

## In this Issue:

Is Baby Brain Real?

+

Overcoming Fussy Eaters

+

The end of a Breastfeeding Journey

+

Positive Birth Stories

+ More

January 2021



# Cuidiú

Caring Support for Parenthood



# Cuidiú

Caring Support for Parenthood

Happy New Year and welcome to the latest edition of the Cuidiú National Newsletter!

If you have never heard of Cuidiú before, we are a volunteer run charity and have been running for almost 40 years. We provide support and information for parents and parenthood, empowering people to make informed choices, from pregnancy through raising children. We offer this via childbirth education, postnatal support, breastfeeding support and, on a social level, at local meets and events. Simply put, Cuidiú is a great place to find your parenting village.

In-person groups are the backbone of the support that Cuidiú provides, but the uncertainty around Covid means we are unsure when we can safely restart these - we know that people are struggling right now without their village and our incredible volunteers continue to work hard behind the scenes to ensure that many of our support groups are able to run online. We're also putting on additional special online events, from informative parenting talks, to fun sing alongs with the kids, to general catch up socials. And if you find yourself looking for specific support, be it breastfeeding help, antenatal queries or if you're just feeling the general struggles of life as a parent and want to talk, our phone services as always remain in operation.

See our website or follow us on Facebook to find more info...

[www.cuidiu.ie](http://www.cuidiu.ie) / Facebook - [cuidiucharity](#) / Instagram - [cuidiuofficialireland](#)

We hope you enjoy reading this edition of the newsletter. As always, if you have any feedback, would like to place an advert with us or have an article, poem or anything else you would like us to include, please email us on [newsletter@cuidiu.ie](mailto:newsletter@cuidiu.ie).

Melanie Grace & Tara Tait (Cork Branch)

*Registered Charity No: 10752*

# Cuidiú: Who We Are

The Irish name Cuidiú means 'care and support' for all parents with bumps or babes, tots or teens. We are a parent-to-parent support charity run by volunteer parents.

## Cuidiú National Council

BOARD OF DIRECTORS			
Chairperson	Melanie Grace (Cork)		
Finance	Maria Ward (Drogheda)	Secretary	Shelly Loughlin (Galway)
Directors	Alexie Ui Laoghaire (Cork) / Katherina McCaul (DSW) / Paula Tahaney (Dublin SW) / Ruth Quealy (DNE) / Ursula Kenny (DSW)		
ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL			
Chairperson	Liz McGovern (Dublin SE)	Grants Rep	Elaine Campbell (Dublin County N)
PRESIDENT	Nicola Reeves (Dublin SE)	IT Rep	Shery Ahmed (Dublin SE)
Antenatal Rep	Tara Durkin (Galway)	Marketing & PR Rep	VACANT
Branch Rep	Alexie Ui Laoghaire (Cork)	Membership	Melanie Grace (Cork)
Breastfeeding Rep	Fiona Corry (Athlone) / Elaine Campbell (Dublin County N)	Parent 2 Parent Support Rep	Jessica Staines (Dublin W)
Comms & Social Media	Rachel Travers (Dublin NW)	Secretary	VACANT
Data Protection Officer	Lorna Barton (Dublin NW)	Treasurer	Fiona Corry (Athlone)
Events Rep	Lisa Farrelly (Drogheda)	Web Rep	VACANT
SUB TEAMS			
Branch Finance - Blanche Hardiman (DW) / Child Protection Officer - Marie O'Hare (Drogheda) / Grants Admin - Susan Mihalik (DSE) & Daisy 'Fang' Huang (DSE) & Alexis Canete (DNW) / Newsletter - Tara Tait (Cork) & VACANT / Project Cuidiú Connect - Susan Rimmer (DNW) / Social Media Holly English (Limerick) & VACANT			

There is no obligation to become a formal member, our standard services and supports are available to all, but as our membership term ticks over into 2021, we want to thank and acknowledge those who are renewing their Cuidiú membership for another year. As an entirely voluntary run organisation, we HOPE our members do enjoy all the perks of having Cuidiú membership: the Business discounts, the training options, the lower events fees, but we KNOW many of our members pay the annual €25 because Cuidiú has changed their parenting lives for the better, and this is their way of ensuring that Cuidiú can survive to support the next generation. Your membership contribution really does make a difference. **THANK YOU!** (visit [www.cuidiu.ie/membership](http://www.cuidiu.ie/membership) for membership info)



# POSITIVE BIRTHING

BY  
AMÉLIE  
NYHAN

Amélie is Mum to Tommy, 10; Liam, 8; and Alice, 5. From France originally, she's been living in Cork since 2005. She has been attending Cuidiú meet ups since 2010 and became more involved as a volunteer on the Cork Branch Committee in 2018. Amélie is a Postpartum Doula, offering attuned support to newborn families in the early days of parenting. Amélie offers a discount to Cuidiú Members and can be found on Facebook.

