

Food Safety and Hygiene
&

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Team baby: A partner's guide to supporting breastfeeding**Emma Pickett**

Association of Breastfeeding Mothers, UK

Infant feeding and breastfeeding are priorities for anyone concerned about food safety and often overlooked – in healthcare professional training and by politicians and decision-makers. The 2016 Lancet series on breastfeeding identified the UK as having one of the lowest breastfeeding rates in the world. 90% of UK mothers say they are not able to breastfeed for as long as they wished. This leaves them at significantly greater risk of mental health issues and both the mother and baby are at greater risk of a wide range of health problems.

The 2016 Lancet series reminded us: “Increasing breastfeeding to near-universal levels for infants and young children could save over 800,000 children’s lives a year worldwide, equivalent to 13% of all deaths in children under two, and prevent an extra 20000 deaths from breast cancer every year.” And crucially, these lives are not only saved in developing countries but around the world.

Why is breastfeeding in the UK in crisis? Mothers are not failing;

they are being failed. Mothers may be in an area where the local authority has cut breastfeeding support. Families may be confused about normal newborn behaviour and perceived insufficient milk supply is a widespread problem. They may struggle to meet health care professionals who have the resources to help them. The online course, “Team baby: A partner’s guide to supporting breastfeeding” aims to address some of these issues. What has the Association of Breastfeeding Mothers learnt in our 40 years of supporting new families?

Speaker Biography

After a career as a Deputy Headteacher in central London, Emma Pickett initially trained with the Association of Breastfeeding Mothers (abm.me.uk), qualifying as a breastfeeding counsellor with them in 2007. She is currently their chair. She qualified as a Board-Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) in 2011, recertifying in 2016. She has supported families at groups in North London for 10 years and answers calls on the National Breastfeeding Helpline.

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