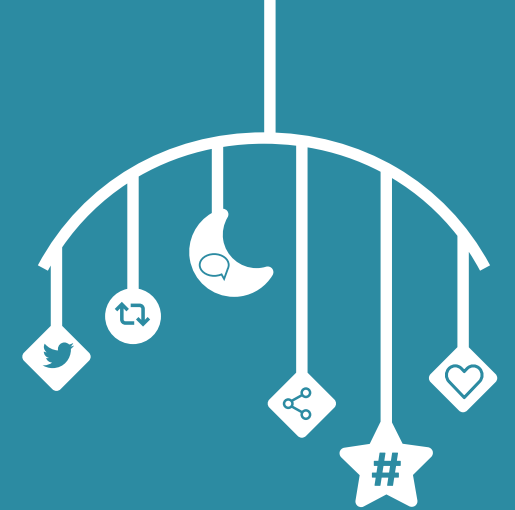


I will work to ensure  
our babies and  
their families can be

**#strongerfromthestart**



Signed



## What is infant mental health?

Infants need trusting, secure and reliable relationships with their parents or main caregiver. The infant can recognise these qualities through the way they are held, talked to, touched, and cared for.

These early interactions during the first weeks, months and years of life prepare the way for strong, healthy social and emotional health and wellbeing across the lifespan.



## Why are the first 1,001 days so important?

The **first 1,001 days** include pregnancy and the first two years of a child's life. This is an age of opportunity. There is clear, compelling evidence that this period lays the foundation for every child's future health, wellbeing, learning and earnings potential. It sets the groundwork for children's developing emotional wellbeing, resilience and adaptability. During these 1,001 days, we can lay a foundation of health and wellbeing whose benefits last a lifetime – and carry into the next generation.



## How do we promote good infant mental health?

Early years investment is the most evidenced and cost-effective way of transforming child and family outcomes. By working to **#includeinfants** in policy, strategy and service delivery we can deliver generational change.

We believe if we act early, we will see individual, economic, systemic and societal benefits.

# What next?

We look forward to continuing to engage with you to ensure all infants and their families in Northern Ireland are **#strongerfromthestart**

We want to make sure that infant mental health is a priority for all parties in the next Assembly mandate. Please see here the Stronger from the Start Manifesto <http://www.aimhni.co.uk/events/StrongerFromTheStartManifesto.pdf>

To continue the conversation please contact [eilish.robinson@barnardos.org.uk](mailto:eilish.robinson@barnardos.org.uk) and a member of the SFTS Steering Group will get back to you.