Barbara Katz Rothman said *"Birth is not only about making babies. Birth is about making mothers - strong, competent, capable mothers who trust themselves and know their inner strength."*

The process of birthing a child is one of the most exciting, powerful and mystical life events a person will ever experience. The way you prepare yourself for birth can create a truly positive mindset that will carry you throughout the journey, no matter the circumstances.

Whatever way your childbirth experience goes, your inner strength and positive self-talk will accompany you throughout the experience, and this, no-one can take away from you!

What practical tools and information will help you on your journey? How to establish self-belief and confidence deep within?

Let's have a look at simple and effective ways of giving yourself a positive and empowering birth experience.

Your body is driven by hormones. Those hormones all have a very specific role and function.

Hormones, such as, Prostaglandin, Oxytocin, Relaxin and Beta-endorphins play a starring role during pregnancy, labour and birth.

Oxytocin is also known as the Love hormone. It plays a major role during childbirth as it provokes contractions. Oxytocin is released in the body when you feel loved, cared for and safe.

Therefore, when you set up an environment where you feel positive and where you feel Love, the hormone release will support and guide your childbirth experience.

Beta-endorphins work beautifully with your oxytocin, as it is your very own, naturally released pain killer! When your labour starts, you will have surges of oxytocin as well as a sharp rise in your endorphins' levels.

High endorphin levels during labour and birth can induce a state of semi-consciousness, a feeling of being 'spaced out' which helps you deal with the pain associated with contractions and childbirth.



Hormone release is a vastly unconscious process. During labour, the more relaxed and open you are, the more you allow yourself to just be, and not think, the better your body will be able to produce all the hormones you need.

Here are a few simple tips to encourage your natural flow of hormones.

1. Throughout pregnancy, practice self-care, relaxation techniques, breathing techniques and positive self-talk. Find the methods that truly help you to relax and allow your unconscious mind to take over. Yoga, mindfulness and deep relaxation will positively prepare you for labour.
2. Find out what helps you enter your relaxation zone: soft music, materials you love the feel of, scents that make you feel happy: a shirt belonging to your life partner, a teddy belonging to your child, a scarf belonging to your own mother or Gran! Pleasant smells can bring back happy memories and boost your love hormones and natural pain killers! Use some or all of these props during your entire labour, at home and in the hospital.
3. Once you have practiced relaxation techniques and found the right support tools, use them to enter your birth bubble and remain there. During labour, let yourself go, surrender to your body's ability and trust yourself.
4. Be kind, and patient and gentle with yourself, in all circumstances! As you prepare for labour and childbirth, you will feel a wide range of emotions: excitement, fear, joy, pain, love, anxiety, bliss. Remember to love yourself first! Love your ability to sustain life within your womb, love your ability to give birth (whatever type of birth you will have), love your strength and your body!

There are many ways you can prepare for a positive birth experience. Your own mental strength and positive self-talk and love are key! You are your very own best friend. And remember this: you will not be on your own, ever! Your baby and yourself are in this together. You've got this!



# IS BABY BRAIN REAL ?

BY LOUISE GOSNELL



*Louise is a mum of three and volunteers on the Cuidiú Cork Branch Committee. She asked the members of the Facebook group to share their baby brain experiences...*

Are you one of those parents who keeps clicking their car immobiliser to open the front door? Have you frantically searched for your phone while you are speaking on it? Or perhaps you have put coffee into your tea more times than you care to recall?

Well, I am here to tell you that you are not alone. I am completely convinced that baby brain is a thing. The science may not be there to back me up yet, but I have found a few studies that show our brains change when we have children. On the other hand, the anecdotal evidence is there in spades and here are a few true stories from our Cuidiú community to make you laugh and brighten your day.

**Tilly** opened the door to the TV license man trouserless! She had completely



forgotten to put them on and was only wearing her granny knickers and 2 odd socks. He hasn't turned up again since, she is not sure why.

**Avril** went to the playground with her baby. She walked home only to realise her car was missing.... It turns out, she drove to the playground.

