

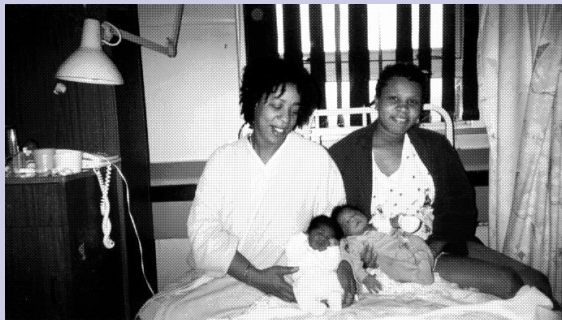
Some comments made by women
we have helped

*Having a birth companion made a
difference to how I felt approaching
labour because I knew I had someone who
was going to be there.*

*I would have been so alone. Thank you
for being there.*

*It made me feel good and less left out.
They made up for what I was missing, my
family.*

*Birth Companions are like Guardian
Angels and I have a special place in my
heart for each of them.*



Birth Companions

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Charity Number: 1120934

Birth Companions



*Supporting pregnant women
and new mothers in prison*

Who we are

Birth Companions was set up in 1996 and is a small charity, providing a vital and unique service for pregnant women and new mothers in prison.

Women in prison can be accompanied during childbirth by a companion of their choice. However, many women prisoners, particularly foreign nationals, have no one who can provide this support. Birth Companions provides this vital support for women in Holloway prison who would otherwise face the experience alone.

Our support is provided on a voluntary basis. There is never any charge for our services.

All our birth companions are highly trained and provide sensitive, non-judgemental support to women.

Antenatal support

The antenatal support we provide involves regular visits to Holloway prison to meet pregnant women in order to provide antenatal support and information - helping women to cope with pregnancy in the prison environment.



Birth support

When a woman who wants our support goes into labour, she can contact us via our 24-hour birth line. We provide a trained birth companion to meet her at the hospital and support her during her labour. This includes helping her to breathe through contractions, massage, offering emotional support and companionship and being her advocate if needed.

Postnatal support

After the birth, we bring flowers and basic necessities for women as well as clothing and nappies for their babies. If they want us to, we also take photographs of their baby and support women with breastfeeding.

We provide support to new mothers when they are back in the prison after the birth of their baby, helping them cope with motherhood in prison. This includes one-to-one and group-based support with breastfeeding and other postnatal issues.

Support after release

We support vulnerable women who are released from prison whilst still pregnant or with young babies, often with no money and nowhere to go. We provide a safety-net ensuring these women do not become destitute and that they are linked into appropriate local networks.