



TESTIMONIALS

FROM PANDAS SERVICE USERS

PANDAS has helped me through my PND, and it's been a great support to know that there are other Mums who feel the same, and that you're not alone.

It continues to be my extended family when I have a bad day

PANDAS was (and still is) there for me when nothing else and no one else seemed willing to help. I know I can contact them whenever I need help - from a little wobble to a big meltdown! I have recommended them to so many people I know.

I don't know what would happen if they didn't exist.

My first experience of PANDAS was a phone call, this call helped me reach out for the help that I needed. Later that day I also called the Samaritans, which gives an indication of how low I was. On the call we talked about my experience, the experience of the support caller, medication & professional help & I was directed towards the Facebook Group. I found it hard to make initial contact but have found the group hugely supportive & reassuring. When you feel like that, to know you're not alone is really valuable. If I had time I would also like to volunteer as it is such a worthy cause and still far too taboo. I also found drugs in breast milk help through PANDAS, without which I would have been forced to give up breastfeeding, which would have affected our bond and most certainly taken me lower.

When I was at my lowest I couldn't talk to anyone about how I felt. Just reading made me feel I wasn't alone. When I felt I wasn't good enough to live, talking to others on PANDAS kept me going another day. Without having somewhere to turn I don't think I would still be here. Friends and family do not understand.



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PANDAS has and continues to be a huge support to myself and my family. Unfortunately there are waiting lists even when we have Post Natal Depression for therapy etc. And I've found that whilst waiting, in my time of need, the page has been invaluable to me. The advice is always positive and PANDAS really has helped me to get better place. I can't thank the team more for what they do.

PANDAS has made a difference to my life by giving me somewhere to say what I feel when I have felt desperately unhappy and abnormal, I've had support and advice from people in the same situation, and those that have come out the other side. I am now not suffering from PND, I have recovered well but looking back it may have been a lot harder without the support I have recieved. Thanks PANDAS.

I joined the group because I needed support and advice from other Mums going through the same as me. It helps me feel less alone and it's like having an extended family unit.

The group has helped me by allowing me to talk about my feelings without being judged, in a relaxed informal environment. Mums sharing their experiences of PND has helped me understand that the feelings I have are very common, normal and that I'm not a bad mother.

PANDAS have helped me in my darkest hours of need giving gentle advice and encouragement when I couldn't see any way of getting better. With this help and my doctors help I am recovered and now only suffer depression occasionally, but not to the extent I did.



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FROM PANDAS SERVICE USERS

PANDAS closed group means that I can say whatever I want within a safe place. A lot of people do not understand - and even though I may not have exactly the same experiences as others in this group, there are common issues.

We can help each other - we know that we are not alone. We can know that what we are feeling however horrendous it seems to us (and possibly to other people) is "ok" and that someone else will be feeling that too (or has felt it). Intrusive thoughts being one example. We can be signposted to resources - books, mindfulness apps etc. which may help. Different things help different people and in this group it is likely that if someone suggests something even if it doesn't help the person they have responded to - it might help someone else reading it.

i joined the group a while ago because I was in a deep pit of despair that I couldn't get out of. Now I am better... I feel a lot more positive. I am still not depression free and I am still having a lot of bad days. but this group and another local group made it easier to get to where I am. Knowing that other mums were there going through the same things, the same problems/ resentments/ guilt... just for being mums. It was a relief. I worried so much about telling people. I was scared my kids would get taken away just because I was struggling. I asked for help everywhere but there was nothing really available to help me. But these groups have helped me step forward.

I am starting to think more positively as well thanks to these groups, a HENRY course and the local Sure Start centre.



TESTIMONIALS

FROM SUPPORT GROUP USERS

PANDAS provided a lifeline for me, a kind listening ear when I had no one to take my issues to. They were crucial to me at a time when I was caring for a baby and in need of care for me. A fantastic, supportive, non judgemental group of ladies with different issues but united by a common understanding of how hard feeling low or having depression can be when you have a child or family to look after.

I have felt so isolated and lonely at times but knowing that I'm not the only one, being accepted and receiving kind helpful words truly makes me feel less alone.

PANDAS group to me is a safe haven. where I'm not judged or made to feel incompetent as a Mum. It's relaxing and welcoming with other friendly Mums and support to be found. A god-send if anything in some of the darkest days I've ever experienced.

PANDAS has made me feel welcome and accepted. I no longer feel alone and ashamed of having had a Post Natal Mental Illness. The ladies are kind and friendly and never judge me. I've made progress.

When I was feeling so low that I couldn't get through each day without crying, I found it extremely helpful to go to a group where there was no need or pressure to look cheerful and swap jolly parenting anecdotes. To know there was somewhere I could just turn up, be looked after, be handed a cup of tea, and have a good cry was a really valuable thing.

A safe place to go when you don't want to leave the house, with people who understand you without you having to say a word.



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FROM SUPPORT GROUP USERS

It has helped me leave the house and make friends with some lovely supporting people who truly understand what it's like. Have been made to feel so welcome, and on the days I can't make it due to my anxiety I don't feel judged

I haven't been to many Support Group sessions as I think just being with other mums helped me see that I wasn't alone in feeling scared, lonely and struggling to come to terms with being a mum, missing my old carefree life; hearing someone else say "it's all a bit boring some days" was a relief! I'm feeling much better but it is good to know you're there if I need to come back again.

It's nice to chat to mums who really understand me, being part of the Facebook group too is great knowing that people are there any time of the day if I need them and the live discussions are very though provoking.

Coming to the group and saying "I'm not OK with how I'm feeling" was terrifying, but the group is really supportive and helped me to see that I wasn't a bad Mam or a terrible person, I was tired, burned out and struggling. I needed somewhere away from home to let all those worries and feelings out, and now I feel better I want to support others so I'm still in touch with the group, thinking about baby number two and I now know others who have taken that step are there to support me

It has helped me by letting me vent and get all my problems out without feeling like a burden to other people and without being judged



TESTIMONIALS

FROM PANDAS VOLUNTEERS

WHY DO YOU VOLUNTEER FOR PANDAS?

To help those that can't see that light at the end of the tunnel find their way out

I don't have money to give but I do have time to listen

To help break the stigma of perinatal mental health and support those who need it most

I really believe that when you speak to people who understand, you've taken the first step to recovery

To give the peer support I desperately wanted and couldn't find!

To give hope and wanting to connect with service users so they feel comfortable enough to share how they are truly feeling

To give people hope, to assure them that they are never alone and that someone does care. Because that's what we do essentially, we care.

To help women to understand that it's OK not to be OK 100% of the time and to let them know they have a shoulder to cry on and support whenever they need it

To be in a position where people are reaching out to me to be a presence in their lives at some of their darkest moments

Because people should never feel that low no matter what and understand that there is nothing wrong with feeling that way. There is always light

Because the more we talk about Perinatal Mental Illness, the less alone others have to feel.

To give help and support to people who are on a difficult journey.
To reassure them that they are not alone