



Blink Festival

A two-day festival
exploring the highs
and lows of becoming
a parent

STORYHOUSE

1-2 September
2018

1

hello and
welcome to

Blink

...(and you'll miss it)

There are lots of ways to be brought up awesome: Batman and Aristotle were orphans; Superman and Marie Curie were foundlings; Spiderman and Nelson Mandela were adopted. But we're all children to parents somewhere.

Some of us one day choose to become parents ourselves. Some of us don't choose it, but turn into parents anyway. Some of us want it but face grief and loss in pursuit of it. Even those of us that choose it, don't have a clue what it really means until a new life explodes normal into nonsense.

Having children, not having children, adopting, fostering, child loss, breastfeeding, nutrition, sex after childbirth, sexual health - and the mental health consequences of it all... Blink creates safe spaces to learn about, confront and honestly share the highs and lows of parenting.

A co-curated community festival in partnership with Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Mothers' Mental Health Matters (#MMhM) and Breast Feeding Friendly Chester.

All events will be relaxed and meet the needs of breastfeeding mothers, however not all events are child friendly so please check online or at the festival hub in Storyhouse throughout the weekend before booking.

TICKETS
Day wristband £10
Weekend wristband £15
Children go FREE

Transferable ticket for care givers which means you can take it in turns to attend. Wristbands will guarantee entry to all events in the Garret Theatre (except the performance of *A Dad's Guide to Losing a Child*).

Places on workshops, talks and take part activities will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

Saturday
1 September



TALK
How to survive the mental pressures of being a new parent?

Founder of MummyYoga based in Chester, Rehana Jawadwala is on a mission to build a community which will help and support parents through the issues we face with our mental health. Rehana will be telling her story and explaining why she is so passionate about Mothers' Mental Health Matters Project (#MMhM). She will be joined by Tania Stanway and Kirsteen Langton-Flint from CWP Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Team Cheshire and Mersey Specialist Perinatal Service. They will highlight the range of issues that women are likely to face and how mental health means different things to different people and how it is a wider problem than perceived.

Garret Theatre
Included in wristband
11am (60 mins)



TAKE PART
Buggy Burn & Firm

Instructor lead guided walks, combined with a range of cardio and strength building exercises. Parents will also be doing traditional push ups and squats, boxing and 'baby-lifts' – using their little ones as resistance weights! Led by Brio Leisure

Lobby
Included in wristband
11am (60 mins - weather dependant) Please meet 10 minutes before start time.
Parents with babies and toddlers still in a pushchair

TAKE PART
Massage Taster

Find out from an expert about what a good massage should feel like and how to learn simple techniques to be able to relieve stress in your partner.

Meeting Room
Included in wristband
(bookable at festival hub)
12pm-2pm (15 mins)

PERFORMANCE
Baby Brahms

A live classical music concert for babies, toddlers and their grown-ups.

A baby friendly half hour long series of short pieces, covering everything from Mozart to McCartney. The babies and toddlers are free to crawl, play, dance and get up close to the music, or simply relax on your lap and soak up the music.

For tickets visit
babybrahms.com

The Den
£5 per adult/children FREE
Pre-booking required
12pm & 1pm (30 mins)

WORKSHOP
Sound Healing Taster Workshop

Sound healing sessions use mantra (vocal toning) to release, rebalance and focus our mind, followed by sound healing using wind chimes and Tibetan singing bowls.

Simply remove any expectations on yourself or the bowls and lay down with your optional pillows, mat and blanket and enjoy.

Meet in **The Kitchen** at workshop meeting point.
Included in wristband
(bookable at festival hub)
12pm, 12.30pm, 1pm & 1.30pm (20 mins)



TAKE PART
BYOB Recording Booth

As part of the Mothers' Mental Health Matters Project, "Bring Your Own Birth Stories – #BYOBs" will be a bank of audio, video and written experiences of women talking about their journeys to becoming mothers.

We need you to share your story to start this bank of knowledge. The recording booth will be in The Secret Room in the cinema foyer all day. Ask a member of the team for directions.

