

The Guild of Pregnancy and Postnatal Exercise Instructors
Policy for exercise sessions when babies are present with their mothers

- The practice of including babies in exercise, or the presence of babies within the exercise area, is neither recommended nor condoned by the Guild, either in groups or in the case of individual instruction.
- All instructors and members of the exercising public are asked to note that **general exercise insurance policies may not cover situations where babies are present while mothers exercise** and that some policies may have restrictions on this practice. Exercise undertaken with babies in buggies may need an additional, specific, policy extension.
- Instructors and members of the public are reminded that it is their responsibility to check the adequacy and specific cover of the insurance policy in force at the time of the exercise.
- As at June 2011 Register of Exercise Professionals' insurance DOES NOT cover ANY exercise session where babies or children are present.
- A baby should only be present if under the care and supervision of the mother.
- Babies must be in a separate area away from, and independent to, the exercise area.
- If mothers need to care for their baby they should temporarily absent themselves from the exercise area and should not exercise in the baby area
- If babies are in buggies or prams they should be strapped in and remain so whilst the mother is exercising.
- Babies must not be carried in a carrier or sling whilst exercising.
- The presence of the instructor's baby or children is unprofessional practice.

- **Unsafe practice may include the following:**
 - Mothers allowed to have their baby with them in the exercise area, or permitted to have their child take part in, or feel part of, the exercise.
 - Babies being exercised at the same time as their mothers.
 - Babies sitting or lying on the same mat, beside the mother, or crawling/toddling around whilst a mother exercises.
 - The use of hand held weights, dumbbells, weighted bars, clubs or kettlebells whilst babies are in the same space, or nearby.
 - Mothers holding babies whilst sitting or exercising on stability balls.
 - Babies left alone at some distance from the group with no supervision.

- Babies being swung in the air.
- Babies positioned on mats under the mother during exercises performed from a standing or kneeling position.
- Mothers jogging or running whilst carrying a baby (jogging and running are inappropriate activities).
- Babies used as a weight or resistance including:
 - Being placed on mother's abdomen during supine exercises.
 - Being held whilst squatting, lunging or performing upper body work.
- Buggy exercise:
 - Babies not strapped into the buggy or pram.
 - Running with a buggy (running is an inappropriate activity).
 - Buggies in the exercise area when dynamic or weighted exercise is performed.
 - Older babies allowed to get out of their buggy/pram and have a run/crawl/toddle around or play whilst mothers exercise.
 - Babies under 12 weeks should not be pushed on bumpy terrain unless they have adequate neck support.
 - Activities involving babies being pushed at speed, in and out of obstacles, are inappropriate.

- The Guild does not permit the use of Guild name and/or logo in connection with any exercise sessions where babies are present that incorporate any potentially risky or dangerous practices such as those listed above, where public liability insurance specifically covering the presence of babies is not in force, or where there is non compliance with insurance policy restrictions.