Early on an icy cold morning, **Emer** de-iced her car before work and then she put the kettle in the kitchen. When she went back outside, she realised she had de-iced the neighbor's car.

**Deirdre** went to the bank and was very confused as to why they would not post a parcel for her.

Lots of people said they left the house wearing odd shoes! Many, many parents in our Facebook group admitted to searching

*"I put the laundry detergent into the fridge!"*

frantically for their house keys whilst holding them in their hands!

There are also many of stories of coffee being poured into baby bottles, and precious expressed milk being added to coffee by mistake (don't keep expressed milk on the same shelf in the fridge as regular milk folks!).

Another common one, is leaving things on the roof of the car while strapping the kids in and driving off without them. (I myself have lost a phone and quite a few toys this way.)

But the best I have heard is of one lady who said she was registering her daughter's birth when she left her folder with 3 passports, marriage licence and

birth certificate on top of the car and drove off leaving them in the wind. Luckily, a kind person found them and tracked her down..... Phew!

So, as we stand here pushing the empty buggy backwards and forwards all the while holding the baby and trying to make lunch for the toddler, we can sigh with relief that there are plenty of other parents out there doing the exact same thing!

How many of these have YOU done?

*"I cracked an egg into the rubbish bin instead of the frying pan!"*

---

## CUIDIÚ LOVES CAKE!

Here at Cuidiú, we love a delicious slice of cake with our tea or coffee, ideally around the table chatting with other parents at one of our regular coffee mornings. Obviously in the current Covid situation, we can't be in person around the table with other Cuidiú village members, and so our Dublin West Branch organised the next best thing!



On November 21st Dublin West hosted their first Expert Night with Jen O'Sullivan, Dublin West Committee Member & Pixie Box Bakery owner. Members from several Branches attended the online Bake Night where Jen shared her tips and tricks about baking and raffled off this beautiful bespoke cake to one attendee who got to design their winning cake live.

Susan Smullen from Dublin West branch was the lucky cake winner on the night and two other attendees won annual membership of Cuidiú for 2021!

# INSPIRED BY MY MUM

**BY KATE NOONAN**

In this moving article, Kate remembers her own mother's sadness at not being able to breastfeed; and how this memory has inspired her to breastfeed her own children.

As a young girl, I have vivid memories of my mum talking about breastfeeding. The pain in her eyes that she couldn't do it. Tears almost. I'd overhear her talk of how she tried and tried but 'failed'. Breastfeeding not being on the forefront of my mind as a kid, I shrugged it off. It wasn't a regular conversation. But the few times it ever came up seem to stick out in my mind.

My Mum lost a battle to breast cancer when she was 51. I was 25. I didn't become a mom myself until 7 years later.



Watching my belly swell, the memories of her speaking about breastfeeding came flooding back. I was determined to succeed in her honour. I started questioning my aunts and family friends about what could have been the 'issue'. I was so keen to avoid it. Convinced she failed mechanically, biologically, physically. Naively I quizzed my GP as to whether it could have been associated with her breast cancer.

I have a cousin born a few weeks before me. That aunt can't recall what was the 'issue' but remembers her sobbing when she fed my cousin in front of her. She was using Gentian Violet at the time and said they fell about laughing and crying at my cousin's blue mouth. Another aunt probably gave me the

probable cause, she was just too anxious and got no support.

My mum worked with children all her life, known as the baby whisperer, she was on a path to become a play therapist when she got sick. She left such a lasting memory on kids that they still come up and tell us what she was to them. A mom who I have no memory of ever raising her voice, who became my best friend as an adult, still beat herself up that she 'failed' to breastfeed.

So I powered through in her honour. With the help of incredible friends and professionals. I was luckier, more supported and stubborn to succeed. Being this driven is not my usual nature.

So in a way she helped me. Planted the seeds, even though I didn't grow up exposed to her feeding. I think of her almost every day. Especially when I feed my babies. Her grandbabies.

Her namesake Annie is feeding 18 months and counting. Brother Teddy only weaned at 2, towards the end of my pregnancy with her. I know my mum would be proud, I know she'd be besotted, and I'd love her to know the impact she had on us, even without realising.

## Cuidiú Breastfeeding Support

Cuidiú has over 180 trained Breastfeeding Counsellors (BFCs) volunteering nationwide providing a free and confidential support service in their communities and online. They are available by phone to answer any questions you may have and provide valuable support and information for any stage of your breastfeeding journey - from newborn to older children.



