Take a Big Tea Break for Maternal Mental Health

Thursday 6 October, 2016

The Breastfeeding Network is encouraging people across the UK to put the kettle on to support mums' mental health.

The charity is asking parents, families, community groups and healthcare professionals to organise a Big Tea Break to start a conversation about maternal mental health and help raise funds for the BfN's vital Drugs in Breastmilk information service.

This service provides families and healthcare professionals with evidence-based information about the safety of medications, procedures and treatments while breastfeeding. Around 15–20% of enquiries are about mental health issues such as post-natal depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder and OCD, and the number is increasing year on year. Many mums who get in touch with the service are considering delaying starting important treatment because they cannot find useful information about their medication and the impact on breastmilk.

One mum who used the service told us: *"You have saved me and my daughters many times over thanks to your support to keep taking my meds and to keep breastfeeding".*

Shereen Fisher, CEO of the Breastfeeding Network said: *"Maternal mental health problems affect more than 1 in 10 new mums. From our work supporting mums every day, we know talking about things often helps, and the BfN Big Tea Break gives us all the chance to get together with friends, family or colleagues and start a conversation about this really important issue".*

The BfN Big Tea Break site has loads of ideas on making the most of your gathering, from using it as an opportunity for professional development to holding a "bake-off"-style competition. You'll even find downloadable cake bunting and printable donation boxes.

As part of the campaign, the BfN is also asking people to join in with our #teabreakchallenge. Just share a photo of your tea break (big or small) on Twitter or Facebook using #teabreakchallenge, text 70070 DIBM88 £3 to donate and then nominate a friend to have a tea break as well. BfN supporters – including record-breaking Paralympian Dame Sarah Storey – will also be sharing their favourite tea break recipes.

The campaign runs from 8–22 October, and the official launch will take place at the BfN's annual conference in Bury on 8 October.

For more information visit www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/bfns-big-tea-break

Notes to Editors

- Contact: Felicity Lambert felicity.lambert@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk / 07826671222 / 07979872301
- Hi-res images available
- For more information on the Drugs in Breastmilk information service, visit www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/drugs-in-breastmilk/

The **Breastfeeding Network** (BfN) aims to be an independent source of support and information for breastfeeding women and others. It aims to:

- Promote breastfeeding and a greater understanding of breastfeeding in the United Kingdom.
- Collect and disseminate information on breastfeeding and baby and infant nutrition.
- Provide information and support to parents on the feeding of babies and infants.
- Set and encourage the acceptance of quality standards for breastfeeding support.
- Establish and publish codes of practice for such support.

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The Breastfeeding Network

T. 07979872301
E. felicity.lambert@breastfeedingnetwork...
W. https://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk

Additional Contact(s):
admin@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk
08444 120 995

www.twitter.con/NBHelpline
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