

small steps



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for the latest
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**Baby and Toddler
activities**



Your free, local parenting magazine in Worcestershire 2011/12

www.smallstepsonline.co.uk

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it's my favourite thing to do

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Welcome to small steps

We are delighted to bring you the 2011/2012 edition for Worcester Small Steps, the free local magazine for parents of babies and young children aged 0-5 years. This is the 10th edition of the magazine and it's definitely the biggest (and we think the best) yet - we hope you will agree.

We have features on baby & toddler activities, education, safety tips, health & fitness, family recipes and many other useful topics. This edition also contains a great competition from Mini Marmalade on page 10 to win £20.00 in vouchers to spend online and we are also delighted to support our chosen charity

The Toy Library. Please see page 19 for how you can help them.

Small Steps Online is our new website full of information for parents including parenting tips and local & regional competitions. There is also an online events calendar where you can find activities and events taking place in your area. Take a look and join our online community by registering at www.smallstepsonline.co.uk. Also have a look at our Facebook and Twitter Profiles.

*We hope you enjoy reading our magazine
The Small Steps Team*

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Your amazing journey through pregnancy, labour, birth and beyond brings many changes to your body.

Massage in pregnancy may help:

- Release muscular pain and tension around the neck, shoulder, back, hips, legs, ankles and feet.
- Reduce swelling around the joints
- Regulate blood pressure and stress hormones.
- Improve circulation which means better nourishment for baby.
- Improve lymphatic circulation and removal of waste and oedema/swelling.
- Reduce sluggish bowel movements.
- Improve skin condition.
- Improve sleep quality.
- Enhance your relationship with your baby.
- Support breast feeding.

This can be both a magical yet confusing time for some pre-natal mums (and partners!) especially as extra pressure builds up on the joints, ligaments and organs causing discomfort. Problems such as morning sickness, feeling lethargic/tired, back pain, pelvic girdle pain, rectus diastasis or supine hypotensive disorder can occur.

However many women sail through pregnancy without anything more than morning sickness. Massage through the three trimesters, labour and post nately is safe, relaxing, calming and effective.

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www.worcester-acupuncture.com

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Swimming *with your baby*

Water Babies Worcestershire is under new ownership! Claire and Steve who have been running Water Babies in Wiltshire successfully for the last five years are very excited about this new opportunity!

Water Babies is the UK's leading baby swimming company, offering fun, innovative classes taught by world class instructors.

Teaching water confidence and safety techniques from birth, the multi-award winning Water Babies programme is designed to make the most of babies' natural affinity with water. With progressive training, babies can be taught life saving skills such as turning onto their backs or swimming to the nearest solid object following a sudden submersion. And it's so important that they do. Within the last two years, eight of our children nationally saved

themselves from drowning - despite three of them being only two.

Swimming from birth is excellent for babies' development, providing a complete physical workout which in turn aids the development of the brain. What's more, regular swimming can enhance their awareness and improve eating and sleeping patterns – a definite bonus!

With a clear emphasis on having fun, lessons are generally very sociable occasions – and excellent for strengthening the bond between the two of you.

And as the weeks go by, you'll love the thrill of seeing your children progress with the help of our professional instructors.

Water Babies lessons run across Worcestershire. For more information call us on **01793 337118** or visit **www.waterbabies.co.uk**

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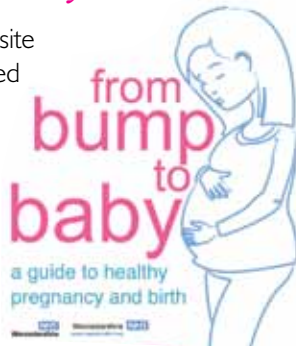
or Call 01746 764111 central booking line

Early scans @ 7 weeks, 16 week Gender scans, 4D ultrasound, NT scans

Support

during pregnancy & labour

A brand new website that was launched earlier this year by Worcestershire County Council is offering essential pregnancy, labour and early days information to expectant and new families all over the country.



