

Making Parents: Expectations and experiences of the transition to parenthood in Edinburgh

Hannah McInnes-Dean, University of Edinburgh
h.j.mcinnnes-dean@sms.ed.ac.uk

The study

Unstructured interviews and observation of new and expectant mothers and fathers in Edinburgh. Interviews on expectations and experiences of becoming parents are participant-led and include topics including their experiences of pregnancy, birth, parental leave, caring for a newborn, and changes to their lifestyle, relationships and identities.

'My relationship with my partner... I think it's tougher than I thought. You know you think "Oh you have a baby; it brings you closer" and yeah it does make you work really well as a team but it does sort of change your relationship. Like you do sort of feel like shared domestic help.' - Rebecca

'I think people expect us to automatically know because we're a mother and that is a whole load of pressure. And my husband thought I'd know as well.' - Anna

'I thought my husband, to be honest, would want to do more at home but yeah actually he was like, "No, I've got to get the money in for the baby," which was more traditional than I thought.' - Rebecca



This research is ongoing.

A later phase will involve interviews with a comparison group of older participants who had their children in previous decades.

I will be recruiting participants for both groups throughout 2016. Please feel free to share my contact details with anyone who might be interested in being interviewed.

'I thought that she as a mother will naturally know better; her natural instincts will tell her what she needs, what she doesn't.' - Tom

'We've never really talked about sort of like how we feel about becoming parents together... sort of like we would talk about what buggy we wanted but we didn't talk about how do we feel about it.' - Mark

'The midwife actually said these words to me, "oh you must be the dad. If you could just sit over there." And it was literally a, a chair over in the corner of room. I was quite annoyed by that ... I thought society or the NHS had moved on slightly.' - Andrew