

Breastfeeding a public health priority

Its impact on climate change, the cost of living crisis and food insecurity

Laura Quinn

Public Health Improvement Co-ordinator

December 2022
www.doncaster.gov.uk

Summary

Breastfeeding: A Public Health responsibility

Why should breastfeeding be promoted and protected?

Well established as a public health preventative measure. Wealth of evidence to confirm that breastfeeding Promotes health, Prevents disease and helps contribute to reducing health inequalities.

Breastfeeding as a positive contributor to climate change, and food insecurity is much less publicised.

We need to continue to promote the positive affects of breastfeeding which extend wider than health.

To do this we need to create an environment where those who choose to breastfeed have the support in place to do this for as long as they wish. This involves Doncaster businesses/venues signing up to “We Support Our Mums” (breastfeeding welcome scheme) and Doncaster Council as an organisation having a breastfeeding policy in place.

The power of breastmilk

- **“Breastfeeding is a natural “safety net” against the worst effects of poverty.... It is almost as if breastfeeding takes the infant out of poverty for those first few months in order to give the child a fairer start in life and compensate for the injustice of the world into which it was born.”**
- James P. Grant, Former Executive Director, UNICEF

What we know about breastmilk for baby?.....

- Breastfeeding has long-term benefits for babies, lasting right into adulthood.
- Any amount of breast milk has a positive effect. The longer a mum can breastfeed, the longer the protection lasts and the greater the benefits.
- Breastfeeding reduces a babies risk of:
 - Infections, with fewer visits to hospital as a result
 - Diarrhoea and vomiting, with fewer visits to hospital as a result
 - Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
 - Childhood leukaemia
 - Obesity
 - Cardiovascular disease in adulthood

Formula milk does not provide the same protection from illness

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/benefits-breastfeeding/>

Why is it good for mum?.....

Breastfeeding lowers a mum's risk of:

- Breast cancer
- Ovarian cancer
- Osteoporosis (weak bones)
- Cardiovascular disease
- Obesity
- Developing type 2 diabetes
- May protect against negative moods (postnatal depression) and perceived stress
- Breastfeeding burns off an extra 500 calories a day, consequently, breastfeeding mothers tend to lose some of the weight gained during pregnancy more quickly than women who formula feed.
- Breastfeeding also supports *involution* (the process whereby the uterus returns to its pre-pregnant size as a pelvic organ).

<https://www.bestbeginnings.org.uk/evidence-of-benefits-of-breastfeeding>

Doncaster Breastfeeding Rates 2022

*Two sets of data

First feed Breastmilk

- (Collected after birth) throughout 2022 on average **57.5%** of woman have given breastmilk as their babies first feed

Breastfeeding at 6/8 week after birth

- (Fully or partial) **34.7%**

A different approach

- Despite well publicised health benefits of breastfeeding. Breastfeeding rates in Doncaster remain fairly static.
- Started to consider how else we can promote breastfeeding, joined a Y&H BF, Climate change and environment special interest group of infant feeding leads.
- Worked in partnership, promoting this agenda to colleagues across the country. Held the first BF, Climate change and environment conference in November this year, and our chair spoke at the UNICEF Baby Friendly conference in December.

How does Breastfeeding link with climate change

- Since the 1980s, there has been an **83%** increase in climate related disasters, such as floods, droughts, and storms, which increase food insecurity.
- In 2016, over **530 million children** lived in countries affected by extreme-weather events and other climate-related emergencies, such as epidemics and crop failure.
- Due to climate change, heatwaves are increasingly common as we observed locally and globally this summer, and we know that infants have a higher risk of dehydration due to their size and that hospital admissions increase significantly for infants during heatwaves.
- recent changing weather conditions have led to poorer harvests, and higher production costs which families are feeling the burden of, higher food and energy prices will be especially harmful to low-income and vulnerable families.
- **By supporting an increase in breastfeeding rates we will see both long term benefits for health and climate change and immediate impact by reducing outgoing costs for families and protecting short term health.**