Log on to the new website at: www.frombumptobaby.co.uk and benefit from a whole host of information categorised via the following three sections:

Pregnancy: This section gives basic and helpful information to support parents in having a healthy and fulfilling pregnancy. It also looks at the support that is available in Sure Start Children's Centres.

Labour and birth: The labour and birth section looks at the various options available during labour, including coping with the early stages of labour at home, and provides an illustrated 'story of birth' to help reassure expectant parents, as well as looking at the role of the birth partner.

Early days with a new baby: The final section includes information for the early days with a new baby; changing a nappy, bathing and breastfeeding.

We are hoping parents will use this website as a support throughout their pregnancy and even when they are in the early stages of labour too!

www.frombumptobaby.co.uk

Find out more online:
www.worcestershire.gov.uk/childrenscentres

worcestershire
county council

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Parent Partnership

Worcestershire Parent Partnership Service

Worcestershire Parent Partnership Service supports parents, carers and schools with:

Special Education Needs
Guidance on policy and procedures

Non-Curriculum Issues
Guidance on admissions, exclusions, bullying, attendance, etc

Information on elective home education

Telephone Helpline

Individual Support

Mediation

Support for Schools



Befrienders

Information/Events

Support Groups

Training

Signposting

The Parent Partnership Service is a statutory service at arm's length from the county council Children's Services and is able to give independent and neutral information and advice.

Contact Information Tel: 01905 727940
Email: ppservice@worcestershires.gov.uk
www.ppsworcs.co.uk

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Be Good To Your Baby, Reduce Waste, and Save Money – *Is This Really Possible?*

Yes! - It is possible to achieve all this by using real nappies, and they may not be as difficult or time consuming to use as you think.

Real Nappies have really changed over the last 15 years. Gone are the days of folding terries, struggling with safety pins and pulling uncomfortable rubbers on. Washable nappies are really easy to put on, many fitting just like a disposable. There is no more soaking and boiling, used nappies can be stored in a dry nappy bucket and washed in a machine at 60°C or 40°C, and if you do not have a tumble drier, no problem, some nappies are made of quick-drying and fluffy micro-terry which dry very quickly and stay really soft.

It is estimated a baby will produce approximately 130 bin bags full of waste if he or she is in disposables for 2.5 years. Due to the chemicals and plastics in disposables, every disposable that has been thrown away is still sitting in our landfill site, so using washable nappies really will help the environment by reducing waste.

An environmental agency report has also suggested that it is possible to reduce your household carbon emissions by upto 40% when using real nappies.

But the benefits do not stop there, importantly in this economic climate, real nappies will save you a substantial amount of money, and not only that, but once you have bought your nappies, you will have little to worry about, and this is not just for one baby as many types of nappy can be used for future babies. Also, disposables are full of chemicals, plastics and bleaching products (have you ever tried to understand the component list on a pack of disposables), however with real nappies, you know what materials you are using and how organic the products are. This allows for much kinder and more natural products being used against your baby's skin.

And finally, cloth nappies are made from a choice of materials to suit everyone, from hard wearing terry, or supersoft, absorbent and environmentally friendly bamboo or hemp to a quick drying micro-terry. There are also many different shapes and styles, and these offer some original and funky designs. All this means that usually people love talking about the real nappies that they are using, and many will happily show off their babies in their nappies and tell other mums about them – does anyone say how much they like using disposables?"

For more information go to
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www.jojingles.com/valeandteewkesbury

Exercise in pregnancy

We are encouraged to remain active and take light exercise during pregnancy. But choosing the right type of exercise for you will depend on your body, your lifestyle and how pregnancy is treating you. I have a friend who, frustrated by the lack of parking at her local hospital, cycled to all her ante-natal appointments whilst pregnant with her twin boys but she is definitely an exception! More commonly recommended exercises for pregnancy include walking, swimming, yoga, and aqua classes, or a specialist ante-natal exercise classes.

As pregnancy progresses, a hormone is released into the mother's body making it more flexible, which enables the pelvis to stretch and open during birth. So it is really important not to overdo your exercises and to tell your GP and midwife about your exercise regime.

