

motherdom

IPSO Annual Statement 2019

Period covered: 1 January 2019 – 31 December 2019

Motherdom magazine is an independent title that launched in March 2019. It's the UK's first magazine dedicated to maternal mental health and wellbeing. I, Anna Ceesay, am the "responsible person" as the Founding Editor and Director of the company. *Motherdom* is a registered C.I.C. (Community Interest Company) – a form of social enterprise.

Motherdom was published quarterly in 2019, and was available in selected WHSmith stores as well as via both my own website and external partners' websites. In addition to the print version, *Motherdom* was also available as an app.

I control all of the content that *Motherdom* publishes. I edit every single article in *Motherdom* in conjunction with my Editorial Board, in accordance with the Editors' Code.

There were no complaints made to *Motherdom* in 2019 and therefore no adverse findings of the Regulator.

At present I am the only member of the Editorial team and have recently joined the Guild of Health Writers to improve my own access to training.

Motherdom's audience is primarily women in the UK, but it has also been sold worldwide.

I display the IPSO mark in the magazine and on my website, along with this text:

Motherdom is a member of the Independent Press Standards Organisation (which regulates the UK's magazine and newspaper industry). We abide by the Editors' Code of Practice and are committed to upholding the highest standards of journalism. If you think that we have not met those standards and want to make a complaint, please email anna@motherdom.co.uk . If we are unable to resolve your complaint, or if you would like more information about IPSO or the Editors' Code, contact IPSO on 0300 123 2220 or visit www.ipso.co.uk

To date I have not received any complaints but if I did, I would ensure I had a complete record of the complaint and either corresponded by email or telephone to try and resolve the complaint, in addition to publishing an apology in the next issue

as well as my social media platforms. If I could not resolve the complaint myself I would consult IPSO.

All of *Motherdom's* stories are read by at least one member of my Editorial Board, made up of 12 women who are experts in different areas of maternal mental health or wellbeing, before publication. My Editorial Board act as advisors to me, but ultimately, all editorial decisions are mine. I take all reasonable steps to fact check all of the claims made in articles. As a health publication it's particularly important to me that the information in the magazine is as helpful, accurate and supportive as possible for my readers. I have not yet had to seek pre-publication legal or IPSO advice for any of my content, but as fully trained (former BBC) journalist, I am aware of the instances where this would be required.

I work remotely with all of my contributors and Editorial Board, and correspond over email or by phone.

Interviewees are fully aware that they are being interviewed for *Motherdom* magazine. I record the audio so have a record of the interview.

Contributor guidelines have been forwarded to IPSO for their information.

Anna Ceesay, Founding Editor
25 March 2020

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Contributor Guidelines

Why does *Motherdom* exist?

Journalist Anna Ceesay went through low mood and anxiety during her second pregnancy. Alarmed by the lack of a mainstream media platform dedicated to maternal mental health and wellbeing – she launched *Motherdom* magazine in March 2019. Anna is the Founding Editor.

Why is it needed?

MIND says that 1 in 5 women will experience a perinatal mental health issue, and from *Motherdom*'s own research we know that the problems don't stop when baby is 12 months old. We spoke to 1000 mums with kids under 5 in March 2019 and found that over half have felt anxious since having a child, 45% have felt low, and over a third (35%) depressed. The level of care across the UK for perinatal mental health is variable, and a report from Healthwatch England (Sep 2019) found that 47% of women who needed mental health services found it 'difficult' or 'very difficult' to get support.

Of course, *Motherdom* can never hope to fill the NHS' shoes – Anna was lucky enough to get Cognitive Behavioural Therapy through the NHS – which was life changing for her. But *Motherdom* does aim to reach as many mums as possible and give them hope, inspiration and motivation from other women's stories.

Who, what, where?

Motherdom is a new mental wellbeing magazine aimed at 'mums with little ones' – meaning children under 5.

It's a quarterly publication, available in print and online (in app form).

It's available from the *Motherdom* website and in selected WHSmith stores.

What kind of pieces are in *Motherdom*?

Real-life stuff

First person accounts of a mum going through a difficult time in her life (with regards to maternal mental health or wellbeing), and how she overcame, or managed to work through, that period. These stories are not scare mongering but rather hopeful and inspiring. These can be emotional to read so we sometimes include a trigger warning at the beginning to prepare more vulnerable readers.

