case of accidents as the new parent may still be finding it difficult to remember everything that they should pack.

Because it is quite uncommon for a new parent to be totally organised and punctual .. or for a new baby to fit into a strict schedule – they have far more important things on their mind – it is good to make it a drop-in session rather than strictly timed. You may or may not choose occasionally to have a speaker or a joint activity but try to make this in the middle of the session so people are not worried about missing it.



If your church does not have the volunteers to run the group, the premises can still be offered to the NCT who may choose to come and run a group there. <https://www.nct.org.uk/local-activities-meet-ups/local-parent-support> They also have a database of local groups so you could refer a new mum to their website if you don't run a bumps and babies group of your own.

