

THE
BABY
Café™

1. Basic facts about Baby Cafés

In 2004 there were 42 Baby Cafés open. By September 2005 there were 70 registered.

In a year mothers made 16,500 visits to Baby Cafés across the country.

Last year we supported at least 1800 individual breastfeeding mothers plus 200 antenatally.

Last year there were 1600 Baby Café sessions run. This year, there will be at least 2000 plus any that open during the year.

The national network of 42 Baby Cafés provided 80 hours of support per week. That's over 4000 hours per year, and increasing all the time.

2. Staffing and funding

Baby Cafés are run by over 80 paid staff and 50 volunteers. That is a total of 130 people, of whom 40% are volunteers. Two thirds of Baby Cafés run sessions with two paid staff on at a time, the number of volunteers seems to vary between one and three. Table 1 shows the different kinds of staff; 90% of Cafés have more than one type of staff.

Type of staff	% of BCs which have
Midwife	71%
Health visitor	68%
Peer supporter	50%
LLL/NCT b'feed counsellor	32%
Nursery Nurse	25%
Lactation consultant	14%

90% of Baby Cafés have more than one different kind of staff.
Table 1: Types of staff

Funding	%
Sure Start or Health Action Zone	46%
Both SureStart/ HAZ and PCT	11%
PCT	32%
Neither SureStart/HAZ nor PCT	11%

NE some Baby Cafés receive other funding in addition to their Sure Start/PCT funding
Table 2: Sources of funding

More than half of all Baby Cafés (57% in total) receive some funding from Sure Start or a Health Action Zone, indicating that they are located in socially disadvantaged areas.



3. Attendances: how many and why?

(See Section 1: Basic Facts for general numbers)

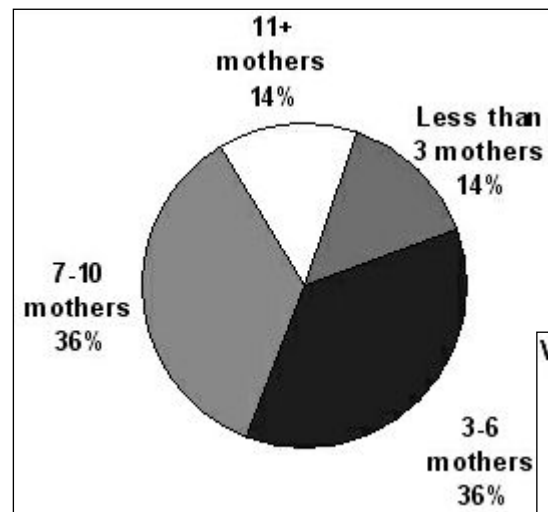


Chart 1: Average attendances per session

72% of Baby Cafés have an average of between three and ten mothers visiting per week.

Overall the figures show that mothers tend to come back to their Baby Café. 70% of mothers visit more than once, with 40% attending more than four times.

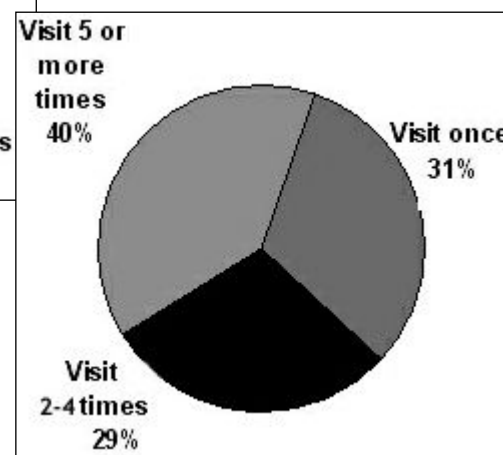


Chart 2: Number of visits by mothers

Chart 3 shows the issues which Baby Cafés reported mothers brought to them either 'constantly' or 'frequently'.

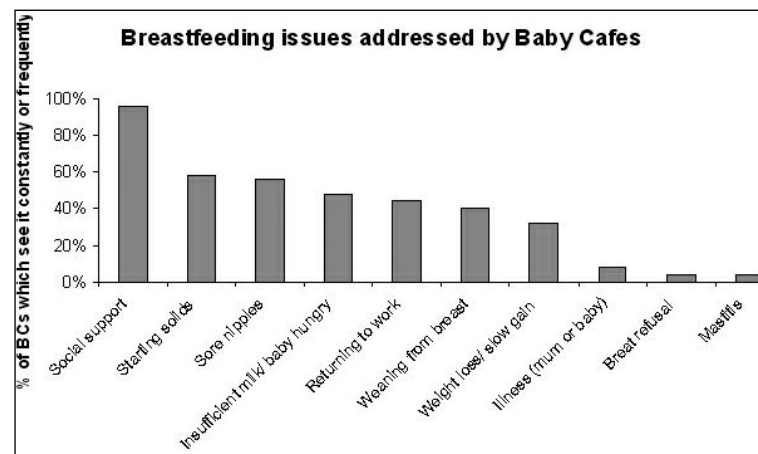


Chart 3: Problems addressed by Baby Cafés

4. Mothers' opinions of their Baby Café.

Of the 200 mothers who responded to satisfaction surveys, 80% thought their Baby Café was 'Very helpful' and the remainder said it was 'Helpful'.

There are some general themes which appear time and time again in mothers' comments. Mothers especially value the following aspects of Baby Cafés:



- friendliness
- helpfulness
- informality
- good advice
- support from professionals
- support from other mothers
- giving confidence to feed in public
- meeting other mothers
- a place to go to feed

(See back page for direct quotes.)