**Cuidiú** to find out more visit  
Caring Support for Parenthood us on [www.cuidiu.ie](http://www.cuidiu.ie)

## Cuidiú Parent to Parent Support

Parent to Parent Supporters (P2Ps) are trained volunteers who are here to listen and support you when parenting might feel challenging. We provide free support to all parents and can be reached by email, online or by phone. We are here to listen!



**Cuidiú** to find out more visit  
Caring Support for Parenthood us on [www.cuidiu.ie](http://www.cuidiu.ie)

# ADVERTISEMENTS

**Keeping kids comfy & colourful!**  
 @sewsewsuzi      www.sew-sew-suzi.myshopify.com

## Mother & Baby Care

Physiotherapy during Pregnancy

- Pregnancy Pilates
- Postnatal Pilates
- C Section Pilates
- Pelvic Floor Workshops
- Baby Massage Classes
- Baby First Aid Workshops

[www.physiofusion.ie](http://www.physiofusion.ie)  
 Email: [info@physiofusion.ie](mailto:info@physiofusion.ie)      Ph: 01 (6077104)

## Chatter Babies

EARLY LANGUAGE WORKSHOP  
 For babies aged 5 months to 14 months and their parents/caregivers

Collect a toolkit of songs, play ideas and language promoting strategies you can use with your child for years to come

Now offered online!

Facilitated by registered Speech and Language Therapist  
 Catherine Lacey, M.H.Sc., S-LP, MIASLT, Reg. CORU

Private speech therapy also available online (free teletherapy trials available) or at home in North Co. Dublin

**Chatter**      **isti** <https://isti.ie/>  
 SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY SERVICES

f @chatterbabiesdublin      @chatter\_therapy      chatterbabiesdublin@gmail.com

## Do you want to advertise in our Newsletter?

Contact [newsletter@cuidiu.ie](mailto:newsletter@cuidiu.ie) for more details

Adverts do not imply endorsement or recommendation by Cuidiú.



Give a gift of support,  
friendship and community with  
Cuidiú Membership

€25 for 2021 Gift Membership  
contact [membership@cuidiu.ie](mailto:membership@cuidiu.ie) for details

# Meet our Cuidiú President!



Nicola Reeves has been a Cuidiú member for over twenty years and has volunteered in many roles, from Branch Librarian, to National Newsletter Editor, to completing her Breastfeeding Counselling Training and moving on to become a Breastfeeding Tutor and eventually serving on both the Tutor and the Breastfeeding Panels.

Outside of Cuidiú, Nicola is a teacher and has three adult daughters.

Nicola was officially welcomed as President at the Cuidiú AGM on Sunday 20th May 2018.



# 10 QUESTIONS ON PARENTING

BY LISA FARRELLY

*Lisa Farrelly lives in Drogheda with her husband and two children. Lisa is the Events Rep on the National Administrative Council.*

## 1. What/who was your biggest inspiration when preparing for parenthood?

My older sister. Seeing how she took to motherhood and the dedication she gave to breastfeeding really did assure me I could do the same.

## 2. What is your favourite thing about being a parent?

Cuddles. Morning, bedtime, post tantrum. Cuddles make everything better.

## 3. What's the worst thing about being a parent?

The usual suspects. Sleep deprivation, being covered regularly in some kind of bodily fluid and of course the nagging feeling of 'am I doing enough'.

## 4. What keeps you motivated in your day-to-day parenting?

I always start the day anew. Once the sun comes up no matter how rough the night has been, I try to count my blessings and get on with it. Also knowing the days are long but time goes so fast.

## 5. Can you describe an embarrassing experience with your child?

Running out of spare clothes with my eldest when she was a baby and having to borrow off a woman I barely knew at a kinda snooty baby yoga group.



**6. Which piece of equipment/furniture/toy could you not have lived without?**

My Spectra breast pump. Even though the suction sounds still kinda haunt me. It got my eldest and I through some very tricky feeding issues.

**7. What do you do to relax?**

I love a bath after the kids bedtime when I can actually be alone. Also mindfulness. I go every Tuesday and although I often nod off - it is bliss.

**8. What words do you most over-use with your kids?**

Are you being kind? What is the magic word?

**9. What would you have done differently in hindsight?**



A huge thank you to everyone who supported us in 2020 - we look forward to seeing you in 2021.



