



## Welcoming a New Baby Parent Tips

Babies are a blessing! A new baby can be great fun, a tremendous challenge, or a bit of each for older siblings. Here's a list of tips to aid in the transition, both before and after the baby arrives.

### **Before the Baby Arrives**

- Keep the lines of communication open. Talk about positive changes in your family. Provide age-appropriate answers to questions. Explain the newborn will be too small to be a playmate right away. Read books about new siblings. Share baby stories and pictures.
- Enlist children to help set up the nursery, wash baby clothes, and arrange toys.
- If an older child is transitioning out of the crib, do so early on to avoid resentment.
- Be prepared for possible regression in sleep habits, toileting, and neediness.
- Have a plan in place for older siblings for the time of birth. Talk about who will care for them while you are having the baby. Allow kids to help pack their bags if they will be going to a friend or relative's home.
- Purchase a small gift for each of your children from the baby. Have the gifts on hand when the kids meet their new sibling for the first time.
- Arrange for a babysitter that can manage the baby and older children.

### **After the Baby Arrives**

- Make time for one-to-one interactions. Even ten minutes of time, alone with Mom or Dad, is special.
- Create a basket of books for older kids to read only while nursing the baby.
- Involved everyone in caring for the family. Chores are good for kids! Allow the siblings to help care for the baby in age-appropriate ways.
- Institute a mandatory quiet time after lunch for all family members. Life is better when all are rested.
- Stick to the family routine for meals, bedtime, and school.
- Plan a weekly date night for you and your spouse.

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