

# FAB

FAMILIES AND BABIES



# Impact Report

Empowering families with evidence-based breastfeeding support for health and wellbeing

# CONTENTS

Welcome	3
Our mission and how we achieve it	4
The FAB Wakefield offer	5
Breastfeeding support & community engagement: A positive impact on families	6
FAB Courses: Empowering Families and Communities	7
Breastfeeding support in action	8
Our stories	12
Our challenges	15
Meet our leadership and team	16
Supporter thanks	17
Donate	18



# Welcome

**We are thrilled to share the impact of Families and Babies (FAB) over the past year, as we continue our vital work supporting families in their breastfeeding journeys.**

FAB is proud to be commissioned by Wakefield Council to deliver the Breastfeeding Promotion and Community Peer Support Service. Our aim is to empower families across the district with evidence-based support, ensuring breastfeeding is a positive and fulfilling experience while helping to normalize breastfeeding in the community.

In addition, we are commissioned by Mid Yorks NHS Trust to provide breastfeeding support on the postnatal wards at Pinderfields Hospital. By offering guidance and encouragement from the very start, we help new families build confidence and give breastfeeding a strong foundation.

This year's report reflects the dedication and impact of our team, partners, and the many families we've supported. Thank you for being part of this important journey with us. Together, we are making a difference for the health and well-being of families across Wakefield and beyond.

**The following pages outline our achievements. Thank you for taking the time to find out more.**

# Our mission and how we achieve it

At Families and Babies (FAB), we believe in the strength of mums supporting other mums. Our mission is to empower families with evidence-based breastfeeding support and to promote healthy infant feeding choices. By working closely with health professionals and providing peer support services led by trained mums, we are committed to protecting, promoting, and normalizing breastfeeding within communities.



## How We Achieve This:

- **Recruitment:** We actively recruit local mums as both paid and volunteer peer supporters, ensuring that our service offers genuine peer-to-peer support.
- **Training:** All our peer supporters receive accredited breastfeeding peer support training, equipping them with the skills and confidence needed to offer effective and compassionate guidance.
- **Collaboration:** We work with health professionals to provide breastfeeding advice and support that is accurate, evidence-based, and follows best practices. This teamwork helps ensure effective referrals when extra care or support is needed.

Through these efforts, we create a supportive network for families, ensuring they have access to the tools and information needed to succeed in their breastfeeding journeys.

