



Mental health and wellbeing for LGBTQIA+ expecting and new parents

All LGBTQIA+ expecting and new parents deserve inclusive, effective mental health and wellbeing support.

In this fact sheet, LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bi+/pan, trans or gender diverse, intersex, queer and/or asexual+) PANDA volunteers share their experiences during pregnancy and early parenthood, including advice for other LGBTQIA+ families.

We also share common signs of mental health and wellbeing challenges, and tips on accessing support.



Supporting you

PANDA can help you find LGBTQIA+ inclusive services, and support you to advocate for your needs.



Mental health and wellbeing

During the perinatal period, we often need to seek more healthcare support. We encourage you to seek out the many LGBTQIA+ inclusive services.

Mental health challenges can occur at any time: planning to conceive, pregnancy and after birth. Symptoms of anxiety, depression and other mental health conditions can affect your wellbeing, relationships, and daily function.

As an LGBTQIA+ expecting or new parent, you may face additional challenges like accessing inclusive care from healthcare services. You may also need to advocate for your care needs if healthcare providers have limited knowledge about LGBTQIA+ parent families and safe, appropriate care for trans, gender diverse and/or intersex clients.

You can call the PANDA Helpline if you're concerned about yourself or a loved one – any time, for any reason.



“Claire came out [as trans] when Ettie was about five months old. It was such a relief, but also a big few months.”
– Catherine

Voices from PANDA's LGBTQIA+ community

“It's important to create 'allies' for our families. It can be easier to face prejudice or judgment, if we have spaces where we're seen and valued as LGBTQIA+ parents.”
– Vessal

“The hardest part for my partner has always been the use of the term 'dads' when referring to non-birth parents. She found it so ingrained in the medical system and it made her feel less relevant and less important. [It] prevented her from reaching out.”
– Michelle

“It's okay to challenge healthcare providers about their assumptions; it's okay if sometimes you feel too exhausted. Talk to your friends about what you're experiencing; join LGBTQIA+-friendly parenting groups. You might be surprised at how helpful [it is meeting] other people with similar experiences. Speaking up about my identity was empowering and helped me to feel a sense of control in maternal healthcare spaces.”
– Alice

“I'm grateful for my struggle with postnatal depression and the journey I've been on. It's made me more understanding, given me a reminder to slow down, to breathe – and made my love and bond with my child and partner so much more profound.”
– Catherine

Read more



PANDA Helpline

The PANDA Helpline provides counselling, referral and peer support from parents who have been through similar challenges.

- When someone calls, you will speak with a counsellor or peer worker who understands the challenges of being a new or expecting parent.
- PANDA counsellors and peer workers listen with kindness and compassion, help you explore support options, and can also provide information about appropriate specialist services.
- **If you are concerned for someone's safety**, it's vital that you seek immediate help by contacting either a local acute mental health service or your nearest hospital's emergency department.
- You can also contact PANDA for advice and support. If you believe that someone's life is at immediate risk, call 000.

 PANDA National Helpline 1300 726 306 | Monday - Saturday

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