

Goodwin Volunteer Doula Project

February 2009 NEWSLETTER

DOULA SUPPORT REACHES 160 MUMS-TO-BE



Feb 2009
Issue 11



Goodwin

*Doula: a noun
A Doula is a
trained and
experienced
partner who
accompanies a
woman
through
pregnancy and
child-birth and
the first few
weeks of family
life.*

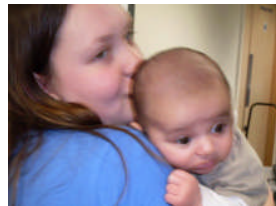


The Goodwin Volunteer Doula Project, which now supports mums-to-be across the whole of Hull, has recently celebrated supporting more than 160 women.

Volunteers across the city are currently supporting 32 women from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and family circumstances. These volunteers give emotional and physical support, and breastfeeding support, to the mums they are matched with, helping to facilitate communication between the woman, her partner, and other professionals.



*Mum-to-be Prisca
with her doula, Tracy*



*New mum Marie with
baby Joshua*

So far, the Doula Project has supported 166 women throughout their pregnancy, birth, and for the first few weeks of family life. Of these, nearly 70% have initiated breastfeeding, and 60% of these have continued breastfeeding for at least 6 weeks after birth.

If you know of any mums-to-be that would benefit from the support of a Volunteer Doula, then please contact the Doula project team on 01482 497811, or email hbarnes@goodwin-centre.org, and we will be happy to give you further information and take referrals.



Volunteers in training



REMEMBER TO VISIT 'GET BRITAIN BREASTFEEDING'!
This interactive exhibition is coming to Hull, and will be at Hull College, Queen's Gardens, from 24th–27th February. It is designed to drive a positive cultural shift where breastfeeding becomes the norm, not the exception, so that the UK again becomes a society where women are supported to breastfeed for as long as they and their baby choose.



Hull

Children and
Young People's Services

VISIT OUR WEBSITE!
www.goodwindoulas.org

NHS
Hull



MEET THE TEAM: Heather Barnes. Heather has been with the doula project since its beginnings in 2005. She personally trained as a doula with Michel Odent and is passionate about supporting women and their families through pregnancy and birth. Heather is currently the project manager and is also working on plans to roll out the project to other areas of the country. Heather is also an IFPA accredited aromatherapist specialising in working with pregnant women.

SPOTLIGHT ON A DOULA...

Vicky Shann has been a Volunteer Doula since September 2007.

Here is what she'd like to say about the project:

1) What first inspired you to become a Volunteer Doula?

My fascination with pregnancy and birth started whilst I was pregnant with my first child. After having my second child I decided to do the Access course at Hull College, then go on to be a midwife. I heard about the Volunteer Doula Project there, and after attending an Open Evening I felt it would not just be an excellent opportunity professionally, but a very rewarding thing to be involved in. I had very good support throughout pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period; becoming a doula has given me the chance to offer my support to other women who have very little or no support.



2) What have you personally gained from the project, both from volunteering and from the training?

I now have an OCN 'Volunteering as a Doula' qualification, as well as an understanding of topics like drug awareness, domestic violence, active birth and natal hypnotherapy; and many more that have been equally valuable. Choosing to volunteer as a doula has been one of the best choices I have made, on every level. It has opened my eyes to the situations and issues that some women are faced with.

3) How many women have you supported and what kind of issues have you been faced with?

I have supported 5 ladies as a main doula and 4 ladies as a back-up doula. They have all been different, so I have faced a range of issues. My first lady and her husband were very anxious due to a previous traumatic birth experience. I spent a lot of time going through relaxation techniques and talking about what we could do to try and avoid it happening again. All she wanted was to give birth naturally and avoid a repeat emergency caesarean. She managed to do this and her self confidence increased as a result. Other issues I have faced are no family support, domestic violence, and immigration related problems. I have worked with an interpreter a couple of times due to language barriers.

4) Has your involvement with the project made any new opportunities possible?

My involvement with the project has made my goal to become a midwife possible. It has given me an insight into being a midwife, and lead to me being offered a place to start the BSc (Hons) Midwifery Programme this September.

5) What has been your best moment so far as a volunteer doula?

I can't choose just one moment as the best! Seeing the dramatic increase in my first lady's self-confidence after she achieved a VBAC (vaginal birth after caesarean) will always stay with me and make me smile. Having the opportunity to attend two breastfeeding conferences on behalf of the project was great for me, as it is a subject I am very passionate about.

6) What are your plans for the future?

I plan to stay involved with the project and when I go on to be a midwife I will support it in any way I can as I truly believe it is something Hull can be very proud of.

I plan to win the lottery as well, but I will have to keep my fingers crossed for that one!