

For more information about the Young Mothers' Service,  
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West Lothian  
Council

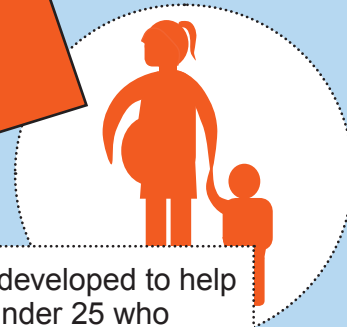
# The Young Mothers' Service

Reporting on the first two years

Improving life  
chances for  
mothers &  
children



# What is the Young Mothers' Service?



The service was developed to help support women under 25 who are pregnant or parenting

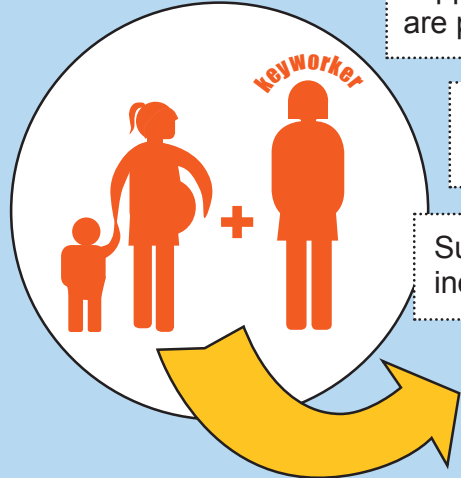
Each young mother involved with the service is paired with a keyworker

Support is also available for partners, including a dedicated Dads' Worker

The kind of support the keyworker offers depends on what each young mother needs

## Goals of the service

- Improved and sustained health and wellbeing for mothers and children
- Mothers improve their confidence and believe in themselves



Since the Young Mothers' Service began

**58** & **64**  
young mothers children

have taken part

## What do young mothers say about their keyworkers?

"Don't think I would be where I am today without my keyworker's help. Thanks a lot!"

"Thank you to my keyworker for being there when I was not feeling my best and the support with my children."

"They took everything I was going through into consideration."



## Emerging results from the service

Young mothers find their relationship with key worker positive and supportive. Young mothers believe they can effect change.

Reduced depression and anxiety amongst mothers.

Young mothers have increased knowledge about child development, attachment, and what children need in the home environment. Young mothers feel more confident about the future.

Improved relationships between mothers and children.

10 children removed from the Child Protection Register.

Mothers are more aware of support that is available to them.

A more stable and healthy home environment for both mothers and children.

High level of engagement, with only 1 young mother not engaging.

Improved wellbeing for mother and child. Decrease in statutory Social Work involvement with the family.

8 mothers supported to enter full time employment, with 14 others working toward this goal.

## Do young mothers think the service has helped them?

“I’m very much more confident by myself and all the support I needed was met.”

“Took me a long time but got there in the end.”

“Now that I’m confident I can take my child places without being anxious.”

## How do young mothers find out about the service?

Most women are referred to the service by health visitors, Family Nurse Practitioners and Social Work, but they can also be referred if they attend Sure Start or other parenting groups. Keyworkers make contact with the young women by phoning, texting, or dropping by for visits.

Volunteers from local groups have knitted baby gifts for the young mothers, which keyworkers bring to them during their first visit. These gifts have helped the young women feel that they are an important and valued part of the community.



## How do the keyworkers support the young mothers?



All of the young women involved with the service have experienced challenges in their lives. The needs-led approach means that keyworkers can be responsive to the young mothers and offer flexible support:

“ I’ve had a couple of clients in particular, really young mums, that have had to have a piece of really intense working. Over short periods, one shorter than another, but requiring long hours, late working and early working actually to attend appointments. But really she has needed that because she’s got no other consistent family support, really no family support. And without that I just don’t know where she would have been. So I feel it’s really important that we are able to have the autonomy to facilitate that with this young lass. YMS Keyworker

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## Some ways keyworkers have supported young mothers



What happened	How it helped the young mother	How it helped the child
Keyworker helped mother to attend a baby group and a walking group	Mother feels more confident and independent as she can now go to these groups on her own	Child benefits from the different group experiences
Help and support around healthy diet and lifestyle	Mother is more confident she can give her child balanced meals	Child is healthier
Support in getting a private let and furnishing it	Mother has a secure place to live and is becoming more independent	Child's living conditions are improved
Support to access local community groups and college	Mother feels less isolated	Mother was still pregnant at the time so pregnancy was more positive

The young mothers described how important keyworkers had become in their lives:

“ I struggle with depression ever since I had ma wee boy and some days I can feel like, horrible and like, talk bad about maself, and [keyworker] would say to me, ‘Look, this isnae how it is’, and she’d tell me all the things that make her proud of me.

I didnae think I was doing well when I first had ma wee boy, I thought I was useless and she did everything in her power to make me feel like I was a good mum.

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Keyworkers encourage the young mothers to recognize their own capabilities and build their confidence. As one keyworker said:

“ You need to be really aware of small achievements and praise them and point out to them the achievements that they have managed on their own or the skills that they have taken on board but that they’ve done them. That’s what I’m saying about the dependence, you need to be careful that they don’t think you did that. You need to make them aware that they did that.

YMS Keyworker

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## Interagency working

The Young Mothers’ Service links with other agencies to provide support. For example, many of the women involved with keyworking also attend Sure Start groups.

Young mothers can also work with the Youth Inclusion Project, which supports young people to build the work and social skills they need to take part in education or employment.

All of the women involved with keyworking are asked in a safe and confidential space if they have ever experienced domestic and/or sexual abuse. Support and help is offered to any young mother who would like it.



**Weaning Group**  
**Sure Start groups**  
**Baby Massage** **Incredible Years**  
**Young Mums 2B**