# THE FAB Wakefield Offer

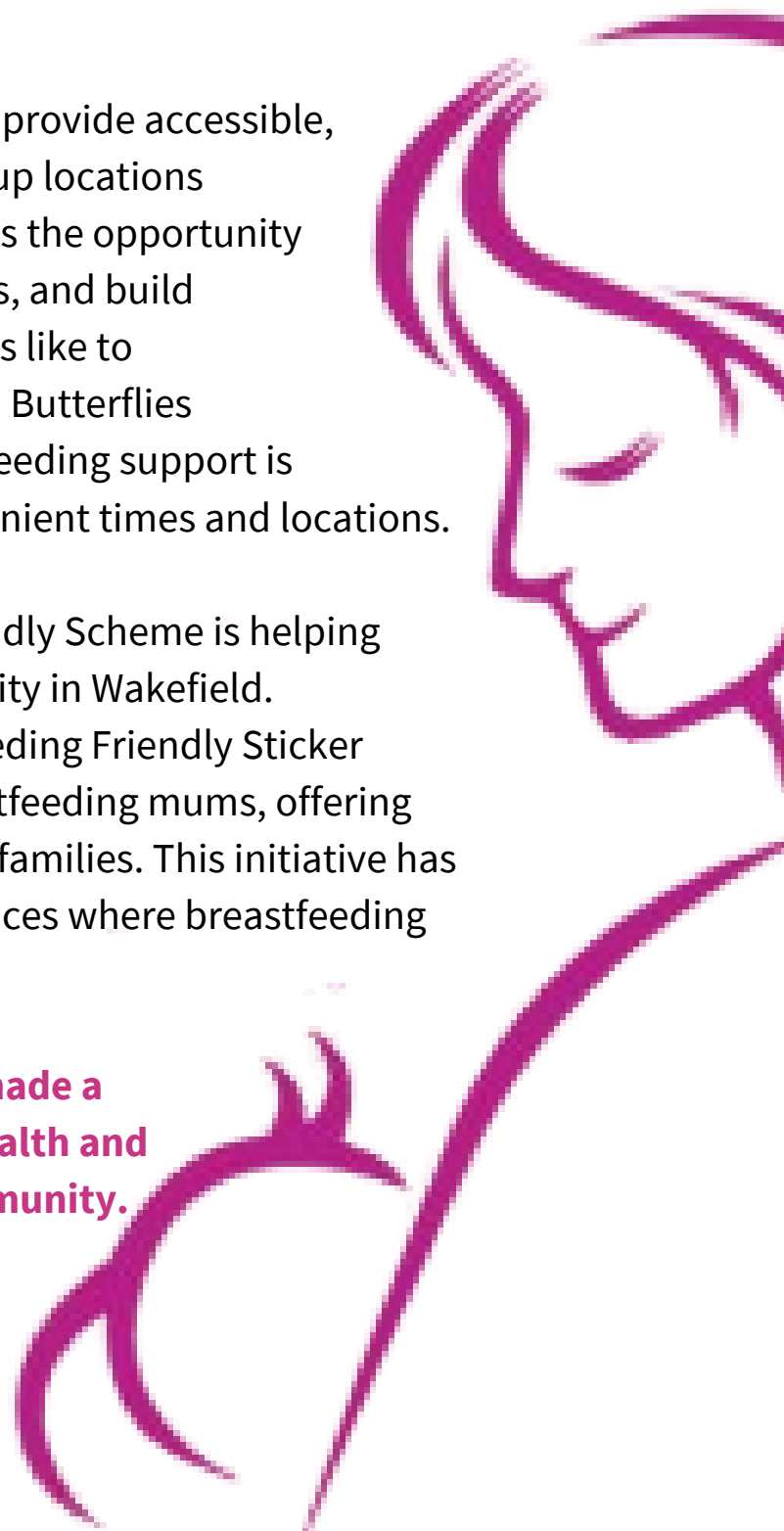
- **Antenatal Support:** FAB offers a range of antenatal support, including face-to-face group sessions, one-to-one support, and an online antenatal course to help parents prepare for breastfeeding.
- **Hospital Support:** Our team is present on the postnatal wards at Pinderfields Hospital from 9am to 3pm, and 6pm to 9pm, 7 days a week, assisting with breastfeeding positioning, hand expression, and early breastfeeding challenges.
- **One-to-One Community Support:** We provide one-to-one breastfeeding support to mums across Wakefield, offering home visits, weekly phone calls for up to six weeks, and additional in-person support when needed.
- **24-Hour Helpline:** Our free helpline, staffed by trained peer supporters, is available 24/7, 365 days a year, to assist with any breastfeeding concerns, providing reassurance and guidance.
- **FAB Facebook Group:** An online community for parents to connect, share experiences, and receive virtual support from peer supporters like “Annie Milk,” along with access to helpful breastfeeding resources.
- **Breastfeeding Support Groups:** Weekly in-person groups are available in local communities, where mums can connect with peers, receive support, and gain information about services offered by Family Hubs, such as baby clinics and parent groups.
- **Volunteering Opportunities:** FAB offers accredited training and volunteering roles for those interested in supporting breastfeeding families, providing valuable experience for future career opportunities.
- **Breast Pump Loan Scheme:** A limited number of breast pumps are available for short-term loan by referral, helping mums access essential breastfeeding equipment when needed.