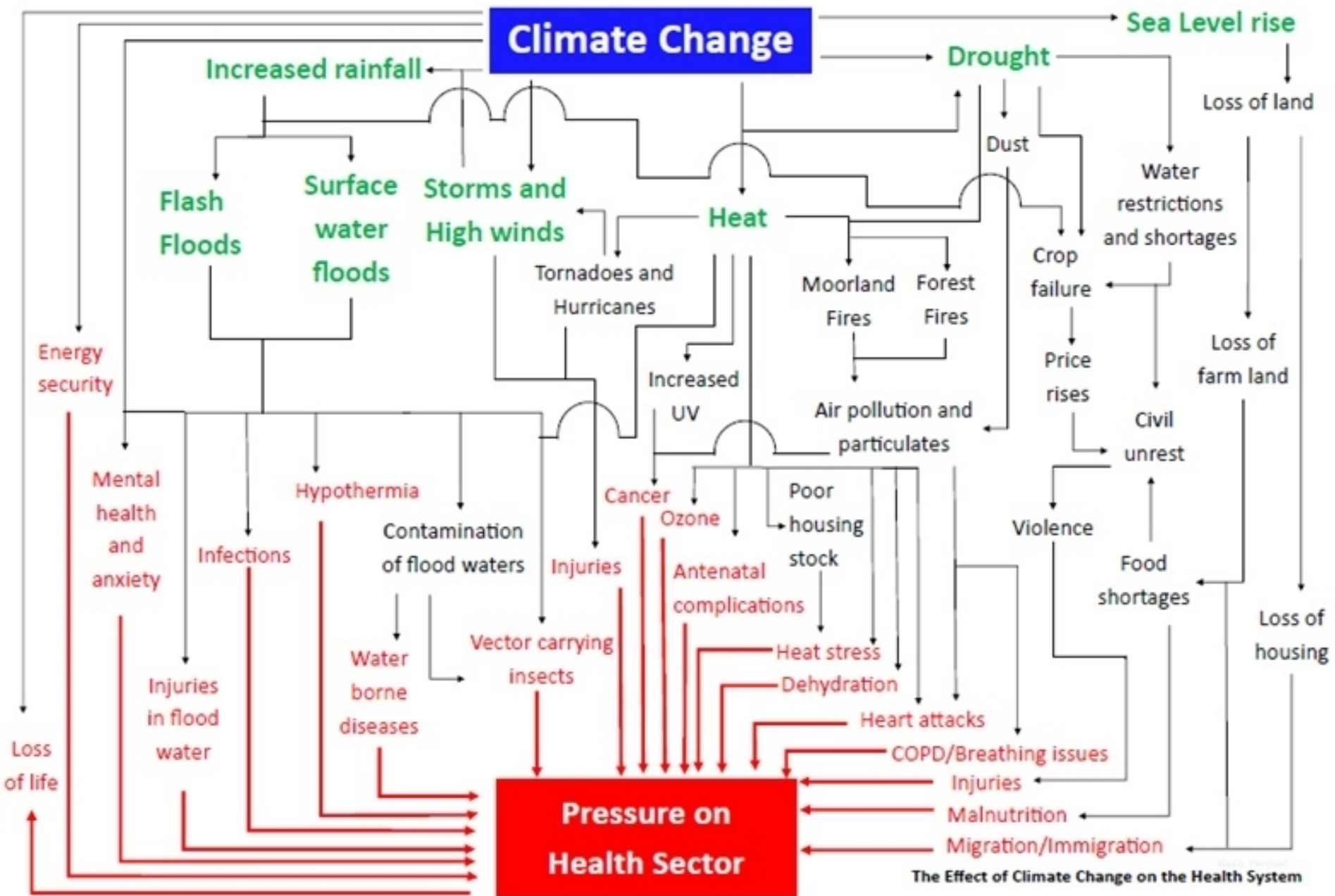


Diagram with acknowledgement from Frank Swinton WY Health Care Partnership

The climate cost of formula milk

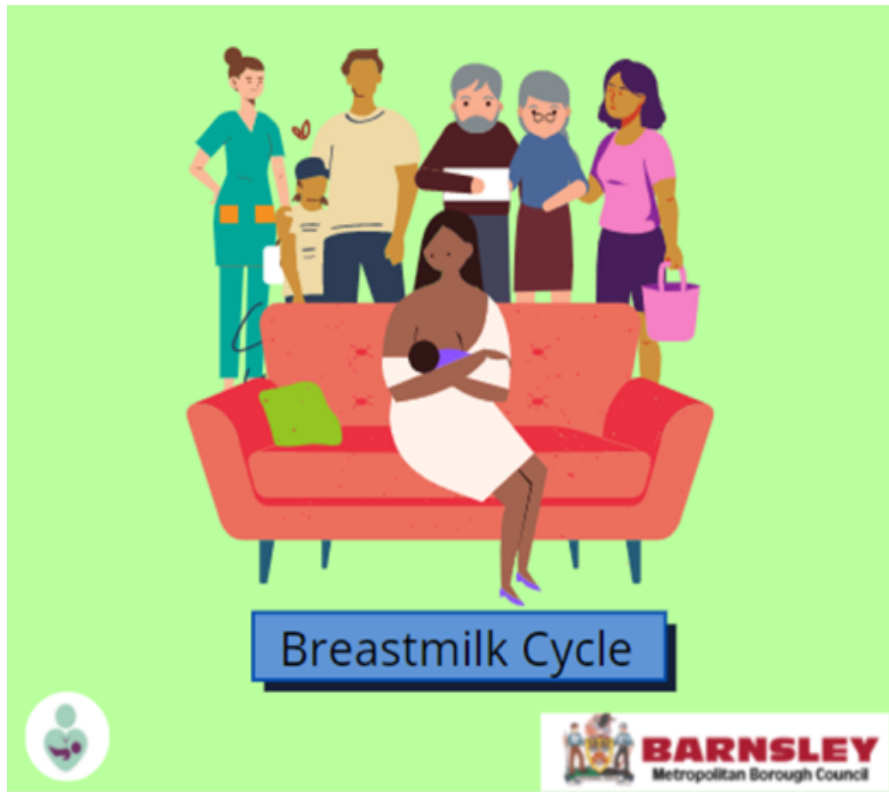
- The global infant formula market was **estimated at 2.7 billion tons** in 2017
- Each kilogram of milk formula generates **4 kg of greenhouse gas** around the world during production
- The EU is by far the largest exporter, exporting nearly **600,000 tons** across the world = **hundreds of thousands** of transport miles

The carbon footprint of artificial formula

- For the UK alone, carbon emission savings gained by supporting mothers to breastfeed would equate to taking between 50,000 and 77,500 cars off the road each year
- Powdered infant formula can be made safely only with water that has been heated to at least 70°C, giving an energy use equivalent to charging 200 million smartphones each year
- breastfeeding for six months saves an estimated 95-153 kg CO₂ equivalent per baby compared with formula feeding
- The production of unnecessary infant and toddler formulas exacerbates environmental damage and should be a matter of increasing global concern.

Joffe N, Webster F Shenker N Support for breastfeeding is an environmental imperative. BMJ 2019; 367:I5646

Support is essential



Images used with permission from Barnsley Council

Our animation



The animation was funded by South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board
<https://www.barnsleyhospital.nhs.uk/services/maternity-services/feeding-your-baby/>

We Support Our Mums

122 local businesses signed up



Certificate of Membership

This is to certify that

is a member of the
We Support Our Mums scheme
and supports breastfeeding
in Doncaster

Dr Rupert Suckling, Director of Public Health Date _____



