

## Farewell to Fabulous Helen

**She has been fabulous and we're sorry to see her go! Helen has been with Mother & Child for 6 years during which time she experienced motherhood first hand (Jack-6, Harry-4 and Charlie-2) and helped hundreds of mothers with her friendly, caring and professional approach. In our interview, she comments on the differences in pregnancy and early child care systems in Singapore and the UK as well as offering some final words of advice.**

Having been a health visitor in the UK, it was interesting coming to Singapore and seeing the differences in how things are done here in pregnancy and the early years. Not only was I looking at it from a professional standpoint, but as a new mum as well.

The Singapore system seems to focus on monthly paediatrician visits whereas the UK and many other countries around the world have a much more regular hands on approach – with initial visits every other day from the community midwife, followed by a combination of home visits and clinic contact which then remains available (if needed) until the child starts school at 4 or 5 years of age.

This is one of the reasons I started working at Mother & Child in 2003 – I feel it is really important for mums and families to have this continuous support from qualified professionals. The other reason was that, having experienced the “New Mum’s Get Together” after giving birth to Jack – many people in that group became good friends and the perfect support network for my time in Singapore. It can be very lonely as a new mum and the staff at Mother & Child were immediately friendly and welcoming as well as being mum’s themselves and a great nursing team!

A few words of advice from Helen:

- If you are a new mum Singapore, you have to ‘get yourself out there’ and join groups. It can be very isolating – perhaps you are stopping work for a while, or don’t have your family nearby, your husband may travel a lot or maybe your current girl friends are not going through the same thing as you.
- Looking after a baby in the Tropics has particular issues to consider, for example heat, sun, dengue, travel, sleep temperatures, viral diseases – it is worth getting some advice on this. (*Mother & Child offer First Aid for Couples, for Mums and for Maids*)
- Sort out any problems early – use the qualified staff at Well Baby Clinic who have a referral list of specialists if needed
- Recommended holiday destination for young families – Margaret River, Australia – it has fabulous beaches, is very child friendly, on the same time zone, relatively short flight, children’s menus in restaurants – and, of course, fabulous wine!

And a personal note sent from the UK:

“It’s time for my family to have a new adventure in York but I’m sad to be leaving colleagues and clients, I’ve loved working with them all at the M & C. Keep up the good work and enjoy your families and the sunshine, from a very cold and wet Yorkshire!”