

How PANDA can help

Becoming a parent can be a joyful, happy time, but it can also be complicated, confusing and overwhelming.

You might experience feelings of grief, sadness or loss as well as changes to who you are and what's important to you.

If you are experiencing thoughts or feelings that affect your daily functioning and wellbeing, it's a good idea to reach out for support.

PANDA operates Australia's only National Helpline providing counselling and information to support your mental health when you are a new or expecting parent. PANDA also supports partners and family members who may be supporting you, or experiencing their own struggles.

Our Helpline operates Monday to Saturday and is staffed by skilled clinical and peer counsellors and volunteers.

You don't have to be in a crisis to call PANDA. Reaching out for help early is one of the best things you can do for your mental health. Our team is here to support you no matter what you are wondering about, feeling or experiencing.

"When I was in the middle of it, I felt like I'd never get better. But I did."



Our mental health checklist

can help you to see if what you're experiencing or observing in a loved one could be reason to seek help. Find the checklist on our website.



PANDA National Helpline
1300 726 306
(Monday to Saturday)
Translators available



Find out more
about what to expect when
you call PANDA's Helpline



Planning, starting or raising a family?

PANDA is here for you



**PANDA supports parents and families
across Australia during pregnancy and
throughout the first year of parenthood.**

PANDA National Helpline
(Monday to Saturday)
1300 726 306

panda.org.au



What do perinatal mental health challenges look like?

Everyone's experiences and challenges look different.

You might start to struggle during pregnancy, or feel things are not right after birth, or many months after birth.

Your feelings, thoughts and behaviour can change quickly or slowly.

There are some key things to watch for in yourself, or your partner or loved one. These include:

- Constant worry, often focused on your baby's health, wellbeing and safety
- Feeling nervous, on edge, stressed or panicky
- Unwanted, scary thoughts (also called intrusive thoughts)
- Feeling that things aren't right and you aren't yourself
- Feeling teary, sad, low, or hopeless
- Difficulty with focus, concentration or memory, 'brain fog'
- Struggling to connect with your baby or loved ones
- Withdrawing from friends, family, and activities you usually enjoy
- Feeling angry, frustrated or irritable

"Having someone listen, validate and normalise my experience was exactly what I needed."

"I called the PANDA Helpline with my first baby when she was 6 months old. Having someone listen, validate and normalise my experience was exactly what I needed. Also exploring my traumatic birth and understanding the impact that it had had on my early parenting journey was very enlightening.

I hadn't connected the two previously.

I also found the follow up excellent - the counsellor kept calling to check in with me every week or so until I was certain that I was OK. This was a wonderful safety net, knowing that if I had any issues arise during the week I could note them down and talk them through with her."

— Lauren



Who is PANDA here for?

- People expecting a baby
- New parents
- Dads
- People who speak languages other than English (translated website and telephone support)
- LGBTQIA+ families
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- Grandparents, family and friends of expecting and new parents

"I thought I'd love my baby instantly, but I could hardly bear to look at her."

