

PRESS RELEASE

9 September 2022

THE DESIGN COUNCIL ARE FIRST UK ORGANISATION TO OFFER BABY MASSAGE FOR ALL NEW PARENTS

In what they believe is a UK employment first, the Design Council has introduced courses in infant massage to their core colleague benefits for all new parents.

This has been introduced as a way to support colleagues with infants up to 6 months old with a benefit that encourages wellbeing and bonding. The online 5-week International Association of Infant Massage course teaches parents how to soothe and calm their baby. Evidence has shown that baby massage helps with alleviating post-natal depression, aiding sleep and reducing stress levels for babies, mothers, and fathers alike.

The move promotes a supportive employer approach towards parental leave and caregiving that is in contrast to the traditional position, where women in particular, were often anxious to discuss the subject with their company.

This benefit is part of a wider wellbeing programme that the Design Council is building. They are working with Wellbeing International, to deliver a range of resources including wellbeing capsules to support the emotional wellbeing and mental health for all colleagues.

The Design Council's CEO Minnie Moll, who previously worked in an organisation that was twice winner of the Sunday Times Best Place to Work in the UK, is passionate about building culture. She said:

"We wanted to do something unique to show our support for colleagues through this exciting change in their personal life. While this benefit is absolutely for fathers too, it is particularly important to make women who have a career break to have children feel valued and supported. It is well documented that motherhood can have a negative impact on career for women, whether that is limited flexibility, being overlooked for promotion, or gender pay gap. There's still much to be done to address this. Our baby massage initiative is a small gesture that we hope says a lot about how much we value our colleagues".

Design Council colleague Jessie Johnson, who piloted the programme after the birth of her son, said:

"I am so grateful that the Design Council values its parent community and gave me the opportunity to spend more quality time with my baby while getting to learn a new skill for life. Mylo's sleep routine has benefitted from the addition of short massage routines which help him get into the space of sleeping and it's made applying suncream a joy rather than a chore. I would recommend baby massage for any mum that wants to take some time out of a busy baby schedule to just pause, relax and take a moment to enjoy your baby."

WellBeing International Consultant and IAIM Instructor & Trainer Kate Pigeon-Owen said:

"Over the past 20 years there has been a significant increase in research into the role of touch in infancy and parent-infant attachment security, with touch being the primary way new-born babies

encounter their parents and experience their environment. This is an incredible move from the Design Council to show their recognition and support of an important time in the personal lives of many of their team.”

- ENDS -

Notes to Editor:

For further information, images and interview requests please contact:

press@designcouncil.org.uk

[IMAGES can be downloaded here.](#)

Benefits of infant massage ([source](#)):

Research shows the following benefits for parents:

- Increases bonding and improves interaction with the infant post-partum
- Increased awareness of subtle signals or clues babies give from their sounds and movements
- Encouraging healthy close attachment to be formed
- reduce parent-related stress.
- Effectively engaging fathers in the postpartum period
- improves mother-infant interaction for mothers with postnatal depression
- Increased confidence as parents

Infants benefit in both physical and psychosocial ways such as:

- Calmed nervous system
- Reduced colic symptoms
- Stimulated circulation and lymphatic circulation
- Increased respiration, hormonal function
- Muscle tone coordination,
- Improved sleep patterns
- Enhances sense of love and trust with parent
- Bonding and communication

About Design Council:

The Design Council is the UK’s national strategic advisor for design, championing design and its ability to make life better for all. It is an independent and not for profit organisation incorporated by

Royal Charter. The Design Council uniquely works across all design sectors and delivers programmes with business, government, public bodies and the third sector. The work encompasses thought leadership, tools and resources, showcasing excellence, and research to evidence the value of design and influence policy. Their Design for Planet mission was introduced in 2021 to galvanise and support the 1.97 million people who work in the UK's design economy to help achieve net zero and beyond.

#DesignForPlanet

www.designcouncil.org.uk

About WellBeing International:

WellBeing International exists to make a positive difference in your life, in the life of your loved ones and your business. Effective, achievable, mind-blowingly simple changes are our speciality.

www.wellbeinginternational.co.uk