


# Gidget House

Face to Face Psychological Support for Families  
Experiencing Perinatal Depression and Anxiety





## How do I make an appointment at Gidget House?

To book an appointment, or find out more information, please call Gidget Foundation Australia on **1300 851 758** or email [contact@gidgethouse.org.au](mailto:contact@gidgethouse.org.au)

## WHAT IS GIDGET HOUSE?

Gidget Foundation Australia's Gidget House Program provides FREE psychological consultations for expectant and new parents nationwide.

Gidget House is a safe haven for parents, with services provided by psychologists and social workers.

## WHO DOES GIDGET HOUSE SUPPORT?

Gidget House is available to any expectant and new parents who have a diagnosis of, or are at risk of developing, a perinatal mood or anxiety disorder and who:

- are pregnant; or
- have a baby up to 12 months old.

Support is also provided to people who have experienced a pregnancy or childbirth-related loss, such as stillbirth, miscarriage or termination, within the last 12 months.

Partners are able to access our specialised services as well.

## HOW MUCH DOES GIDGET HOUSE COST?

Our perinatal mental health specialists provide a minimum of **10 individual psychological consultations free of charge** within a calendar year. (The cost of these sessions is fully funded by Gidget Foundation Australia in collaboration with Medicare Australia's Better Access to Psychiatrists, Psychologists and General Practitioner's initiative).

## HOW DO YOU ACCESS GIDGET HOUSE?

To access Gidget House, you will need a referral from a GP, including a mental health care plan. You can also access the service without a mental health care plan on a full fee paying basis, if you prefer.

A list of Gidget House locations can be found at [gidgetfoundation.org.au](http://gidgetfoundation.org.au)

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## WHAT IS PERINATAL DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY?

Depression and anxiety during pregnancy and the first year of parenting (the perinatal period) affect around 20% of mothers and 10% of fathers. Previously known as Postnatal Depression, we now refer to it as Perinatal Depression and Anxiety (PNDA) as we know that symptoms of depression and anxiety often occur together and start during pregnancy, rather than just postnatally. Research also shows that if anxiety is treated during pregnancy, the risk of developing depression postnatally is lower.

These are recognised, diagnosable and recoverable medical conditions; the result of biological, psychological and social factors. Left untreated, the impact on the mother, father, child and other family members can be profound.

Perinatal depression and anxiety should not be confused with the 'baby blues' that occur three to five days after giving birth. These feelings of teariness and anxiety affect around 80% of new mothers, are transient, and will dissipate without treatment, with extra support and reassurance given to the new mum.

## CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

Risk factors for perinatal depression and anxiety may include:

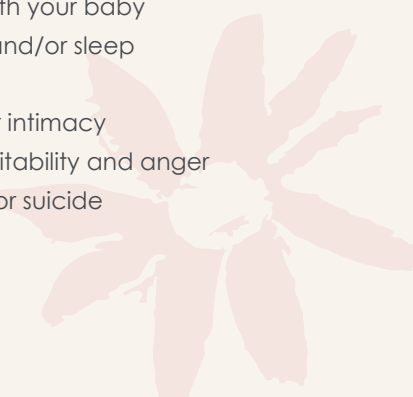
- \* Lack of emotional and/or practical support from family and friends
- \* Lack of support or understanding from partner
- \* Stress, such as related to finances, work or moving house



- \* Certain personality types e.g. a perfectionist personality
- \* Previous personal or family history of mental health issues
- \* Trauma background
- \* Recent bereavement
- \* Age less than 18 years or over 35 years
- \* Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander culture
- \* Living in a rural or remote location
- \* Culturally and linguistically diverse background

### **FEELINGS TO BE AWARE OF:**

- \* Feeling like you can't cope
- \* Feeling sadder than usual
- \* Constant worrying
- \* Feeling worthless
- \* Finding it harder to do daily tasks
- \* Withdrawing from family and/or friends
- \* Lack of connection with your baby
- \* Changes in appetite and/or sleep
- \* Loss of concentration
- \* Losing interest in sex or intimacy
- \* Extended periods of irritability and anger
- \* Thoughts of self-harm or suicide





Gidget Foundation Australia is a not for profit organisation that provides programs to support the emotional wellbeing of expectant and new parents.

The Gidget Foundation was named after a vibrant and joyful mother, who suffered from unrecognised postnatal depression. Her nickname was 'Gidget'. The Foundation evokes Gidget's warmth and lively spirit. Established by her friends and sisters, the organisation has grown and is now supported by passionate individuals, community leaders, health professionals, businesses and government.

New babies bring delight along with challenges. Nearly **1 in 5 mothers** and **1 in 10 fathers** will suffer perinatal depression and anxiety; that's around 100,000 Australians each year.

**Gidget Foundation Australia exists to support the emotional wellbeing of expectant and new parents to ensure they receive timely, appropriate and specialist care.**