I would have been kinder to myself. I really feel that a lot of women on their first pregnancy and birth feel as though they need to prove to themselves, their peers, their employers that they can do it all. The second time I concentrated on me and what was best for my body and mind and that allowed me and my family to relax and just enjoy the ride.

**10. Have you any advice for new parents?**

An echo of before. Be kind to yourself. There are no perfect parents and no perfect babies. Read the baby books if you so wish but believe in yourself, your partner and your baby. This is your journey and it will be amazing.



# OVERCOMING FUSSY EATING

BY  
DR HAZEL  
WOLSTENHOLME

Dr Hazel Wolstenholme has a Degree in Psychology and a PhD on family experiences and management of fussy eating behaviours. She is trained in diverse approaches to assessing and managing feeding challenges and now works as a child feeding consultant.

Here in the first in a series of articles from Hazel about overcoming fussy eating and feeding challenges in children, she suggests we rethink the question **“How do I get my child to eat?”**

So many parents want to know the answer to the million dollar question “How can I get my child to eat?”. Parents I work with frequently ask “What can I do? No matter how hard I try, I cannot get him to eat vegetables”.

In reality, it is almost impossible to get a child to eat when they do not want to - and the more we try, the worse the problem can become. Instead, we need to start by asking different questions. The first step to helping your child overcome picky eating and feeding challenges is to get to the bottom of why your child is avoiding foods. We are born with an internal drive to eat, to grow and to develop to our best potential. If eating is not working well, there is usually something getting in the way.

Asking “Why is my child not eating?” and “Is there anything that is making eating difficult for my child?” is a helpful starting point. These are not easy questions to answer - research studies have identified hundreds of factors that are associated with fussy eating and feeding challenges. Eating is one of the most complex tasks we do, involving so many senses, complex motor skills, as well as physiological and psychological processes.

**Common reasons for feeding challenges:** Very often, food refusal is developmentally normal. Young children’s preferences and appetite change dramatically depending on growth and energy needs. However, when eating challenges go beyond developmentally normal food refusal, some of the common reasons include:



1. Feeding Skill (e.g. motor skills and sensory processing difficulties). Children who struggle with feeding skills may be communicating “This is too difficult for me” or “I can’t stand the taste, smell, or texture” or “I don’t know how to handle this food in my mouth”.

2. Psychosocial (e.g anxiety, temperament, trauma, the need for autonomy, the mealtime environment). Children may be saying “I need to do it myself”, “I want company”, “this is not a pleasant experience for me” or “this food is unfamiliar and I feel really scared!”

3. Medical, dietary and nutritional (e.g. medical conditions, illnesses, digestive problems, allergies, nutrient deficiencies and issues with ears, nose and throat). In this case, children may be communicating “Eating this hurts” or “I feel sick” or “I’m not hungry”.

Avoidant eating is not ‘bad behaviour’ that can be solved by time-outs, discipline, or “just trying harder”. Avoidant eating is communication. Although children may not be able to verbalise it, food refusal is a way of telling us that something is not quite right, or that they have not yet managed to master an important skill that makes up a piece of the complex feeding puzzle.

It is our job to listen to what children are communicating, and to figure out what is preventing them from eating to the best of their ability. This way, we can discover how we can make eating an easier, more enjoyable and successful experience for them.

### **Moving from getting your child to eat to understanding why your child isn’t eating:**

So next time you start an all-too-familiar mealtime battle over broccoli thinking “What can I do to get my child to eat this?”...

Stop. Rethink. Ask yourself “from my child’s perspective - why might eating this be difficult?” When you have insight into why eating is difficult for your child, it makes it so much easier to avoid confrontations, to empathise, and to be on your child’s side to support them to reach their eating potential.

**Dr Hazel Wolstenholme**  
Child Feeding  
Support and Consultancy

facebook.com/  
childfeeding  
support

Compassionate  
Evidence Based Parent  
Support & Strategies  
for  
**Picky Eating and  
Feeding  
Challenges**

**Contact**  
www.childfeedingsupport.com  
hazel.wolstenholme@outlook.com

“My son’s  
picky eating was a  
source of huge anxiety  
for the whole family.  
The expert guidance I  
have received from Hazel  
has been invaluable.  
I only wish I had sought  
her help much  
sooner”  
~ Farrah, UK

BA Psych., PhD ~ Specialised in Fussy Eating Behaviours  
Trained in SOS, Behavioural and Responsive Feeding Approaches

