

The Maternity Journey

Road Map for Working Mothers

Month	Event	What to be doing & thinking
1	Discovery	<p>Congratulations! - You've found out that you are pregnant. Now you need to find out as much as you can about how this might affect you and what it means for you as a mother and as an employee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Practical Information:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ What your rights are as a working mother○ The childcare support that My Family Care provides● You might also like to think about finding an internal mentor – someone who has been through the same journey that you are embarking on whether it's first, second or even third child. (This might be easier when the news is out at month 3.)● Also, start thinking about what the arrival of a baby might mean for you both personally and professionally
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3	The news	<p>Telling your boss and your team can be difficult - it needn't be. Prepare for telling your line manager and your colleagues. Prepare for it like an important meeting and have your thoughts and ideas about professional and personal priorities clear.</p> <p>Starting a support network – Going through the maternity journey as a working parent can feel lonely and isolated. Start creating a support network by attending workshops on the subject of maternity/paternity. If you have not started before you might also like to think about finding an internal mentor – someone who has been through the same journey that you are embarking on whether it's first, second or even third child.</p> <p>My Family Care – It would be great at this stage to speak to a MFC maternity & childcare consultant so we can talk through the maternity journey, establish the relationship and act in a mentor capacity when needed.</p>
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7 Preparing to leave

- Remain engaged!
- Handling your work relationships:
 - You might start being excluded from meetings – challenge this and don't take it personally
 - Feedback before you leave – make sure there is a clear record of where you are at in your career before you depart on mat leave
 - Have a clear and documented plan for handing over your work – it's what your colleagues expect and can make the return to work much easier
 - Be clear how you are going to stay in touch if that's what you want – will you be able to log on to the intranet? Do you need to maintain passwords? Do you have a private email address? Who will you stay in touch with?
 - How long do you plan to take off? Communicate it



9 to 15 /
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Maternity

It's a journey – priorities will change, it can be emotional (and tiring!).

My Family Care can provide a good guide to some of the feelings you will go through. Make sure you:

- Reassess your priorities – feelings of guilt and conflicts are normal. You will need to work your way through them
- Have a plan for keeping your skills up to date – speak to HR or your line manager for more details
- Stay in touch if you want to – it makes the return easier
- Work out how to sort out your childcare. What is the best solution for you, your family and your job
- Backup Childcare – your childcare arrangements will break down; it will be stressful. Have a plan in place for when it does
- Start thinking about hours – what is the work life balance you need. What hours will be able to work
- Talk to your partner – and agree roles and responsibilities
- Agree return date!
- Find a mentor – either use the MFC consultant but also good to find someone at work who has been through the same journey



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The return

Practically – what needs setting up before you come back – desks, location, passwords

Back in the swing – have a plan for how you get back involved. Press your line manager for details. Seek career coaching

Skills – what needs updating; what have you missed? Confidence key and training can be a massive help in reassuring you that you have not lost any of the skills you had before maternity leave.



Performance – seek feedback on how you are doing. It's essential to have an open discussion about performance and expectations.

Assess – make a plan to give yourself a proper carer/mother assessment: look at your job; the hours; the pressures; the work life balance. Things will have changed – don't let the change itself be a cause of stress.

Childcare – do you have the right childcare in place? Use a dedicated MFC maternity consultant to help make sure you always have the right childcare (which will include the occasional childcare breakdown).

Childcare Vouchers – have you signed up to Childcare Vouchers? It's a great way of saving some of the costs of childcare.

Mentors and Networks - there will be challenges combining work and family – you will not be the first to face them! Try and find an internal mentor how also combined work and family.