# Breastfeeding Support and Community Engagement: A Positive Impact on Families

Our Breastfeeding Peer Supporters provide accessible, welcoming support at multiple group locations across the district, giving new mums the opportunity to receive advice, share experiences, and build connections. With sessions at places like to Ferrybridge Community Centre and Butterflies Family Hub, we ensure that breastfeeding support is available without barriers, at convenient times and locations.

In addition, our Breastfeeding Friendly Scheme is helping to create a more inclusive community in Wakefield. Businesses displaying the Breastfeeding Friendly Sticker are committed to supporting breastfeeding mums, offering a safe, welcoming environment for families. This initiative has expanded the number of public spaces where breastfeeding is encouraged and respected.

**Together, these programs have made a positive, lasting impact on the health and well-being of families in our community.**



# FAB Courses: Empowering Families and Communities

We are proud to offer valuable online courses designed to support new families and promote successful breastfeeding practices.

## **Antenatal Course**

Our antenatal classes and online antenatal breastfeeding course provides evidence-based information on bonding with your baby, breastfeeding techniques, and preparing for the early days. With helpful videos on breastfeeding positions and hand expression, plus interactive quizzes, the course is designed to support you in navigating life with a newborn. It's completely free for Wakefield residents, making it an accessible resource for expectant parents and their families.

## **Breastfeeding Peer Supporter Training**

Our accredited training program equips women who have breastfed with the knowledge and skills to support other families. Over 11 sessions and 9 assessments conducted over 8 weeks, participants receive comprehensive training, with tutorial support available through email, phone, or video calls. We also offer discounts for organisations with 10 or more learners or students with a union card.

By offering these courses, we empower individuals to become knowledgeable advocates for breastfeeding, fostering a supportive community for new parents.



# Breastfeeding Support in Action

## **Extended Hours:**

FAB Peer Supporters assist at Pinderfields from 9 AM to 3 PM and 6 PM to 9 PM daily.

## **Impressive Reach:**

Since Jan 1 2023, support has been provided to 2,151 mothers at Pinderfields Hospital.

## **Inclusive Care:**

Support extends to mothers from outside the Wakefield District.

## **Comprehensive Support:**

Bedside assistance includes skin-to-skin, hand expression, and positioning.

## **Breastfeeding Tips:**

Support on breast pumps, newborn behaviour, and cluster feeding.

## **Holistic Help:**

Includes nappy output, responsiveness, and cup feeding.

# Breastfeeding Support in Action

## **Emotional Support:**

Offer emotional guidance and safe sleep practices.

## **Ongoing Support:**

660 mothers referred to FAB post-discharge for continued assistance.

## **High Initiation:**

All referred mothers initiated breastfeeding and consented to support.

## **Successful Outcomes:**

82% still breastfeeding at 10 days; 61% at 6 weeks.

## **Building Confidence:**

Immediate support boosts mothers' breastfeeding confidence.

## **Empowering Mums:**

FAB support empowers mothers to continue breastfeeding after hospital discharge.

# Success Stories and Testimonials

*“I was at breaking point when Lisa\* from FAB visited me on ward. She listened and gave me breast feeding advice and support. I was struggling mentally and physically after an emergency c section just 2 days before and I was doubting my ability. After talking things through I decided to have another go at breast feeding whilst Lisa\* was there for support and I enjoyed the breast feeding experience and felt confident again.”*



*“Emma’s\* approach to both my wife and I couldn't be faulted. She is an asset to your team and is clearly suited to the hospital support role (and very obviously loves what she does!)”*



*“Hannah\* and Julia\* have been so friendly and helpful, offering support whilst I have been an inpatient and visiting me throughout my stay, they made me feel like I could do anything.”*



*“FAB have been amazing, I was visited on the ward after having my baby. They gave me great support and helped me tweak a few things to start my breastfeeding journey. My child is 3 months old today and she is exclusively breastfed. I was contacted weekly and invited to breastfeeding group. What an amazing service.”*

