

# MARCH 2011

## Prevent Child Abuse Illinois' 20 Ways

### 20 Suggestions for New Moms and Dads

#### Congratulations and welcome to parenthood!

1. Know that babies cry a lot and learn what soothes your baby. Try not to blame yourself or be angry with your baby if you are unable to calm your little one. Learning what works takes patience and practice.
2. Never ever shake a baby! If you feel you are getting upset, place your baby in a safe place and walk away for a few minutes.
3. Keep a camera close by and take frequent pictures. Babies grow and change quickly.
4. Ask for help. Caring for a newborn can be exhausting and it's normal to need help.
5. Plan ahead. Keep a list of phone numbers you may need in a hurry programmed into your cell phone and near your home phone such as your pediatrician, the hospital emergency room, a relative, supportive friend, or breast feeding consultant.
6. Hold your baby as often as you want. You will not spoil the baby. Holding and cuddling helps baby to feel secure and loved.
7. Listen to other's advice but follow your pediatrician's recommendations.
8. Take time for your baby. Housework can wait.
9. Learn as much as possible about early brain development and how you can enhance your baby's learning.
10. When baby naps, get some rest yourself.
11. Keep a list of questions for your pediatrician and take it with you to your baby's appointments.
12. Establish a bedtime routine, such as a bath, book, breast or bottle, then bed. This will help baby be prepared for sleep.
13. Learn how to swaddle your baby.
14. Always place baby on their back to sleep. "Back to sleep" has been proven to reduce the chance for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.
15. Make sure baby's equipment such as crib, car seat, swing and toys are safe.
16. Always use a car seat for your baby when driving.
17. Keep baby away from cigarette smoke.
18. Talk to other new parents. Join a support group.
19. Take time for each other. You were a couple first!
20. What your baby needs most is you and your love. Enjoy!

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