Expert stuff/ Practical stuff

Experts in maternal mental health or wellbeing on their area of expertise – often giving practical tips to the reader, things they can try at home.

Dads stuff

Every edition of *Motherdom* has an article from a dad. The magazine may be called *Motherdom* but of course we can't delete dads from the conversation! These are similar to the real-life stories in their format.

Food stuff

We feature mum-foodies and include one or two of their recipes that are healthy, realistic and family-friendly. The connection between physical health and mental health is clear, and if we're well nourished then we're better equipped to deal with what life (or a toddler) might throw at us.

Kids stuff

Articles on kids' mental health and wellbeing - previous pieces have included book recommendations for their mental health, advice on starting school, how to encourage kids to see the 'magic' in their mistakes, and troubleshooting challenging behaviour.

Mumpreneur stuff

Features on mumpreneurs who have used their own mental health journeys to create a business.

Funny stuff

The archetypal "and finally..." piece which offers light relief at the end of the mag.

The nuts and bolts

If you'd like to write something for *Motherdom*, there are some practical things you should know:

- Firstly, as we're a small start-up business, we're currently unable to offer remuneration for articles. However, we're very happy to include authors' Instagram handles as well as websites.
- Not all story ideas that are pitched make it into *Motherdom*. This is absolutely no reflection on you, but rather Anna's passion to make every single story the absolute best fit for our readership.
- If your submission is successful, your article should be an absolute maximum of 1000 words. The best length is somewhere between 600-800 words.
- Each issue is themed (Issue 1: You're not alone / Issue 2: You're good enough / Issue 3: Who are you mum? / Issue 4: Creativity and maternal mental health) - so some of the articles will be tied to the theme, but not all.
- We always like to use high-resolution photos, so if you have any that's brilliant. (Please note - if any family members are in the photo we will need their, or their parent or guardian's permission before we can use it). If not, we may invite you to a photo shoot so that we can use those pictures. After the following edition has been released, the photos are yours to use and keep freely.

- *Motherdom's* Editorial Board read every single original piece before the magazine is published, so they may come back with some feedback which Anna will pass on to you. This is totally normal and nothing to worry about. Their job is to make sure that the content is as helpful, accurate and supportive as possible. There is so much stuff out there (especially on social media) about maternal mental health and wellbeing that's not checked over by an expert and therefore runs the risk of being triggering, misleading and unhelpful for its audience. This is the opposite of what we're trying to do!
- *Motherdom's* editorial process is quite long. The magazine is quarterly, so by definition it's 'slow journalism' which places quality above everything else. As mentioned previously, the Editorial Board check over every original article and Anna also edits the pieces, so this takes some time. If your piece is not ready for the imminent issue, it may be held back for the following edition. This is not a bad thing - Anna wants to make sure that every story is treated with exactly the same level of care and attention. In rare cases, pieces may be pulled entirely if either Anna or the Editorial Board have concerns about the article that can't be remedied. These are never easy decisions to make, but are always made in the interests of the readership.
- If you are interested in writing a 'real-life' piece and have your own lived experience of maternal mental health issues, Anna will need to know that you have already accessed support, and also that that source of support is still available to you should you need it at any point in the writing process or immediately following publication. *Motherdom* is passionate about ensuring its contributors are being looked after - Anna is certainly not a tabloid journalist, and she cares about her writers 😊
- Once you, Anna and the Editorial Board are happy with your piece and the final edit has been locked down, you will be sent a contributor release form. This is basically a document that gives *Motherdom* some legal protection in terms of liability and copyright. Again, as we are a small organisation we don't have an in-house legal team so this is something that we have been advised to encourage our contributors to sign. But you are under absolutely no obligation to sign it, if you'd prefer not to, that's no problem at all.
- Once the magazine is on sale, Anna will make as much noise as she can about it via Instagram (and Facebook too), so if you are on social media then please do join in and post about it too.

Finally...

If you have any questions about any of this, please do get in touch with Anna - she's on anna@motherdom.co.uk

Thanks so much for your time and interest xxx