# Success Stories and Testimonials



*“Just wanted to specifically name Anne\*, who saw us at Pinderfields hospital. She was so lovely, informative and understanding of our situation offering techniques with demonstration on approach she help us utilise both breasts as baby had a favourite and also helped us secure a better latch to feed our baby. The whole experience with Anne felt personalised and we really appreciate all her help and advice! Thanks from baby Liam!”*

*“The thing that helped was being able to speak to someone the evening of my daughters birth as she wasn’t latching. when I saw the FAB lady she was so reassuring and helped get my daughter latched then I saw another lady who was just as helpful and kind the next morning.”*



*“The daily presence at the hospital is so great.”*



*“Leah\* was absolutely lovely, patient and compassionate to our situation (long hospital stay following a diagnosis of meningitis). She took time out of her evening to ensure we felt supported.”*

*“I was really unsure about breastfeeding having never known anyone to do it but after speaking to fab on the ward and then receiving a phone call and a visit I am determined I am going to give my baby breastmilk for at least 6 months.”*



# Our Stories



Breastfeeding can be both rewarding and challenging. Behind every success is a network of support, offering guidance, practical advice, and encouragement. From healthcare professionals to peer supporters, and from families to the broader community, these efforts make a significant difference.

In this section, we share real stories of the families we have worked with—stories that highlight the impact of practical support and informed choices. Each one reflects the determination of mothers and the value of accessible, responsive care.

Our goal remains clear: to ensure that every mother has the information, confidence, and support she needs to make the best decisions for herself and her baby. These stories are a reminder of the progress we've made and the continued importance of collaboration in improving breastfeeding outcomes.

# FAB Helped Me Breastfeed and Inspired Me to Give Back

“When I had my daughter, I wasn't sure I wanted to breastfeed. However, once she was here that changed overnight. We had struggles latching to begin with and some poor advice from some healthcare assistants at the hospital. But then FAB came in, they showed me how to hand express, pump and cup feed - so latching issues weren't the end of our journey.

FAB loaned me a pump so I could continue to express at home and as a solo mum this was a godsend! It was found that my daughter had tongue-tie, which was causing her to not be able to latch. I also had a lot of blood loss at birth and throughout the first few weeks, which resulted in problems with my health - throughout this, I was determined to feed. The amazing Hayley came out to see me and this changed everything. I was using nipple shields and just generally struggling. But Hayley listened to me - for what I felt like was the first time anyone had. She let me cry, made me laugh and then gave me the support I needed.

Hayley helped me get off nipple shields and taught me what was normal, what to expect and just told me that I was doing a good job. I think every new mum needs to hear this. And here we are still breastfeeding two years later!

When my daughter was a few months old I decided I wanted to give back to a service that gave me so much. I trained as a Peer Supporter through FAB and started helping out at a Breastfeeding Group. This then led to me applying for a job within FAB, where I have supported countless mums and hopefully passed on some of the support that was given to me. I feel that I personally have made an impact on some of the new mums' lives and that is all because of the support given to me by FAB in those first few weeks of my daughter's life. “



# From Challenges to Success

“I met Claire on my first week working for FAB. She had been to our antenatal classes & felt prepared but feeding was painful. We went out for a home visit when Thea was just a week old, after the home visit things went on the up for Claire and Thea - weight gain was slow but she was gaining.

However, Claire came along to a group when Thea was around eight to ten weeks and breastfeeding had been significantly harder for the last couple of weeks. Claire was worried that Thea had a breast aversion. When we discussed what was happening it seemed more like a growth spurt, which was expected around this age. However, with Thea's slow weight gain, she had been referred to the Infant Feeding Team. Thea was put on a feeding plan and it was discovered she had tongue-tie, which had been missed. Claire struggled with this for a while but came to group each week where I could give her emotional support and work on her positioning and attachment to make sure that Thea was getting as much as she could from Claire herself. Claire was amazing, she did everything she could to continue breastfeeding Thea despite all that was happening.

