

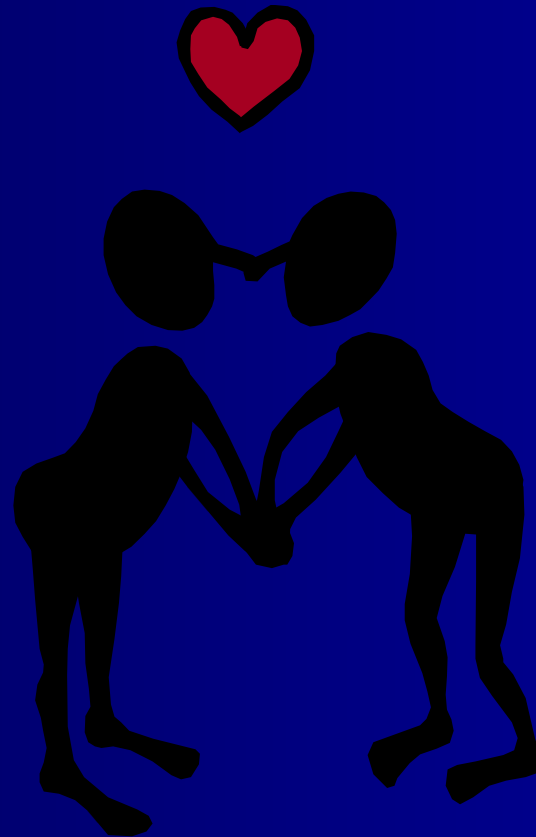
# **Baby Shock!**

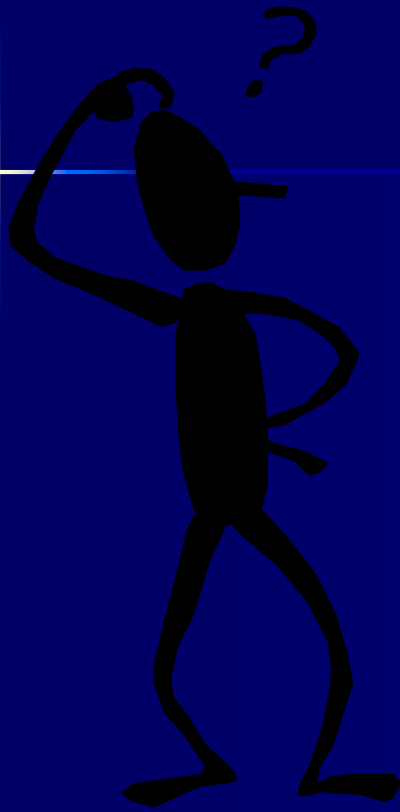
## **Couple Support for New Parents**

Lynden Askew

**FAMILY MATTERS YORK**

# Why support new couples?





- Family life has changed
- Communities have changed
- Employment has changed
- Change has been very FAST
- Less support
- Mums now have to balance careers, children and partner

**Children do better in every way if their parents' relationship is healthy**

# New parents

- Need help to nourish their couple relationship
- Need help to adapt to parenthood



# Relate's Experience

- A large proportion of couples visiting Relate for help with their relationships look back and identify having their first child as the time when their problems started.
- Helping couples at this crucial time could help prevent family breakdown.
- It might be too late by the time they contact Relate.

