



JOB DESCRIPTION

Position:	Peer Support Worker – Thurrock Family Hub Start for Life Programme
Hours:	35 hours per week
Salary & Benefits:	£21,548 (£23,088 FTE) Holiday entitlement 28 days per annum pro-rata plus bank holidays NEST work-based pension scheme.
Location:	Flexible working based in Thurrock family hubs with additional travel (mainly Thurrock area) Some home working
Key contacts:	Joined up working with Thurrock Family Hub services. Vulnerable expectant and new parents and their babies/children, peer support volunteers, midwives, perinatal mental health services, parent/infant relationship services, health visitors, social workers, and voluntary sector workers, early years and family support workers, potential and new volunteers, Parents 1st staff team.
Reports to:	Parents 1st Programme Manager (Perinatal Peer Support), Thurrock Family Hubs Start for Life Initiative
Responsible for:	Developing and delivering peer support for mothers, fathers and birthing people during pregnancy and post birth as part of the Thurrock Family Hub transformation programme

Staff have an individual responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults; to be an advocate for their rights, to be listened to and to be safe

Outline of the Post

This exciting new post will form part of a new peer support worker team with the aim of supporting the best start for babies in Thurrock through extending Parents 1st existing

Pregnancy Pal and Birth Buddy programme. The new Start for Life programme in Thurrock involves the development of 3 new Family Hubs. This new peer support role will embrace a joined-up way of working with the new Family Hubs so that parents can easily access and benefit from the services they offer. The post holder will be aligned to one specific Family Hub. Informal peer support will aim to enable parents to improve their emotional and physical wellbeing during pregnancy, prepare for labour and birth, and will support them to become confident parents.

The Family Hubs Model has 3 principles:

- **Access:** a clear, simple point of access for help and support
- **Connection:** services, professionals and sectors working together
- **Relationships:** building on family strengths

Summary of Purpose

1. Working in partnership with Family Hubs, maternity, perinatal mental health services and VCS organisations to offer peer support, starting in pregnancy, to all first-time mothers, expectant fathers and birthing people, and parents who are vulnerable expecting subsequent babies.
2. Engaging socially isolated parents and those experiencing language, cultural or mental health issues to provide 1:1 and group peer support in the home, hospital, community, and virtually.
3. Use the Parents 1st model to support a caseload of vulnerable parents starting as early as possible in pregnancy and through the early months of a baby's life.
4. Supporting parents to feel confident and empowered to access Family Hub services and give their feedback
5. Share information about pregnancy, birth and parenting, to enable parents to make informed choices
6. Offer flexible peer support relevant to individual needs via a variety of mediums such as face to face, text and WhatsApp, online groups and information sessions.
7. Deliver outreach activities to engage with families, to assist with recruiting volunteers, and to encourage involvement in Family Hub activities
8. Supported signposting and advocacy to raise awareness of services available to parents, and how to access them and to help increase access rates to specialist services when needed.

You will be supported by the Parents 1st Programme Manager and wider staff team.

Key tasks:

1. Carrying out a variety of regular community activities that engage with expectant parents

- Seek out, set-up and deliver regular activities in the community that provide opportunities to introduce the programme informally to expectant mothers,

fathers and birthing people e.g., face-to-face introduction at antenatal clinics / Family hubs or outreach visits to families in the home or living in temporary accommodation

- Build relationships with local midwives, perinatal mental health practitioners, health visitors, Family Hub practitioners, voluntary sector agencies etc, to encourage joined up working through meeting them in person, enabling understanding of complementary roles, and keeping them supplied with promotional materials, and providing them with regular updates by e-mail, phone etc.
- Identify and ensure up to date information is held about local services, facilities and activities available to expectant and new parents in the local area so that peer supporters can enable parents to benefit from them
- Contribute new ideas to engage with vulnerable and isolated parents
- Contribute to marketing and promotion under the direction of the Programme Manager e.g., developing materials, press, radio, social media
- Assist in promoting the programme by posting and moderating our Facebook and social media pages under the guidance of the manager
- Carry out other duties in line with the responsibilities of the post
- Run face to face and virtual peer support group sessions

2. Deliver regular outreach activities in the community to introduce expectant parents to each other and share evidence-based information with them,

- Establish a space (e.g., alongside antenatal clinics and Family hubs) where several expectant parents can access information and have opportunities to meet informally.
- Share evidence-based resources focused on pregnancy, birth and caring for, and bonding with a baby
- Support the expectant parents to continue to meet or stay in contact with each other for mutual support.
- Increase awareness and knowledge for families to decrease the stigma and fear associated with asking for help or support

