

## Supporting children born prematurely

**Prematurity describes when a baby is born earlier than 37 weeks. Early intervention is vital to help children who were born prematurely to make good progress in their development.**

Issues premature babies can face include low birth weight, breathing difficulties, feeding difficulties and problems regulating their body temperature.

Statistically, the earlier a baby is born, the more serious their health problems are likely to be. However, the prognosis for most babies born prematurely has improved dramatically, thanks to research and new advances in prenatal and neonatal health care over the years. Babies born prematurely are also more likely to experience a developmental delay.



Early intervention is vital to help children who were born prematurely to make good progress in their development and can include:

- Gather starting points as soon as they start the nursery
- Gather as much information from the parents about what the child can and cannot do already
- Link up with any other professionals involved in the child's care
- Demonstrate how you support child development by creating a display with links to support groups for parents, which could include:
  - Bliss – for babies born premature or sick
  - Information for parents of extremely premature babies
  - POPPY Project
  - National Childbirth Trust