## Relate's book Baby Shock:

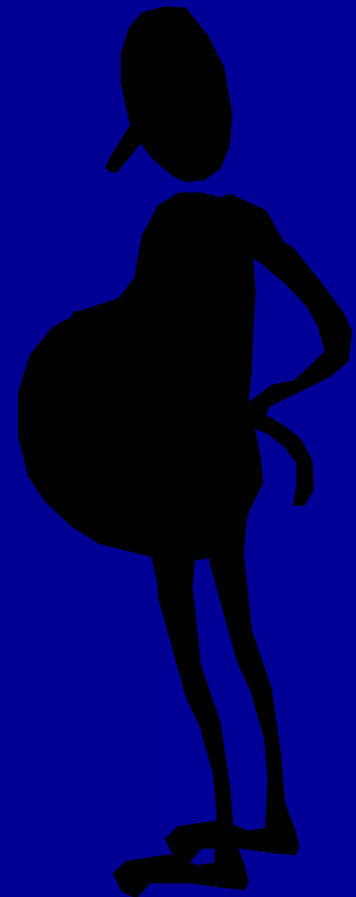
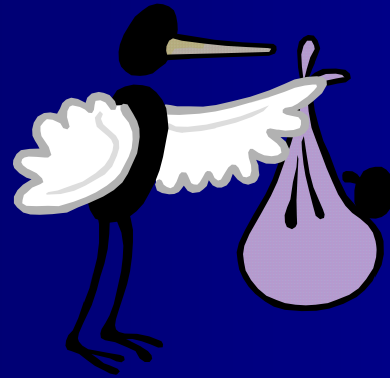
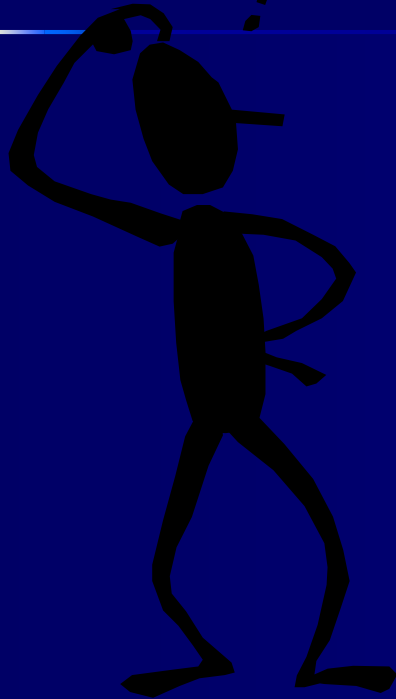
“The **MOST IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIP** by far within the family is the relationship between the parents, because from the quality and strength of that relationship springs the **quality and strength of family life.**”

They advise new parents:

“Nurturing your own relationship and giving it top priority isn’t selfish. It’s vital, absolutely vital, for the long term stability and well being of your family”

(quote from Relate’s book: Baby Shock E Martyn 2001)

# Baby Shock!- couple workshop





# Health Clinics – Key venue

## BABY SHOCK TASTER SESSION

- Ante natal groups (parent craft for couples)
- Or post natal groups for new Mums



# Health Clinics

## – content of session

1. Talking about changes
2. Permission for couple priority
3. Simple tips about:
  - strategies for coping with change
  - communicating about expectations
  - Being “up front” about worries
  - TIME FOR EACH OTHER

# Contacting couples

- Medical centres  
HEALTH  
VISITORS
- Follow up with  
community bite-  
size relationship  
skills courses



# Suggested Topics for follow-on BITESIZE learning:

- Listening to understand
- Meeting each other's needs
- Resolving Issues – or arguing productively!
- Building YOUR family patterns
- Family Budgeting skills

# The Importance of Access points!

- Couples think they've got better things to do than attend to relationship classes!
- So we need to access them at KEY places.
- We provide user friendly and simple materials
- We input relationships at KEY life-stages



# How to:-

make contact with:

- Friendly Health Visitors
- PCT managers
- GP surgeries
- Midwives

# persuasion!

## Stage One

- Make the case for SUPPORT
- Offer to deliver single sessions
- Demonstrate the materials

# Make it easy for the professionals!

- Offer materials to local Health Visitors or Midwives
- Provide resources free or very low cost
- Offer a Video or DVD



# LASTLY

- Couples *are* hard to convince.
- It takes TIME to change a culture.

■ *If we work together*

*WE WILL MAKE A  
DIFFERENCE!*