



THE FEDERATION OF
MOTHER AND
CHILD HOMES
AND SHELTERS

SUPPORT FOR EXPECTANT PARENTS
AND FAMILIES WITH INFANTS

Great start

BRIGHTEN UP BABY TIME!

Hey you, baby's parent

LIFE WITH A BABY is full of joy and challenges at the same time. Your days are filled with feeding the baby, changing nappies, taking care of the baby and worrying about the household. Time for yourself is precious and scarce. Sleep may be fragmented and you are probably tired almost all the time.

All parents need help and advice as they grow into their new role. Other parents often give great advice, but sometimes we also need professional help. If you have been feeling overwhelmed or depressed for a long time, or there are stressful issues in your life, you might need special


SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE. YOU ARE VALUABLE.



support. Exhaustion, stress and feelings going up and down, in the worst case, they can lead to rough handling of the baby or even mistreatment.

Help might also be needed if you have illnesses, are very young, have learning difficulties or finances are really tight.

Member organizations of The Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters (Ensi- ja turvakotien liitto) offer support for parents in different types of challenging parenting situations.



OUR SERVICES ARE MADE
FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY.



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“HELP! Things shouldn’t be like this!”

BEING WITH THE BABY WILL

BRING MORE JOY AND

YOU CAN FEEL MORE RELAXED.

When daily life is not working well

YOU ARE NOT THE ONLY ONE. Many are surprised by how difficult baby care can be. It is great that you are seeking help for your family.

The whole family feels fine when daily life flows smoothly and the parenting role is internalized. If you feel that every day is chaotic, we can help. It is possible to make daily life more sensible and manageable.

We become parents gradually by being and living with the baby. It is important that you try to understand what the baby wants to tell you. By working with us, you will receive support in learning how to take care of your baby, finding daily routines and recognizing the baby’s communications and needs.

Support will help you to notice and understand better what the baby needs.



Be kind to yourself

Things don't always have
to be perfect – neither
you, your home, your
partner nor your child

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The home doesn't
need to be immaculate
all the time

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You will feel better if
you take a more relaxed
approach

This is
how we can
help you



BABY BLUES

When the baby doesn't sleep and you continue to feel exhausted and overwhelmed, a Baby Blues worker can help.

Even talking to a worker on the phone can help to break the cycle of insomnia or bring some relief to the baby's crying spells. You could also meet with a Baby Blues worker at your home or at his or her office.

The Baby Blues team organizes meetings for families with babies in similar situations and works in cooperation with Maternity and Child Health Care Clinics. The service is free and you can contact them anonymously.

"Thank you, this is important work without which I would not have survived the desolation, helplessness and hopelessness of the early stages. I can't even imagine where I would have been. That I was 'held and hugged' will definitely impact my whole life and the life of my child as well!" Mother

DAY GROUPS

When daily life with the baby seems hard to manage and you want to improve your skills as a parent or you need support from other families with babies, a day group is a good solution.

Regular routines, frequent meetings, group activities and discussions with other families with babies bring joy and reassurance and build capabilities for the family's daily life. You can contact the day group workers directly or inquire about the services from the Maternity and Child Health Care Clinics or Child Protection Services.

- 4-6 FAMILIES
- 2-3 TIMES A WEEK FOR HALF A YEAR
- 4-5 HOURS AT A TIME

"Day groups are very accessible, and it is easy to ask for and receive help." Day group participant mother

MOTHER AND CHILD HOMES (ENSIKOTI)

Ensikoti is a homely place where you and your family are supported round the clock.

Ensikoti is a community where we learn parenting together, support each other and share experiences. The whole family is welcome. In Ensikoti, you will find a safe space where the needs of both the baby and the parents are heard and mutual relationships are strengthened in the beginning of your new family life.

You can come to an Ensikoti even before the baby is born. The length of stay at the Ensikoti is agreed on together with the child protection social worker. It is usually a few months, and in the final stage we practise transitioning to your own home.

"Going to the Ensikoti was the best decision of my life." A mother at an Ensikoti



VAUVAITKEE.FI

If the baby cries a lot, you may feel helpless or get tired of the crying. Sometimes it can be difficult to pacify the baby.

At the website vauvaitkee.fi, you can find help and tips on how to pacify your baby.

Babies cry to express themselves. A cry is a baby's way of telling you things. Sometimes babies cry when there is an emergency and sometimes just because they need love and attention. Sometimes there is no clear reason for the crying. A baby's cry must always be responded to.

VOLUNTEER DOULA

If you are expecting a baby alone or if you and your partner feel that you need someone by your side, a volunteer doula support person could be a good choice.