# The End

## THE END OF MY BREASTFEEDING JOURNEY

BY TANIA  
LAWLOR

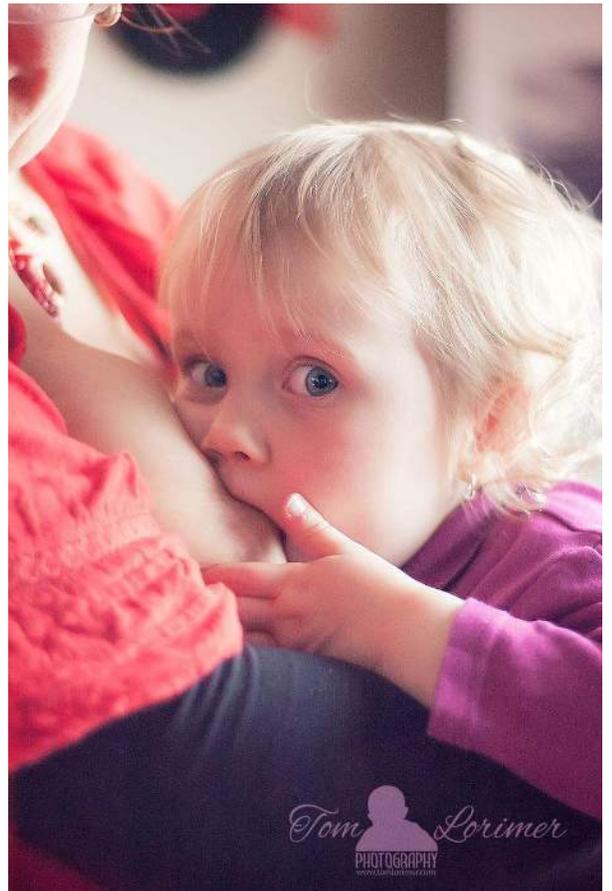
Tania is a mother of four, has been a Cuidiú member for 12 years, a Cuidiú Breastfeeding Counsellor for 8 years, is also a trained Cuidiú Parent to Parent Supporter and is part of the Cuidiú Kerry Branch Committee.

This is the end of my breastfeeding journey of fourteen and a half years. My goal was one year for my first son. When he turned 1, I thought I'd feed him until he started to walk, which happened a week later. I just went with the flow. Weaning him would have been too much effort and I found breastfeeding very practical. At the time I knew no one who fed 'so long'.

When he was a baby I met a woman at a breastfeeding group and I thought it was 'weird' to feed a 2 year old. I got pregnant and tandem fed. I fed my first until he was 2.5, baby two until 4.5, and then baby three until 5.5! My fourth, Einín, turned 6 in August. Each baby fed longer so I think I will stop having babies, LOL!

Recently Einín started to have less and less feeds and could go days without it, even a week. I was contacted by a photographer for an interview during lockdown to include my breastfeeding journey in her book. We were really looking forward to the photoshoot, especially knowing that every feed could be the last. Einín and I talked about the photoshoot and how it would be her last boobies and she was OK with it.

The day came and was sunny and gorgeous. We live by the beach, the perfect place for our last boobies to be



Tom  Lorimer  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
www.tomlorimer.com

captured on camera. We were looking forward to it but suddenly our world changed when my Father-in-law sadly passed away. It was a difficult decision but I agreed to reschedule to the next morning, something told me we should go for this opportunity and I'm so glad we did. We were prepared for Einín to only feed for a few seconds but were surprised, she totally milked it (excuse the pun!). She took her time to enjoy a long feed and her last 2 feeds were captured on camera. I couldn't wait to see the photos, it was a beautiful moment!



My husband's family were bottle fed. When I started breastfeeding, my Father-in-law did not know where to look but soon got used to it and understood the benefits. It felt very strange because it was not the end of the journey I expected. Looking back, they were fantastic years,

and now I'm ready for the next chapter of parenting without boobooos.

Some might wonder or ask how can a child of such an age still be feeding, I like to say my 'baby' is only one day older than yesterday and it just happens. I think there is no need to plan to feed for a specific amount of time, every mother and child are different.

Now two months on, Einín says she misses it from time to time but hasn't asked to feed. She kissed them few times when she saw me getting dressed!

This year I have met fantastic mothers and new friends via online breastfeeding support. Zoom meetings have been great, but I can't wait to get back to meet face to face again.