Are you a breastfeeding mum?

Many businesses support breastfeeding in Doncaster.

For details of breastfeeding-friendly venues
visit www.doncaster.gov.uk/wsom



<https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/health-wellbeing/we-support-our-mums>

Breastfeeding and Mumbler

The screenshot shows the Doncaster Mumbler website. The browser address bar displays doncaster.mumbler.co.uk/pregnancy/breastfeeding-support/. The website header includes the Doncaster Mumbler logo with the tagline "Your Local Parenting Community", social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and Email, a "Join the chat" button, and a search bar. Below the header are two promotional buttons: "Doncaster Mumbler Awards" and "100 Doncaster Things to do before you're 11". The main navigation menu includes: What's On, For Grown-ups, For Kids, Pregnancy, Offers, Mumbler Recommends, and About Us. The featured content area contains a large purple banner for "SUPPORTING YOU ON YOUR BREASTFEEDING JOURNEY" with the subtext "IT'S MORE THAN JUST FOOD" and a "Find out More" button. To the right of the banner are four smaller white boxes with purple borders, each containing an icon and text: "Food & Meal Delivery", "Virtual classes and Activities for Kids", "Lockdown Resources", and "Walks Outdoors".

Breastfeeding Blog:

<https://doncaster.mumbler.co.uk/supporting-you-on-your-breastfeeding-journey/>

12 months worth of advertising, 2 live adverts, inclusion in 4 x newsletter, 4 x Blog

Breastfeeding related resources

WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU ON YOUR BREASTFEEDING JOURNEY

FAMILY HUBS
You can access breastfeeding support at your local Family Hub. We have trained breastfeeding champions who you can talk to and groups that you can come to with your baby to meet other families.