Recently introduced into Worcestershire is Aqua-Natal Yoga, a gentle yet effective form of

exercise in a warm swimming pool which combines stretching, breathing and relaxation.

These classes are particularly beneficial to pregnant ladies as the resistance of the water helps them to stretch and tone muscles ready for birth but without the risk of overstretching and straining.

The most popular aspect of the class is the water relaxation. Using buoyancy aids for support, the mums-to-be will float for up to 10 minutes at the end of the class, either quietly or to gentle music. Just imagine the luxury of floating in warm water uninterrupted and without distractions, concentrating on your baby, or on your breathing, or maybe on nothing at all.



Classes are currently held at:
Chessgrove Swim, near Bromsgrove.
Please call **01527 821978** or see
www.chessgroveswim.co.uk

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mini marmalade have searched high and low to bring you oodles of scrummy products for pregnancy & little people age 0-5. Little people have been at the forefront of my mind when choosing products that are fun, eco-friendly, unique and make our job as parents easier!



For your chance to win simply answer this question:

how much does standard delivery charges start from online at www.minimarmalade.co.uk

Draw held quarterly

Answers on email to competitions@smallstepsmedia.co.uk please remember to include your name, address and contact telephone number.

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or spend it at home when you host a mini marmalade party

- A draw will take place on 31.1.12 - 30.4.12 - 31.8.12 and 30.11.12
- Winners will be notified within 14 days of the draws taking place.
- The prize must be taken as stated; there will be no cash alternative.
- The winning entry will be drawn by the Small Steps team and the team's decision is final.
- We will only accept one entry per household.
- This competition is not open to any employees or contractors of Small Steps Media or Premier Concepts Ltd, or any person directly involved in the organisation or running of the competition, or their direct family members.
- If the winner cannot be contacted within one calendar month of the published closing date, the Small Steps team reserve the right to re-draw for the winner.



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To view all the classes in and around the Bath area and to book online, please visit www.rugbytots.co.uk or call 0845 313 3242 david@rugbytots.co.uk

Thinking of returning to work?

If you are thinking of returning to work after you've had your baby, lots of help is at hand. You may wish to return to work part time rather than full time, or you may wish to try something new and work out of home. You might be entitled to claim financial support, and you could need to find quality childcare for your baby.

Choosing childcare

By choosing childcare which is registered with Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills), you know that the childcare provider has been assessed on their suitability to care for children. Registered providers for children under the age of 5 must offer care and early learning to meet the Early Years Foundation Stage framework (EYFS). Providers are inspected before registration and regularly. Registered childcare for infants includes childminders, day nurseries, children's centres and some nannies.

Financial help is generally available for working or studying parents, but there may also be support for lone parents and parents moving into work. Many employers also offer childcare voucher schemes that can save you over £1,000p.a. by allowing you to pay for childcare out of your gross earnings, rather than out of your net take home salary.

Useful websites are:

www.daycaretrust.org.uk

Advice on choosing & paying for childcare.

www.workingfamilies.org.uk

Advice & information on employment rights & flexible working.

www.hmrc.gov.uk

Advice on working tax credits.

www.business.gov.uk

Advice on running your own business

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Family Information Service

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- Clubs and activities
- People and services that can support children, young people and their families
- Working with children, young people and their families
- Information on financial assistance

**If you don't know who to ask...
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Find out more online:
www.worcestershire.gov.uk/familyinfo

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small steps

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small steps Recipes

Mini Quiches

These little quiches make a great snack for children and can be filled with food of your choice. Some ideas are peppers, sweetcorn, ham, tomatoes and cheese.

Makes 12.

- 4oz / 100g Plain Flour
- 2oz / 50g Butter
- 4 floz Milk
- 2 Eggs
- Fillings of your choice

1: Make your pastry by rubbing together the butter and flour in a large mixing bowl. Ask your children to help you 'squidge' the two together to see if you can magically make the butter disappear into sand. Once it is all combined add cold water a spoonful at a time until you get a nice dough. If it gets too wet then just add a bit more flour.