5. Projects and initiatives carried out by Baby Cafés

Baby Cafés were asked about any specific projects or initiatives they have carried out.

The most commonly reported project was peer support, with over half of all Baby Cafés doing it already or planning to do so soon.

The next most common project was pump hire or discounted sales with about a third of Baby Cafés offering this service.

Many Baby Cafés have visiting speakers; examples of subjects being real nappies, dental health, speech and language, and weaning.

Another common activity is developing a local guide to breastfeeding friendly places to go.

Some of the more unusual and innovative projects undertaken by Baby Cafés include: Tibetan head massage (for mums!), baby massage, healthy cooking sessions, paediatric homeopathy, loan of slings, 'Cuppa campaign' vouchers for mothers to exchange in cafés during Breastfeeding Awareness Week and the development of a text messaging service for mothers to ask for advice.

6. Publicity carried out by Baby Cafés

Over half of all Baby Cafés reported some kind of local press publicity, either for their launch or for another event such as a birthday party. About a third of Baby Cafés said they had gained some publicity during Breastfeeding Awareness Week.



Other publicity is aimed at health professionals via PCT publicity, visits or leaflets. Mothers are also targeted via advertising and leaflets at GP surgeries, clinics, hospitals, SureStart centres etc.

One Baby Café had a launch accompanied by a breastfeeding art installation. Several reported having local dignitaries such as the mayor attending.

7. Objectives

Baby Cafés were asked about their objectives for the next year. The three most common objectives concerned developing peer support programmes, increasing attendance generally and increasing antenatal visits.

8. Training

Baby Cafés were asked about any training needs they had identified. About two thirds mentioned that their staff and/or peer supporters had already undergone specialist professional training or were booked to do it.

Several Baby Cafés identified training needs around breastfeeding awareness and keeping up with the latest information.

9. Support from the national organisation

Baby Cafés were asked what they had found useful from the national organisation and what else they need.

The Professionals' Pack was seen as a very useful tool in setting up and running a Café, and many Baby Cafés mentioned the helpful support and advice they had received either in person, by phone or by e-mail. Also useful were visits to other Baby Cafés, newsletters, the website and just knowing the support is there if needed.

Specific areas that Baby Cafés would like the Charitable Trust to address are: helping hard to reach communities, procuring resources, visits and possibly supervision from national staff, sharing good practice on setting up webpages (i.e. for Sure Start) and networking good practice and sharing information between Cafés serving similar geographical, ethnic or social profiles.

"Baby Café is an invaluable support unit for new mothers who want to breastfeed. I would have given in and put my daughter on the bottle if it was not for the expert advice, help and support I received. Also the social support from meeting other new mothers helped as well. Keep up the good work and more Cafés please."



"A real lifeline at a time when we really needed it."

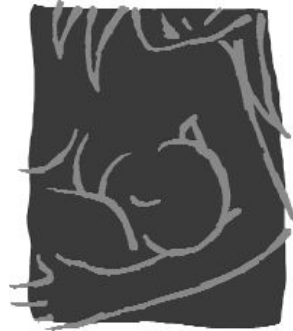
"Excellent idea"

"Much appreciated facility. I wish it had been there for my first baby."

"A haven"

"Very encouraging! Would definitely have given up breastfeeding without their help."

Comments from mothers:



THE BABY café™

"I had difficulty feeding, and the support I got helped me to continue."



"I've enjoyed the Baby Café, and found it extremely useful both in terms of advice from yourselves, and the opportunity to share experiences with other new mothers having similar problems."

"Thank you for being there for me in my hour of need."

"The Café was the first place I breastfed my baby in public."

"The Baby Café really helped with my post-natal depression."

"Invaluable"

"I did intend breastfeeding for a maximum of 6 weeks but the Café helped me continue (for 12 weeks)"

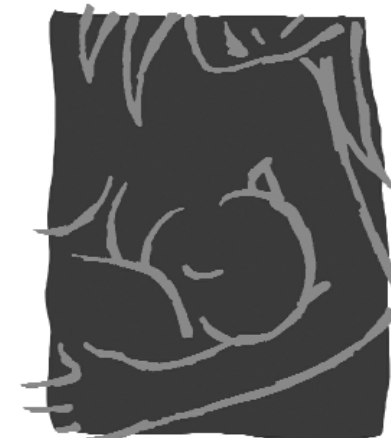
"A great facility"

"The staff are uniquely skilled and I felt very fortunate to have their guidance... if only such quality support were available more widely."

"I really missed it when I went back to work."

"I look forward to coming each week and meeting other breastfeeding mums. It's fun."

"Your support gave me the confidence to go back to work and carry on breastfeeding."



THE BABY café™

NATIONAL STATISTICS & FEEDBACK 2004



Baby Cafés are drop in centres providing a service for pregnant women, breastfeeding mums and their supporters.

They provide a place where breastfeeding is regarded as the normal way to feed a baby. Women can obtain up-to-date information about breastfeeding, from staff skilled in working with breastfeeding women, and have an opportunity to meet other breastfeeding mums. This all occurs in a relaxed, informal and non-clinical environment.

Piloted in 2000 the initiative has grown and evolved, and became a charitable trust in 2005.

This is the first annual national evaluation. Data was collated using a questionnaire sent to all registered Baby Cafés that were open at any time during 2004.

The Baby Café Charitable Trust
Registered Charity Number 1110358

www.thebabycafe.co.uk