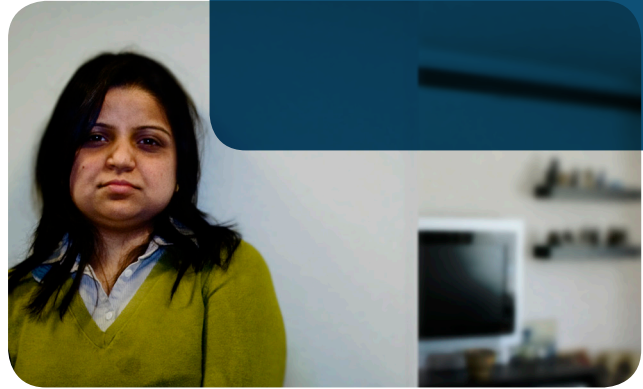


“Why does the Health Visitor keep calling out to see me?”



I am getting very tired of this now and I would like some privacy. I don't understand why she wants to see Wasim - he is fine and she can see that. My house is immaculately clean...surely she can see that - there isn't a thing out of place and Wasim wants for nothing...she needs to pay more attention to the other children in this town - you see them in their buggies filthy, with food around their faces - shouting and crying in the street. They are the families that really need support.

She keeps suggesting that I take Wasim to the parent and toddler group, but I don't want him mixing with the others - children that age pass things around and I don't want him picking up headlice, colds, and goodness knows what else - I don't want him picking up bad habits either - he is a well behaved boy and I want it to stay like that. In any case, I don't think that my husband would like me associating with some of the other families around here and Wasim doesn't need it, he gets everything he needs right here with me...do you hear him crying? Do you see him badly behaved? No, so what is the problem?

We don't go out much - we don't need to. I spend most days at home cleaning and preparing food for when my husband comes home from work. When I do go out it is usually to the shopping outlet in the car - Wasim enjoys going around the shops and we have our lunch there...there is a play area but Wasim is too young for that yet, and what would I do whilst he played - I would feel silly sat there on my own.

I do get down at times...but I cope.

I used to have friends at work but I didn't bother keeping in touch once I had Wasim - there didn't seem much point as none of them live close by. I get very lonely at times because Saleem works long hours and he doesn't seem to be at home much. But he is right when he says that I am very lucky, I have much more than my parents had when their family was young...

At some point I might go back to work, but not for a few years yet, I have a different job now...to be a home maker and a mother and this is the most important job. I would like to get some more qualifications and maybe do a night school course, but that would be impossible at the moment, with all my other responsibilities”.

Mabina Akhtar's story

F3.1 ¹