2: Leave the pastry aside whilst you prepare your tin. Give your child a chunk of butter and using it as a crayon colour in your tart tray holes until they are fully oiled, you then sprinkle flour over the holes and turn the tray upside down, the excess will flour your surface.

3: together roll out the pastry and cut out lots of circles large enough to line your tin.

4: Fill the cases half way up with your fillings, then combine the egg and milk and fill to the top. Cook at 220°C / 430°F for 12-15 minutes until cooked throughout.

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Sweet Potato Scones

These savoury scones are an ideal way to introduce your child to sweet potato – or any other root vegetable you may wish to try! They are lovely for picnics or lunchboxes, with just butter or ham and cheese as a substitute to sandwiches.

- 5oz / 125g Plain Flour
- 2oz / 50g Butter
- 4fl oz Mashed Sweet Potato
- 6tbs Milk
- 2dsp Soft Brown Sugar
- 4tsp Baking Powder



1: Rub together the butter, baking powder and flour, encourage your children to squidge it all together as described for quiches.

2: When you have a breadcrumb like texture stir in the sugar and mashed sweet potato. Add the milk slowly until you have a nice, firm dough.

3: Roll out the dough until it is as fat as an adult's finger and cut your shapes. If your child is slightly suspicious of new foods it's amazing what a star or heart shape will do for encouraging them to try!

4: Cook in a pre-heated oven at 220°C / 430°F for 12-15 minutes until cooked throughout.



Beckie and Jenny are bringing the wonderful Crafty Cooks classes to the Worcestershire area.

With five children between them they know exactly how to enthuse your child and share with them

the joy of cooking! You'll have a chance to discuss any food issues you have before tasting your dishes and leaving armed with a little pack of recipes to try at home, with or without the help of your kids!

For more information

contact Beckie on

07790 429361

or visit

www.craftycooks.co.uk



Looking for a family friendly holiday?

Going on holiday with a young family isn't always easy so it's reassuring to know that help is at hand! Set up by two mums, Away with Kids is an on-line travel directory which specialises in truly child friendly holidays, mainly in the UK but with some overseas.

So, if you're looking for a short break or a longer holiday, it's worth checking out their site.

www.awaywiththekids.co.uk



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The first Bookstart pack is for babies aged 0-12 months



Bookstart Packs



My Bookstart Treasure Chest is for children aged 3-4 years

Bookstart



Bookstart is a national book gifting programme which aims to give every child a lifelong love of books and reading. It encourages parents to share books with their children from an early age and helps promote the benefits of libraries to families. Bookstart packs are free for every eligible child in the county.

Children up to the age of 5 can join the book start book crawl in Worcestershire. This scheme means every time your child returns a book they will receive a sticker and after 3 stickers they receive a specially designed certificate by a famous author.

For more information visit:
www.worcestershire.gov.uk

* Packs subject to change

Days Out & Activities with your Baby or Toddler



All babies and toddlers love to go out and it's good for you too! Why not schedule in a regular daily walk to the park and perhaps arrange to meet some other mums there too? It won't be long before your baby will enjoy being pushed in a baby swing or helped down a little slide. If there is a river or pond in your park, they will also enjoy watching or feeding the ducks.

Older toddlers can leap around and explore the bigger space of the park and burn off some of their seemingly boundless energy! If the weather is nice, why not take a snack or picnic?

For more information

www.facebook.com/worcesterparks

www.worcester.gov.uk

From the age of approximately 3 - 6 months, most babies also enjoy swimming, baby gym and music & movement classes.

So why not make use of one, plus the free vouchers in this magazine to give them a go? Older children will enjoy junior sporting & drama activities and it's a great way to tire them out!

Why not also make a regular expedition to your local zoo or wildlife park? All children love seeing other animals and most venues also include fun toddler friendly activities. Most also offer annual family memberships which can help spread the cost.

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The Toy Library



Just like a book library... but with toys!

Select from 1000s and 1000s of toys to borrow*
Baby toys, outdoor play equipment, sports equipment,
construction, themed boxes, story sacks and much more!