Thea finally had her tongue-tie cut at four months old and feeding became so much easier. Thea gained weight and Claire is still breastfeeding a year on! She has done such a fantastic job - she puts this down to the support from FAB, the peer supporters and the friends she made at group (although I think she owes herself a lot more credit than that!).”

Here is a message from Claire herself regarding the service:





“I always wanted to breastfeed ever since finding out I was pregnant. However, an undiagnosed tongue tie, slow weight gain and misinformation from professionals left me on the verge of giving up. If it hadn't been for Jade and her Hemsworth group, I'm not sure I'd have continued. Jade's endless support has allowed me to feed exclusively for almost a year now, a goal that seemed so far away at the start. Jade listened, empathised and gave relevant advice and I genuinely cannot thank her and FAB enough. Jade is fantastic at what she does and a complete asset not only to FAB but the breastfeeding community. FAB simply are that, fab!”



# Our challenges



While celebrating our achievements, we acknowledge the challenges ahead:

-  **Financial uncertainty:** The increase in minimum wage has put a strain on commissioned services.
-  **Breastfeeding rates:** Wakefield has had very low breastfeeding rates for many years and it is a major challenge to change this societal norm.
-  **Commercial influence:** The advertising and promotion of formula milk can undermine parents belief and confidence in breastfeeding.
-  **Awareness:** The low numbers of parents accessing antenatal education is a challenge as families may not be making informed choices about infant feeding

# Meet Our Leadership and Team

My name is Elaine Edwards, and I am the Chair and Founder of Families and Babies, which I started 20 years ago. I was a working single parent when I became pregnant with my daughter in 2003. Just like many other mums, I struggled to get breastfeeding support that was tailored to me. I was inspired to pursue my vision to help support other mums who are struggling with breastfeeding; most parents know that “breast is best” when it comes to feeding your baby, but it doesn’t always come naturally. We have worked hard to develop our support through training and empowering local mums to support others and I am immensely proud of all our staff and volunteers and the dedication they show to each and every mum they come into contact with.

Rachel Wilson	Operations Manager
Sharon Hughes	Branch Manager
Jade Wright	Admin Manager
Millie Barker	Admin Apprentice
Sarah Colley	BFI Lead
Sara Keane	Targeted Intervention Worker
Emma Krasinska	Volunteer & Events Co-ordinator
Haley, Sarah, Tammy, Gayle, Emma, Joanna, Lynsey	Community Peer Support Staff
Serena, Rachel, Ozma, Gemma, Bex, Tammy	Ward Peer Support Staff
Millie, Toni, Bex	Retail Staff

# Supporter Thanks

In a time of economic uncertainty and social challenges, the role of FAB in Wakefield is more important than ever. At the heart of our service lies the belief in the power of mums supporting other mums. Your support enables us to empower women through evidence-based peer support training, allowing them to work alongside health professionals and provide the breastfeeding support that families and babies truly need.

Through our commitment to sharing reliable information, we help families make informed infant feeding choices, ensuring that effective support is always available. Together, we are fostering a community where mothers can thrive and support one another on their breastfeeding journeys.

As we look to the future, we remain steadfast in our vision: to protect, promote, and support breastfeeding through a peer support service run by mums, for mums. Thank you for being an essential part of this mission. Your contributions make a meaningful difference in the lives of families and help build a healthier future for generations to come.

We would like to acknowledge the support from the following organisations:

- Public Health, Wakefield Council
- Mid Yorkshire NHS Trust

We thank you for your  
continued support

# Donate

**Your donation will help us support more mothers in Wakefield to breastfeed.**

**Donations to support our work can be made through our website or through donations to our shop, which supports the service by selling pre-loved items and our bespoke merchandise.**



# FAB

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Would you like to know more about us? Contact us today:



<https://familiesandbabies.org.uk/locations/wakefield>



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