Eligibility Criteria
There is no cost to you for the 10-week Community HUGS playgroup. This is covered by our funding for those meeting the following eligibility criteria:

- Having a baby aged 1-10 months
- Experiencing low mood (depression, anxiety, stress) since the birth of your baby
- Having consulted with a health professional about your emotional well-being or are willing to consult with a health professional

Playgroup facilitators:
Jennie Ericksen, Clinical Psychologist
Elizabeth Loughlin, Dance Therapist

Playgroup venue:
Parent-Infant Research Institute
Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital
Level 1, South Wing, Centaur Building
300 Waterdale Rd, Heidelberg Heights

Contact us:
Phone: 9496 4496
Email: piri@austin.org.au
Web: www.piri.org.au

What women have said about Community HUGS

“I was anxious about attending at first, but being in a supportive environment really helped me to get the most out of the program. I could see my baby develop over the weeks, to anticipate the songs and play activities. I’m able to be more available and loving with my baby. It’s fantastic!”

“I have more patience with my baby since doing this group and know a lot more about how to play with her and understand her.”

“We are just normal people going through some things together. I realise that it’s mostly my issues not the baby’s, but that they affect her.”

“It was good to get together people who have experienced some issues with their babies. I could not identify with other mother’s groups; everyone seemed to be coping so well, I felt different. I compared myself with others and felt worse.”

“I enjoyed the discussion about how my own childhood was relevant to how I now parent. Learning to understanding my child’s feelings was great.”

About the Parent Infant Research Institute (PIRI)

- The Infant Clinic aims to help parents deal with the stress and difficulties they experience when raising their infant.
- The Research Unit aims to maximise the child’s future development through developing interventions.
- The Training Division consults with professionals about methods of working with and helping parents and infants.

Community HUGS
Happiness, Understanding, Giving & Sharing®

A specialised playgroup focusing on the interaction between mother and baby

Developed by the Parent-Infant Research Institute (PIRI)

Community HUGS has been made possible through funding from the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
Adjusting to Parenthood Can Take Time

- Have you been feeling overwhelmed, flat, sad or depressed?
- Are you struggling to cope with your baby?
- Do you find that you no longer get enjoyment from things or feel less confident as a person?
- Do you feel anxious or overwhelmed by the task of parenting an infant?

This playgroup might be what you need!

Community HUGS Playgroup
This is a 10-week playgroup developed by PIRI to promote the relationship between mother and baby by learning positive ways to communicate with each other. Sessions last approximately 1 hour and are followed by an informal chat and refreshments.

Women learn how to:
- understand their baby’s cues, and
- interact with their baby in a way that’s mutually enjoyable.

Sessions include both play and discussion. Music and movement is used in the group as another way to connect with your baby. Weekly take home information is provided to help you to continue to play during the week between sessions.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE:

Mother-baby play
- What play does my baby like?
- What do I enjoy? What is stressful & how can I cope?
- Baby massage.

Getting to Know Each Other
- Getting to know your baby’s temperament
- How your baby communicates with you and what your baby needs from you

Knowing Yourself
- How you parent; your own family and life experiences
- Learning how your feelings impact on your parenting
- Interpreting your baby’s behaviour.

Finding Time for Us
- Putting it all together, finding time for joyful interactions.

Time for you to enjoy
- Refreshments are provided as well as an opportunity to socialise with the other mums and babies.

Struggling to adjust to parenthood and all its demands can be a difficult experience for some women. Feeling anxious, depressed or irritable may also interfere with your relationship with your infant. Our Community HUGS program can support you to find a way to communicate positively with your baby and to experience mutual enjoyment in your interactions.

Improved mother-baby interactions and communication encourage attachment, infant development as well as maternal well-being and self esteem.