

Royal baby fever

Relate Cambridge's five things to think about before having a second child

With the arrival of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's second child, many parents will be questioning whether to follow in the royals' footsteps by adding to their brood. In anticipation of the discussions the royal baby is likely to spark amongst couples, Relate Cambridge has come up with a list of things to consider before committing to more kids.

Relate counsellor Elaine Taylor said: "The decision to have your first child is arguably the biggest commitment you'll ever make, but choosing when to have your second can be equally daunting. It's totally normal for couples to be raring to go one minute and then have cold feet the next. Often one partner feels desperate for another baby whereas the other is content with the way things are.

"Kate and William have chosen to have a second baby within two years of giving birth to George, but there is no right amount of time to leave between offspring. Relate can help couples who are considering having more children to assess the potential impact on them and their relationship, have difficult conversations and explore options."

Elaine's five things to think about before having a second child:

- **Is this something you both want?** It might seem obvious, but it's important to make sure you're on the same page when it comes to having a second child.
- **The costs involved** If you've already got a child, you'll know that being a parent can be expensive. Although you can save money this time through hand-me-down clothes and baby equipment, you'll still have to budget for food and childcare, and is there enough room for you all at home?
- **Going back to work** Consider how you feel about returning to work after your second child is born and how long a break you want. Due to recent changes in the law, parents can now apply for shared parental leave, which may not have been an option with your first child.
- **Support available** Do you have the same support network available as when you had your first child? Perhaps your parents have retired now and have more time to help or maybe you've broken up with your partner and are now a single parent. Speak to your nearest and dearest about if and how they might be able to lend a hand this time around.
- **Your family setup** When you introduce a second child, the family dynamic will inevitably change. This can be great: your first child will have a sibling to play with and confide in but it will also mean more demands on your energy and less alone time. Relationship Counselling can be a good way of preparing for a big change.

Elaine said: "When parents have decided they want to go ahead and try for a second baby it is important to consider how this may impact on their first born child. There are lots of ways that parents can introduce the idea of another child into the family, such as involving them in choosing a name for the new baby. When spending time together as a family, it also works to have one parent looking after the baby so the other can focus on the needs of the older child.

"Some parents worry that they may not love their second child as much as their first but there is always more love to go round and they needn't be concerned".

Relate Cambridge offers information, advice and counselling for all stages of your relationships, including family counselling, which can include support when preparing for and adjusting to the arrival of a new baby. Relate Cambridge also runs a workshop called 'From Partners to Parents' which provides single or couple parents of young children (between ages of 0-6 years) with relationship skills to help consider the practical and emotional aspects of becoming a parent. This will also give parents the opportunity to meet and talk to others going through the same thing. Finally, there are also a series of relationship MoTs available, one of which is on Parenting Skills.

Visit www.relatecambridge.org.uk for more information, or call 01223 357424.

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For all media enquiries - please contact Elaine Taylor on **01302 347712**

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Relate Cambridge – supporting relationships at every stage of your life

Notes to editors:

- Relate champions the importance of strong and healthy relationships as the basis of a thriving society.
- Personal and social relationships are important in our everyday lives and are central to our wellbeing.
- Relationships are under increasing pressure - breakdown costs the UK economy £46 billion each year according to the Relationships Foundation.
- Over a million people every year access information, support and counselling from Relate but it's clear many more would benefit from Relate services.
- Relate's services extend beyond relationship counselling to family counselling, counselling for young people, sex therapy and informal courses and workshops and are offered through a network of 1,700 counsellors across the country.
- Relate Cambridge celebrates its 70th birthday this year.
- For more information and advice visit: www.relate.org.uk.