	<p><b>33,582</b></p> <p>The number of times our Breastfeeding Counsellors provided support to nursing mothers in 2019</p>
<p><b>189</b></p> <p>The number of Qualified Breastfeeding Counsellors we currently have providing FREE support across Ireland</p>	
<p><b>400+</b></p> <p>The number of volunteers who gave their time to Cuidiú in 2019</p>	<p><b>1,753</b></p> <p>The number of people who signed up for Cuidiú Family Membership in 2019</p>





# MEET OUR CUIDIÚ ANTENATAL IRELAND TRAINEES



**Antenatal Ireland**  
Building Confidence for Birth & Parenting

Cuidiú's antenatal sector, Antenatal Ireland runs a comprehensive Diploma in Antenatal Education to train our facilitators. Here, some of our students explain why they chose to do this training.

---

## **Jen Brady - Oldtown, Co. Dublin**

### **Why did you choose to do the Antenatal Ireland facilitator training?**

I was already a member of Cuidiú and had completed Cuidiú training as a breastfeeding counsellor - I knew that both Cuidiú and Antenatal Ireland had a great reputation and a firm basis in ensuring that their students engage with the most up to date, evidence based information. I didn't want a 'one size fits all' course that churns out Antenatal teachers in a few months - I wanted to really invest my time with an organisation that prides itself on quality over quantity.

### **What has been your experience so far?**

So far I am delighted with my experience - I love that the students get to work collaboratively and that there is such a focus on making our classes engaging, enjoyable and thought provoking for parents. Having three young children can make sitting down to write essays challenging, but the tutors have been so helpful and supportive throughout. I definitely made the right choice with Antenatal Ireland.



### **What do you hope to bring to parents once qualified?**

I am so excited to bring top quality, evidence based antenatal classes to parents. I am passionate about all things birth and baby, and I really hope that the classes I will be teaching will both inform, and enable parents to have empowering experiences during pregnancy, birth and beyond.

## Elaine Campbell - Beaumont, Dublin 9

### Why did you choose to do the Antenatal Ireland facilitator training?

I already trained as a Cuidiú Breastfeeding Counsellor and in fulfilling this role, I met many new mums in early days postpartum who were so under-informed going into labour and into early parenthood - I felt a lot of the negative emotions that I was supporting women through could be prevented through better Antenatal education and empowering them in advance.



### What has been your experience so far?

The training days are with a very positive group of people with an amazing attitude to learning. It's assumed that everyone is knowledgeable or will ask if they have information gaps.

### What do you hope to bring to parents once qualified?

Information, confidence and help to empower partners to advocate more.



## Cuidiú Antenatal Courses

Now available online, Cuidiú Antenatal Ireland Courses are centered around the parents-to-be with lots of time for questions and discussion. Informed decision making is key.

to find out more visit us on  
[www.antenatalireland.ie](http://www.antenatalireland.ie)  
[www.bump2babe.ie](http://www.bump2babe.ie)



## ONLINE PAEDIATRIC FIRST AID COURSE FOR JUST €10 WITH CUIDIÚ MEMBERSHIP

CONTACT [MEMBERSHIP@CUIDIU.IE](mailto:MEMBERSHIP@CUIDIU.IE) FOR DETAILS

First Aid Coaching

## Carolyn Gall - Bray, North Wicklow

### Why did you choose to do the Antenatal Ireland facilitator training?

My own children were born outside of Ireland, so I didn't have first-hand experience with the Irish maternity system. After moving to Ireland though and talking with other women about their experiences of preparing for the birth and the first time with their baby, I learned that there seemed to be a lack of good quality and - most importantly - evidence-based courses around.

I spent years being part of the Cuidiú community and the thought of wanting to help parents on their pre-birth journey grew bigger and bigger.

So I heard about the Cuidiú Antenatal Ireland facilitator training, mulled the thought of doing that training around in my head for many months and then applied and started soon after.



### What has been your experience so far?

Being an antenatal student has been an interesting and satisfying journey so far, where I've learned so much (also about myself). One of the best things about it: that the training group of qualified teachers and students are wonderful and caring characters who all have that same mindset and the devotion of passing on the best of antenatal wisdom to expecting parents. Seeing them once month (well, pre-Covid times) is a real highlight.

### What do you hope to bring to parents once qualified?

When I'm finished with my training, I want to be able to provide expecting parents with a good learning experience, so that they will have the really relevant information they need for the birth of their baby. Informed decision making is always at the heart of Antenatal Ireland courses anyway, so this will be something I will focus on. It would be good too, to get the message across that confidence in their body and in birth as a natural process is so important.