Rural outreach service also available - please contact us for details

www.thetoylibrary.net

The Toy Library, Sixways Trading Estate,
Barnards Green, Malvern, Worcestershire WR14 3LY
t: **01684 891081** e: contact@thetoylibrary.net

Opening Times
Tuesday 9.30am-4.30pm
Wednesday 2pm-7.30pm
Friday 9.30am-3pm

* **Membership Fees**
6 Month Family Membership £14
12 Month Family Membership £25
12 Month Grandparents Membership £10
(5 visits per year)
For group membership fees please contact us

Charity No: 1129697

Messy Play

Taking part in creative and messy play activities has numerous benefits for children's learning and development. Children are active learners. They learn through play. Play allows them to make sense of the world around them.

Through play, children learn to make choices, solve problems, and make plans. Learning processes grow and concepts develop. Play makes learning exciting and interesting. It ensures that children remember what they learn.

Messy play offers an outstanding opportunity for children to grow and learn. Babies and toddlers may simply explore the materials and enjoy textures and smells. As pre-schoolers grow, they will begin to ask questions and experiment with the materials to find answers. Each child will benefit in his own way. Messy play helps children to develop concepts. These concepts are the basis for later learning. As children roll and mould play

dough, they learn about cause and effect - what happens when they squish it or roll it in their hands. They may practice counting, sorting, and grouping with the things they make with the dough.



1 Minute Play Dough (Not edible!)

- ½ cup of salt
- 1 cup of flour
- 1 tablespoon of cream of tartar
- 1 tablespoon of oil
- 1 cup of boiling water (from the kettle) mixed with some food colouring.

Put all the dry ingredients in a bowl and then mix vigorously with the hot water. Add glitter for a Christmas touch! Makes wonderful play dough which lasts for ages in little plastic sandwich bags.

Work-life balance *without the 9 to 5 grind*

With childcare costs escalating and a recent survey suggesting the average UK family manages to spend just 49 minutes quality time together a day, it is little wonder that women are looking for creative and flexible ways to earn a living.

Natalie Heeley is one such Mum who successfully managed to set up her own business as an independent distributor for Forever around her young family. She believes it is all down to clever time management - as well as a willingness to work hard.

She says: "Every Mum (or Dad) needs to be able to halve their working hours without reducing their pay and it is possible. With a business like mine you can get the work life

balance right and make sure your family are your priority.

"I started off with Forever hoping to earn just a little extra for our family but now 5 years later having worked my business around the children we now have an income I never dreamed possible and an amazing flexible lifestyle - my next goal is to live mortgage free."

If you are thinking of changing your lifestyle or would like to work flexibly around your family, Natalie is looking to expand her team and is happy for people to contact her for a chat.

Call her on: **01905 820411** or email: **natalie@foreverlucrative.co.uk** for a FREE information pack. It could be the catalyst to a whole new chapter in your life.

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RHYMES NURSERY

We believe that children learn through play – a strategy that provides outstanding results. Above all, we seek to be recognised as a leading provider of quality childcare.

REDDITCH Call Us: 01527 63900 DUDLEY Call Us: 01384 458051
or visit our website: www.rhymesnursery.co.uk
Email: enquiries@rhymesnursery.co.uk

Birchensale Farmhouse, Low Field Lane, Brockhill, Redditch B97 6QB

Want to earn up to £1,500^{pm} for p/t hrs?

- You've got young children?
- Struggling to balance your job, role as a parent and finances?
- Been made redundant or just fancy a change?

...Sound familiar?



If a rewarding job with true security that provides you with the work/life balance, flexibility and control over your own destiny sounds appealing – contact **Natalie Heeley** today. You can work part time, around your existing work or family commitments and there is no financial investment. Find out how Natalie's children can always be her priority – working part-time hours to suit her family commitments – you too could change your life.

Contact Natalie for a **FREE** information pack on **01905 820411** or email: Natalie@foreverlucrative.co.uk

Your unborn baby needs protection from *smoking*



Every time you smoke it harms your baby. Most mums know smoking whilst pregnant isn't good for them or their baby, but that doesn't make it any easier to kick the habit. You may not be aware that when you smoke you inhale 4,000 chemicals from the cigarette. One of these is a dangerous chemical called carbon monoxide, which gets into your bloodstream and your baby's. This restricts the oxygen that is essential for your baby's healthy growth and development.