3. Delivering peer-to-peer support to a caseload of vulnerable parents starting in pregnancy

- Provide regular semi-structured home visits to a caseload of families as required starting as early as possible in pregnancy and continuing post birth using the Parents 1st materials and strengths-based, solution focused approach
- Ensure information and resources shared with parents are up to date, appropriate and evidence based
- Ensure the programme data collection tools are completed accurately and submitted on time
- Encourage parents to navigate and benefit from services available to them, assisting them to take the 'first step' if necessary
- Contact the Programme Manager if a family requires further help, and take appropriate action if the well-being of an adult, unborn baby, or child could be at risk
- Regularly reflect on the progress of the support delivered to each family by completing reflective diaries, and participating in regular one-to-one and peer group supervision sessions
- Work closely with the peer support worker for fathers to encourage fathers to access peer support appropriate to their needs

Important note:

This role does not include the requirement to support families during labour and birth. Such additional support, if needed, will be drawn from the Parents 1st volunteer peer support base.

4. Supporting the day-to-day delivery of the Parents 1st programme as required.

- Carrying out some initial assessment visits for parents referred for Pregnancy Pal or Birth Buddy Support, following all procedures, policies and agreed ways of working.
- To work alongside the programme delivery team ensuring streamlined and successful delivery of the programme.

General tasks and responsibilities of all Parents 1st staff

- To follow Parents 1st policies and procedures including professional boundaries, lone working, equality, and diversity.
- To alert the Safeguarding Lead to any adult or child protection concerns.
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all users, staff, and volunteers through risk assessments for all activities and home visits.
- To be familiar with and apply Parents 1st's procedures at all times within your work and to attend training in these areas
- To contribute to the accountability of Parents 1st through assisting in the maintenance of agreed records including statistics, registers, risk assessment records, evaluations, data collection, financial transactions etc.
- To assist other team members as required, especially if joint visits are necessary
- To be proactive in ensuring that Parents 1st's Equal Opportunities policy is applied to all aspects of the work
- To be aware of and follow Parents 1st's Combined Safeguarding Adults and Children policy and procedures and attend regular training
- To follow lone working guidelines and procedures and use the lone working app provided by Parents 1st.
- To attend regular staff meetings and supervision as required
- To attend training associated with the post as required
- To ensure that appropriate confidentiality is maintained

NB This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and is subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check. When shortlisting we are looking to interview people who show on their application from that they meet the criteria and competencies listed below. Priority is given to the essential criteria. We will use the interview and assessment process to explore this further and to cover those areas that cannot be shown on a written application.

The Health & Safety at Work Act (1974) and other legislation places responsibilities for Health & Safety on all employees. Therefore, it is the post holder's responsibility to take reasonable care for the Health and Welfare of him/herself and other employees in accordance with legislation, policy and Programme. Where the post holder is disabled every effort will be made to supply all the necessary employment aids, equipment or adaptations to enable him/her to perform the full duties of the job. If however, a certain task proves to be non-achievable then job redesign will be given full consideration.

It is the responsibility of the individual to inform the Chief Executive Officer of Parents 1st (in strictest confidence) of their medical history and any changes, which could affect their work duties.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Qualifications	Essential / Desirable
Level 3 qualification relevant to the post or willing to work towards during the first year in post	Essential
Knowledge and understanding of	
Pregnancy, childbirth, the transition to parenthood, and secure infant attachment	Essential
The value of peer support and how it differs but complements the support provided by professionals	Essential
The role of services for expectant parents, children, young people and families	Essential
Confidentiality and data protection	Essential
The importance of reflection and supervision	Essential
Experience of	
Supporting parents with a diverse range of needs through pregnancy and the first three months	Desirable
Building trusting peer relationships with vulnerable parents that enable parents to find their own way forward	Desirable
Successfully engaging with vulnerable parents and expectant and new parents from different communities and backgrounds	Desirable
Volunteering and peer support	Desirable
Skills	
Time management and organisational skills including ability to independently schedule regular home visits in response to identified parent needs	Essential
Well-developed skills in using a strengths-based, solution focused and empowering approach that avoids dependency	Essential
Excellent active listening skills	Essential
Basic literacy and numeracy skills and good verbal communication skills	Essential
IT skills (MS Office – Word, Outlook, Explorer and social media)	Essential
Values	
Fully committed to using an empowering, early preventative and strengths-based approach to supporting parents	Essential
Fully committed to equal opportunities, including anti-racism and anti-discriminatory practice	Essential
Absolute commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults, ensuring their needs are addressed/listened to	Essential
Comfortable with the Parents 1 st ethos, approach and working environment	Essential

Circumstances	
Has a driving licence, access to own transport and able to travel to a variety of locations	Essential
Willing to undertake relevant additional training	Essential
Able to work flexible hours as required including occasional evenings/weekends	Essential