The volunteer doula is there to support your family at the final stage of pregnancy and at childbirth. The doula's main job is to be there for you, listen and give advice. She works based on the needs and wishes of your family. The volunteer and the family meet each other three times on average.

"The doula's presence brought a feeling of safety to the birthing experience. I knew that I would not end up alone at any stage." A mother who gave birth

ÄIMÄ MOTHERS FREE FROM POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION ORGANIZATION

If you have become gloomy and depressed, and the joy of being with the baby has disappeared, peer support and knowledge about postpartum depression can help.

Äimä is a peer support organization helping mothers suffering from postpartum depression and postnatal psychosis by offering peer support. Peer support groups, private and group chats, peer support over the phone and private meetings with support mothers are offered. The website Äimä.fi is aimed at mothers suffering from depression, their spouses and other close relatives.

"Sometimes it helps just to talk things out with someone who has had a similar experience, who cares." A recovered mother

This is how we can help.



MY STORY

At the bus stop, jacket open, without gloves.

I didn't know anyone who had been to a day group. I wondered if I could make the commitment to go there three times a week. Leaving the house in the mornings was also scary. Sometimes I have been at the bus stop with my jacket open and without gloves, though I dressed the children well.

I have received a lot of help and support. When we got to the group in the mornings, we were warmly welcome; the baby got a lap while I got to eat breakfast. It was also meaningful to get to know the other mothers.

Now the children have grown and I have learned to ask for help earlier. Many don't ask for help because they are afraid that their distress is not great enough. Fatigue is reason enough. If you just wait and watch for a couple of months, you may already

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You get so tired you think that extreme fatigue is normal. Luckily, I started to cry at the doctor's office at the Maternity and Child Health Care Clinic. The doctor started to tell me about the day groups and the nurse also recommended them.

have reached the end of your tether. Tiredness makes the small things feel bigger.

The day group has helped our family more than we could even have hoped for.



A BABY WHO HAS BEEN LOVED AND NURTURED

LEARNS TO VALUE HERSELF AND OTHERS.



We are in many cities around Finland:

BABY BLUES:

- Helsingin ensikoti ry (Helsinki)
- Keski-Suomen ensi- ja turvakoti ry (Jyväskylä)
- Kokkolan ensi- ja turvakoti ry (Kokkola)
- Kuopion Ensikotiyhdistys ry (Kuopio)
- Kymenlaakson Ensi- ja turvakotiyhdistys ry (Kotka)
- Lahden ensi- ja turvakoti ry (Lahti)
- Lapin ensi- ja turvakoti ry (Rovaniemi)
- Oulun ensi- ja turvakoti ry (Oulu)
- Perheidenpaikka ry (Outokumpu)
- Tampereen ensi- ja turvakoti ry (Tampere)

DAY GROUPS:

- Etelä-Karjalan perhetyön kehittämisyhdistys ry (Lappeenranta)
- Helsingin ensikoti ry (Helsinki)
- Kokkolan ensi- ja turvakoti ry (Kokkola)
- Kuopion Ensikotiyhdistys ry (Kuopio)
- Kymenlaakson Ensi- ja turvakotiyhdistys ry (Kotka)
- Lahden ensi- ja turvakoti ry (Lahti)
- Oulun ensi- ja turvakoti ry (Oulu)
- Porin ensi- ja turvakoti ry (Pori)
- Tampereen ensi- ja turvakoti ry (Tampere)
- Vuoksenlaakson ensi- ja turvakoti ry (Imatra)
- Ylä-Savon ensi- ja turvakotiyhdistys ry (Iisalmi)

ENSIKODIT:

- Helsingin ensikoti ry (Helsinki)
- Keski-Suomen ensi- ja turvakoti ry (Jyväskylä)
- Kokkolan ensi- ja turvakoti ry (Kokkola)
- Lahden ensi- ja turvakoti ry (Lahti)
- Lapin ensi- ja turvakoti ry (Rovaniemi)
- Oulun ensi- ja turvakoti ry (Oulu)
- Raahen ensi- ja turvakoti ry (Raahе)
- Tampereen ensi- ja turvakoti ry (Tampere)
- Turun ensi- ja turvakoti ry (Turku)

VOLUNTEER DOULA

FOR THE FAMILIES IN NEED OF SPECIAL SUPPORT

- ask the nearest association.

VAUVAITKEE.FI

AIMA.FI

ENSIJATURVAKOTIENLIITTO.FI (FINNISH)

ETKL.FI (ENGLISH)

The Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters (Ensi- ja turvakotien liitto)

Asemamiehenkatu 4 | 00520 Helsinki | p. 09 4542 440 | etkl.fi | ensijaturvakotienliitto.fi