Cinema Foyer
Included in wristband
12pm (5 hrs)

Book Tickets:
- Online at:
storyhouse.com
- By phone:
01244 409 113
(subject to a £2.50 booking fee)
- In person at:
Storyhouse

WORKSHOP**Pregnancy Loss: Decision making, communication and metaphor**

In this workshop participants will be led through a series of discussions by Prof Jeannette Littlemore (University of Birmingham), Dr Sheelagh McGuinness (University of Bristol) and Dr Sarah Turner who have been working on a research project into the law around pregnancy loss, the ways in which it is interpreted and the choices that people make following their loss.

This workshop is suitable for anyone who has an interest, or has experienced pregnancy loss. The space will be a safe one which will be professionally managed by Jeannette and Sheelagh.

Chester Sands Group will be around and at the event to provide any after care. chestersands.wordpress.com

Garret Theatre
Included in wristband
1pm (60 mins)

Book Tickets:

- Online at: storyhouse.com
- By phone: **01244 409 113** (subject to a £2.50 booking fee)
- In person at: Storyhouse

**TAKE PART****Breath Walk with Chester Sling Library**

Join Rehana Jawadwala creator of Keep Me Close Sling Yoga, who will introduce the concept of connection of breath, body and synchronous movement of the parent with the baby. The first 15 minutes will teach why our breathing connection with our baby is one of the most ancient and ingrained parenting tools we have.

Followed by a 30-minute walk around Chester Town Centre and finishing with a 15-minute discussion about how to start your own sling walk groups in your local community to combat social isolation and bring pregnant and new mums together. You can come to some or all of it.

The Den
Included in wristband
1.30pm (60 mins)

**WORKSHOP****10 Minute Tales at Blink**

Participate in a panel discussion where four diverse mothering stories will hopefully lead to meaningful conversations and a deep sense of empathy with fellow mothers. Facilitated by a mental health professional, we will aim to highlight the diverse nature of the issues we face before, during and beyond pregnancy and birth

This session will launch "Bring Your Own Birth Stories - #BYOBs" a portal of audio, video and written experiences of women talking about their journeys into motherhood. We have a private booth at the festival where you can record your experience in a safe place anytime during the festival.

Garret Theatre
Included in wristband
4pm (60 mins)

**TALK****Grace into Action - a story about stillbirth**

David Monteith (actor, director, teacher/coach, voiceover artist and podcaster) has spoken at hundreds of conferences and events about his experience of stillbirth.

Dubbed an emotional, humorous and uplifting talk that also embraces the trauma of stillbirth.

This event is for everyone. For more information about David and his family, visit graceinaction.org.uk

Garret Theatre
Included in wristband
3pm (30 mins)

PERFORMANCE
Fascinating Sax

A new all-female saxophone quartet will perform a series of popular classics, with a sexy twist!

The Kitchen
Included in wristband
5pm (30 mins)

**CINEMA****Tully**

Saturday 1 September
1.15pm

£9.50 | £8.50 (conc)
Booking essential
Not included in event
wristband

Tully is an honest portrayal of modern motherhood with all its ups and downs. Marlo (Charlize Theron) is about to give birth to her third child. Her husband is loving and works hard, but remains clueless about the demands that motherhood puts on his wife. When the baby is born, a night nanny arrives – a surprise gift from Marlo's brother. Baby and parent screening, babies must be 12 months old or under.

Released: 2018 | Duration: 96 mins
Directed by: Jason Reitman
Starring: Charlize Theron, Mackenzie Davis

PERFORMANCE**A Dad's Guide to Losing a Child**

A true story about a man who had a daughter.

The sonographer turned off the machine, looked at us and said "I'm afraid it's bad news for you today". And all I wanted to do was to reach over and whisper to my baby, "You will never be bad news to me."

Yet Another Carnival present a moving, yet funny, experience for audiences with and without children. Allow yourself to celebrate grief; it's a privilege to have loved enough to grieve. Let's learn from the tough times.

Garret Theatre
£8 | 7.30pm (60 mins)

Sunday 2 September

TALK

Navigating the world of maternity care as a same sex couple

Sally and Sarah Probert-Hill talk about their journey through conception, maternity and the early stages of raising their family in a same sex relationship.

What were the problems they anticipated, feared and planned for and how they survived a couple of surprises!