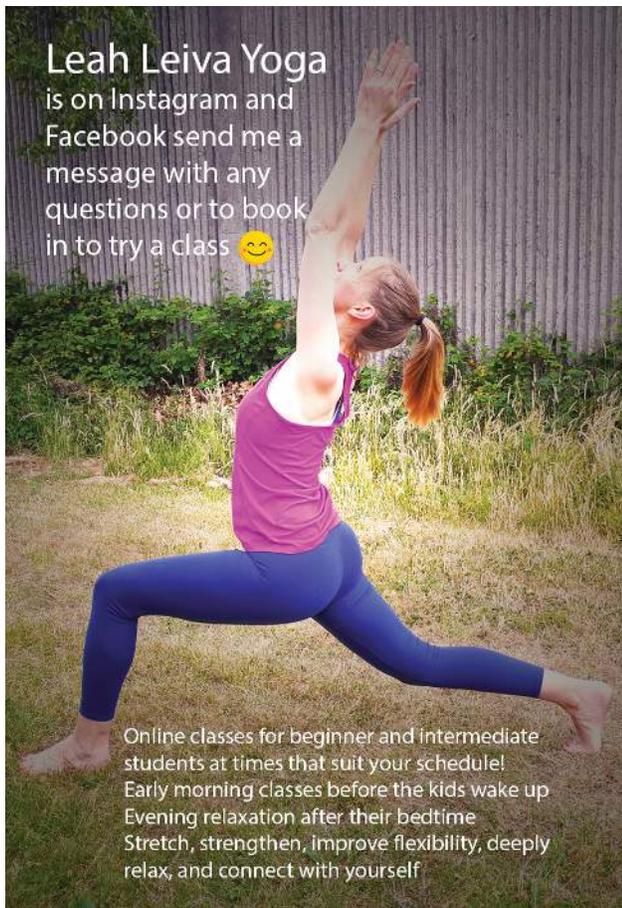
To find out how you can train with Cuidiú Antenatal Ireland, contact us on - [info@antenatalireland.ie](mailto:info@antenatalireland.ie)



**Antenatal Ireland**  
Building Confidence for Birth & Parenting

# ADVERTISEMENTS

Leah Leiva Yoga is on Instagram and Facebook send me a message with any questions or to book in to try a class 😊



Online classes for beginner and intermediate students at times that suit your schedule!  
 Early morning classes before the kids wake up  
 Evening relaxation after their bedtime  
 Stretch, strengthen, improve flexibility, deeply relax, and connect with yourself

Loving | Compassionate | Support

*Limerick Doula*  
SERVICES

Taking some of the stress out of pregnancy and early parenting! ❤️

Providing gold standard birth and postpartum doula support, hypnobirthing and antenatal education for families in Munster.



[limerickdoulaservices.ie](http://limerickdoulaservices.ie)  

Knowledge | Encouragement | Support

*DoulaCare*  
IRELAND

Your National Birth & Postpartum Doula Service

All our doulas are **Garda Vetted**, are **insured** and undergo rigorous recruitment to join our Agency.

**We provide a range of virtual and in-person supports\*:**  
 Breastfeeding Support - VBAC Classes - Comfort Measures Classes - Birth Preferences Consultations - Birth Doula Support - Postpartum Support

\*Subject to Government Covid19 Guidelines

Supporting your choices with our skills and experience.



[www.doulacare.ie](http://www.doulacare.ie) | [info@doulacare.ie](mailto:info@doulacare.ie)

**DOULA**  
ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

Reliable information | Unwavering support

Realise your dreams of a positive pregnancy, birth, postpartum, and parenting journey.

**FREE!** Book a **free 30-min virtual consultation** with a professional doula at [www.doula.ie](http://www.doula.ie)

# Cuidiú Family Membership

Membership is €25 from January to December  
Join from 1st July until the end of the year for just €13  
(plus Pay Pal fees when joining online)

Sign up at [www.cuidiu.ie](http://www.cuidiu.ie)

## Why become a Family Member?

- ~ Invitations to members only events ~
- ~ Discounts with many local and national businesses (shown below) ~
- ~ Most importantly you will be supporting a charity run exclusively by volunteers dedicated to helping others on their parenting journey ~



Businesses on the Cuidiú discount scheme are not endorsed or recommendation by Cuidiú.  
Our discount policy can be found on our website - [www.cuidiu.ie](http://www.cuidiu.ie)