HEALTH PROMOTION PRACTITIONERS
We are also able to provide you with breastfeeding support, we organise the delivery of the breast pump service and run the breast start groups across Doncaster. We also make up part of the specialist breastfeeding team.

MIDWIVES
We will discuss breastfeeding whilst you're pregnant and will be there to help you get feeding off to a good start, from the moment your baby is born.

BREAST START/FIRST FRIENDS/GROWING FRIENDS GROUPS.
We have a selection of groups that run throughout Doncaster. They include our Breast Start, First Friends and Growing Friends groups. For more in formation please contact Single Point of Contact on 01302 566776 or ask at your local Family Hub.

HEALTH VISITOR
You will be allocated a health visitor who will see you both before and after your baby is born. We are here to provide support and guidance throughout your breastfeeding Journey. We also make up part of the specialist breastfeeding team.

ONLINE SUPPORT
Our maternity, health visiting and Family Hubs all have Facebook pages where you can access support. They are all monitored by staff who can answer your questions or point you in the right direction.

NURSERY NURSE
We complete some of the core visits, and you might also see us if you decide to come along to baby massage, First friends or Growing friends. We also make up part of the specialist breastfeeding team.

NEED TO LOAN A BREAST PUMP?
If you need to loan a breast pump, you can contact Single Point of Contact on 01302 566776.

WE SUPPORT OUR MUMS
Look out for the "We Support Our Mums" logo when you're out and about. If you see the logo at a venue it shows that they are supportive of breastfeeding mums. You can be confident that you will be made to feel welcome.

INFANT FEEDING SPECIALISTS
Both our Maternity and Health visiting services have Infant Feeding Specialists in post. If you need additional support with feeding your baby the health professional looking after you, will be able to refer you to an infant feeding specialist.

PEER SUPPORTERS
Doncaster have a team of volunteer breastfeeding peer supporters. They are all mums who have breastfed their babies and have completed training in order to offer their support to other local mums. Peer supporters can be found in the Breast start group/ First friends and growing friends group (Will be back when Covid 19 restrictions allow).

MIDWIFERY SUPPORT WORKERS (MSW)
We are here to offer you support with your breastfeeding. I will visit you at home after you've had your baby and I can be contacted through the Community Midwifery Hub (01302 642794) should you need any extra support.




IT'S MORE THAN JUST FOOD.



Breast milk is the healthiest food your baby can have - It's full of nutrients only available in breast milk.



Breast milk can help boost your baby's immune system throughout childhood.



Breast milk can help improve oral health



Breastfeeding can help protect against some cancers



Start introducing solid foods from six months of age.



Reduces the risk of sudden infant death.



Helps with relationship building and attachment between mother and baby.



It can help prevent obesity for the child later on in life. For mum breastfeeding can burn around 500 calories a day.



Breastfeeding is good for the environment.



It is free - breastfeeding doesn't cost a penny.

If you need help and support at any time we are all here for you and your family.



Doncaster Council

Breastfeeding related resources

WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU ON YOUR BREASTFEEDING JOURNEY

If you would like to speak to someone about breastfeeding, have a question, or need some support or advice you can contact:



A MIDWIFE / MATERNITY SUPPORT WORKER
Community Midwifery Hub: **01302 642794**

A HEALTH VISITOR
Single Point of Contact: **01302 566776**

NEED TO LOAN A BREASTPUMP?
Single Point of Contact: **01302 566776**

FAMILY HUB
There are 12 Family Hubs across Doncaster. Scan the code to find your nearest one.



WE SUPPORT OUR MUMS
Look out for the "We Support Our Mums" logo when you're out and about. It shows that a venue is supportive of a breastfeeding mum.

ONLINE
Access support on our maternity, health visiting and Family Hubs Facebook pages. They are all monitored by staff who can answer your questions or point you in the right direction.

Hello my name is

“Talk to me about breastfeeding”

My phone number is

The board is asked to:

Continue to support breastfeeding as a public health priority. Acknowledging all benefits associated.

Encourage venues to sign up to We Support Our Mums. Any business open to members of the public is able to join the scheme for free.



As an employer; Doncaster council.
Implement a breastfeeding policy,
demonstrating to employees returning to
work. We support them.

