

Lifestyle

PARENTS CAN LEARN FROM BABY'S STORY

By **Iain Howie**

A FAMILY from Stirling have called on expecting mums and dads and new parents to be aware of the early signs of a problem in newborn children.

Frazer and Kirsteen Scott say that looking out for problems with a baby's hips could prevent it having a long-term effect.

Their daughter Innes, now seven months, was diagnosed with developmental dysplasia, also known as "clicky hip", of her left hip at 12 weeks old.

Since then she has had surgery to re-position the hip joint and has been in a hip spica - a full body plaster cast from her chest to her feet - for more than four months to ensure that the joint is stable and has time to develop.

Mr and Mrs Scott believe that it is vital that parents know the signs to look out for that may indicate displacement and are campaigning for greater awareness of developmental dysplasia of the hip (DDH).

Kirsteen said: "Innes' DDH was picked up by her GP at a routine immunisation at 12 weeks, and although Innes had all the common signs of DDH from birth, no-one put them all together."

Innes is being treated at Edinburgh Sick Children's Hospital and is now in her third hip spica.

This is due to be removed next month and she will be fitted with a fixed brace to be worn for several months.

Frazer said: "Initially, it was very frustrating when Innes went into her cast, we had to think again and adapt the ways we did normal and routine things like getting out and about, buying a specialist car seat, washing, changing nappies and handling her day to day, but it wasn't long before it became second nature and Innes doesn't seem fazed at all by it."

"We have received great support from STEPS, in particular the forum for parents which has been a huge source of practical advice, support and comfort."

Kirsteen explained that during pregnancy and early checks after Innes' birth, they had heard lots



FAMILY TIES: Kirsteen and Frazer Scott with baby Innes in her bodycast.

Photo Ref: wpsow030209Scott-2

about babies and "clicky hips", but no-one really explains that this is what DDH is and what the journey might be if your baby is diagnosed. "Frazer and I have learned so much about living with a child with DDH and we hope that this knowledge might be useful to other local parents who are facing the same and that it can be used by the health service in some way," she said.

Confused

When a child is diagnosed with a lower limb condition, such as hip dysplasia, parents can often feel confused and isolated.

The couple have been working with STEPS, a small national charity, which provides a dedicated information and support service to parents which help them become effective carers of their children and to make confident and informed decisions at

what can be a confusing and difficult time.

The charity is launching its Baby Hip Health Week, from February 23 to 28, to coincide with the publication of a report that suggests that the majority of primary health care trusts in the United Kingdom do not even have a hip examination policy which is an important part of the newborn and six-eight week physical baby health check.

If you are concerned your child has a hip problem, it is recommended that you seek advice from your GP or health visitor immediately since treatment is usually less complex the earlier it is started.

Anyone wishing to get further advice should either contact the STEPS helpline on 0871 717 0044 or visit the STEPS website: www.steps-charity.org.uk.

Keeping your feelings to yourself

IT'S good to talk - just not too much and not to too many people.

That appears to be one of the main findings of the latest study of British attitudes which has been part-authored by lecturer at Stirling University.

Sociologist Dr Julie Brownlie has looked into public attitudes towards emotional support for the latest British Social Attitudes Survey and found that while people seemed to be happier about discussing their emotional lives now than in the past, they were still far from becoming dependent on professionals.

While almost half the people surveyed said they had grown up in homes where no one discussed their feelings, 66 per cent now believe people spend more time talking about how they feel - and around the same proportion say that it's important to them to be able to discuss their feelings.

Nearly half of those who were surveyed said they had actually sought emotional support from a friend or relative at least once a month during the previous year.

This strong emphasis on family and friends was especially important with

less than a third of those questioned having ever discussed their emotional lives with their GPs and only 16 per cent having spoken to a counsellor or therapist.

The report states: "There is undoubtedly an emerging consensus about the general value of 'talking about things' and a sense that we are now more open about difficulties in our emotional lives than we once were."

"But this does not translate into a universal or even widespread acceptance of formal therapeutic intervention and a sizeable proportion of the pop-

ulation remains wary of the idea of therapy or counselling, or simply understands very little about it".

And Dr Brownlie added: "Informal relationships continue to occupy a hugely important role in most people's lives, while formal emotional support - and especially the use of talk-based therapies - remains relatively rare."

The British Social Attitudes survey is the leading social research survey in Britain interviewing 3,300 randomly selected adults every year on a wide range of topics.

Extra cancer drug trials in Forth Valley

MORE cancer patients in Forth Valley are to be involved in trials with the latest drugs.

NHS Forth Valley says the move will put people on the cutting edge of treatment and give them access to the most up-to-date medication.

Already almost 250 patients have been recruited to cancer trials in Forth Valley - 178 breast, 36 lung, 20 haematology and 13 urology.

The total number of trials taking place is 23, with 15 open to recruitment and eight closed to new patients but now on follow-up.

NHS Forth Valley medical director Gareth Davies said: "It is important that we become involved with clinical trials to ensure the best outcome for patients."

"Cancer treatments are improving and new drugs are being developed. In deciding which trials we undertake we consider the best international evidence before making a decision."

At the latest board meeting, members heard NHS Forth Valley has an "excellent record" of diagnosing cancer and getting people treated quickly.

Figures published in autumn last year showed more than 96 per cent of patients urgently referred started treatment within two months. This is above the national average.

Cancer drop-in centres have recently been established in Stirling and Falkirk. A recent independent study commissioned by NHS Forth Valley and funded by Macmillan Cancer Support found them increasingly popular and recommended they should be extended to other areas.

**PRIZE
CROSSWORD**

Win...

DVD PLAYER
(worth £40)

QUICKSOLVE?

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>ACROSS</p> <p>2. It soothes (4)</p> <p>5. Join (4)</p> <p>6. Open (4)</p> <p>7. Rare gas (4)</p> <p>9. Fair (4)</p> <p>11. Revolt (5)</p> <p>15. Wash out (5)</p> <p>18. Night birds (4)</p> <p>20. Tiny particle (4)</p> <p>21. Chopped (4)</p> <p>22. Simplicity (4)</p> <p>23. Enthusiastic (4)</p> | <p>DOWN</p> <p>1. Antelope (4)</p> <p>2. Twisted (4)</p> <p>3. Long hair (4)</p> <p>4. Mist (4)</p> <p>8. Whale (3)</p> <p>9. Mock (4)</p> <p>10. Knock out (4)</p> <p>12. Puff (4)</p> <p>13. Not so much (4)</p> <p>14. Moisture (3)</p> <p>16. Thing (4)</p> <p>17. Went down (4)</p> <p>18. Portent (4)</p> <p>19. Desire (4)</p> |
|--|--|

SOLUTION FOR LAST WEEK

ACROSS: 1. Fetlock 6. Inro 7. Win 8. Childish
10. Whip 12. Desk 14. Escapade 16. Ice
17. Milk 18. Scenery

DOWN: 1. Fowl 2. Trench 3. Oxlip 4. Kindred
5. Mocha 9. Hijacks 11. Seamy 12. Dance
13. Seize 15. Bevy

Name

Address

..... Tel No

Postcode Closing Date for entries is 5pm Monday next week. The first correct entry drawn will be declared the winner.

Which Edition(s) Of The Stirling Observer Do You Read?

WED FRI BOTH

**Send your entry to: R M S CROSSWORD COMPETITION No. 827
STIRLING OBSERVER, 34 UPPER CRAIGS, STIRLING FK8 2DW**

Stirling Observer Crossword sponsored by

**RADIO MUSIC
STORE**

1/5 Quakerfield, Bannockburn
Tel: (01786) 812420