Quitting smoking is the single most important thing you can do for your health and the health of your unborn baby, and it's never too late. NHS stop smoking services offer

expert support to quit and can arrange nicotine replacement products on prescription for you if they are suitable.

Did you know you are four times more likely to quit with your local NHS stop smoking service? So why not give it a go and make a call today to arrange your first appointment with your local friendly pregnancy stop smoking adviser.

To find out where your nearest stop smoking service is or to request a home visit from a stop smoking service please ring **0800 917 5602 or 01905 363909, or text WOQUIT and your post code to 88020.**

Useful Numbers

Cheltenham General Hospital

08454 222 222

Royal Worcestershire Hospital, Worcester

Main Switch board 01905 763333

Ante natal Clinic 01905 760659

Alexandra Hospital, Redditch

Main Switchboard 01527 503030

Antenatal Clinic Office 01527 512004

Delivery Suite 01527 501828

Worcestershire Family Information Services

01905 822666

Worcestershire Parent Partnership

01905 727940

Worcestershire Stop Smoking Service

0800 917 5602

Breastfeeding Support

Penny Turton Infant Feeding Advisor

(Worcester Royal Hospital)

01905 760507

Caroline Payne Infant Feeding Advisor

(Alexandra Hospital, Redditch)

07879 440264

National Breastfeeding Helpline

0300 100 0212

Worcestershire County Council Customer Services

01905 765765

NHS Direct Helpline

0845 46 47 www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Worcestershire Registration Services

0845 603 2859

Tips for getting *back into shape*

Congratulations on your new arrival! Once the euphoria has calmed down, and you are over the first few weeks it may be time to start thinking about yourself, and getting back into shape.

1 Initially try to have a daily walk with the baby in the buggy and concentrate on strengthening your pelvic floor muscles. Do this by kneeling on all fours, inhale to prepare, and as you exhale draw your tummy button to your spine. Hold the tummy button in this position for a count of 5, then inhale and relax. Try not to tighten the muscles in the bottom as you do the exercise, repeat 10 times.

2 After your 8 week check increase the time you are out walking for or join a class. The mental benefits exercise can bring after having a baby are huge, helping with the isolation and reducing tiredness.

3 If you are breastfeeding exercise is fine, but where possible feed prior to a class, and ensure you have the correct size bra on. Breast feeding can require up to 500 extra calories a day, make sure you eat a healthy snack after, and drink lots of water.

Having a new baby is not a reason to neglect your own health and wellbeing, there are lots of opportunities now and it has nothing but benefits for you and the baby.

Sue Thomas runs a ladies only health and wellness clinic based in Worcester. For more information on post natal fitness and classes go to www.start2exercise.com

Small Steps 22



then you need these...

Start2push

New mums buggy fitness classes

**Monday, Tuesday or Friday
10.30am, parks across Worcester**

**For more information contact Sue:
www.start2exercise.com 07968 292784
sue@start2exercise.com**

Have your cake AND eat it!

Don't forget!!
*to register your
baby's birth*

You only have 42 days to register your baby in the district where the birth took place. This can often be done at the hospital of birth, or at your local register office.

You can find out more on:

**www.direct.gov.uk or
www.birmingham.gov.uk/registeroffice**



Aqua-Natal Yoga

New! Pregnancy exercise classes

Helps you tone, stretch & relax

Low impact exercises for all stages of pregnancy



Baby Swimming

Safe, sensitive & fun classes

Small class sizes

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01527 821978
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Your **unborn baby** needs
your protection from smoking

**Quitting smoking is the best
thing for you both**

You are up to **four times more likely** to quit
with your local stop smoking service.

For your nearest **Stop Smoking Service**
call **0800 917 5602** or **01905 363909**
or text **WOQUIT** + your postcode to **88020**

For more information visit:
www.stopsmokingworcestershire.nhs.uk