Garret Theatre
Included in wristband
10am (45 mins)

TAKE PART

Breastfeeding Friendly Chester Storytelling Room

Drop-in to the storytelling room to chat to the BFFC volunteers and help create a giant piece of 'boobie' art which will form a collection of tips and advice about breastfeeding. A range of breastfeeding support professionals will also be around during the session to talk to you and provide advice.

The Den
Included in wristband
11am (3 hrs)



PERFORMANCE

PopVox Choir

PopVox - a choir that lives by these three words: Sing. Laugh. Learn. Get your Sunday off to a great start by listening to some uplifting songs.

PopVox was formed in 2011 and has several choirs across the North West. Its founder, Emma Nowell, decided to use her professional experience and love of music to create a fun, friendly adult choir.

The Kitchen
Included in wristband
11am & 1pm (40 mins)



TALK

Nutrition for Children and Parents

Feeding your family can be a real headache – attend this interactive workshop to learn more about how to relieve the stress of making sure your family gets the right nutrition.

Led by Melanie Jones a qualified pharmacist and nutritionist and functional medicine practitioner.

Garret Theatre
Included in wristband
11.30am & 2pm (30 mins)

TAKE PART

Boomwhacker Music Making

Family music making with boomwhackers – expect lots of noise, learn some rhythms and how to boom-whack a pop song!

The Kitchen
£5 per family*
Pre-booking advisable
12pm & 12.15pm (15 mins)

*Each family tickets guarantees 2 boomwhackers per family + percussion for under 5s

TALK

Everything you want to know about your body and sexual health after pregnancy

An informative talk covering vaginal health, pelvic floor, contraception and sex after pregnancy.

Presented by Dr Nicola Mullin, Consultant in Sexual and Reproductive Health plus Q&A.

Garret Theatre
Included in wristband
12.30pm (45 mins)

TAKE PART

Positive Birth Movement Meeting

A global network of free to attend antenatal groups, linked up by social media. We connect pregnant couples, birth professionals and anyone interested in sharing stories, expertise and positivity about childbirth. We aim to challenge the epidemic of negativity and fear that surrounds modern birth and help change birth for the better. Join us as we meet up, link up and shake up birth!

Meeting Room
Included in wristband
2pm (60 mins)



TALK

The Importance of Father's Mental Health

A story told from a personal experience by international campaigner Mark Williams (author of *Daddy Blues*) who after speaking to over two thousand dads who have suffered in silence, now campaigns for all parents to be supported and screened during the antenatal and postnatal period. The biggest killer in men under 45 is suicide and the UK still have no mention of the word Father on CG192 Nice Guidelines (Clinical Guide no, 192: Antenatal and postnatal mental health: clinical management and service guidance. National Institute of Healthcare Excellence).

In 2004 Mark experienced depression and suffered in silence for years until a breakdown. He founded International Fathers Mental Health Day (18 June) and the #Howareyoudad campaign to make sure all parents are supported for the whole family.

Garret Theatre
Included in wristband
3pm (60 mins)



TALK

Dr Ravi Jayaram on your child's health

Consultant Paediatrician Dr Jayaram will talk about health issues in young children and babies – a whistle stop tour of things parents should know plus Q&A

Garret Theatre
Included in wristband
4.30pm (50 mins)

PERFORMANCE

Dee Ensemble Choir

Dee Ensemble will bring the festival to a close with an uplifting variety of their favourite songs.

The Kitchen
Included in wristband
5.30pm (30 mins)

Book Tickets:
- Online at:
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Wednesday
5 September

Foster Recruitment Event

Ever thought about fostering with Cheshire West & Chester Council and have a spare bedroom? Are you good with children? Do you have time and space in your home to support a child/young person to blossom? Come and join us in the Garret Theatre to talk about all things fostering, watch a short presentation over a cuppa, meet one of our supervising social workers & foster carers and ask any questions you may have. There are information packs to take away and an opportunity to learn about next steps.

Garret Theatre

10am-12pm

book now at [storyhouse.com](https://www.storyhouse.com)
@StoryhouseLive



Storyhouse, Hunter Street, Chester, CH1 2AR
01244 409 113

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