

# 20 Suggestions For New Mom's and Dad's

Prevent Child Abuse Illinois

Congratulations on the birth of your new baby and welcome to parenthood! Enjoy every minute because time will fly and soon your newborn will become a toddler. Here are 20 tips (in recognition of Prevent Child Abuse Illinois 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary) to help you along the way



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 will take patience and practice.
2. **Never ever shake a baby!** If you feel like 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 of your baby. Babies grow and change very 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 people and phone numbers you may need in a hurry programmed into your cell phone and near your home phone. Include numbers such as your pediatrician, the hospital emergency room, a relative, a supportive friend, or a breast feeding consultant
  6. Hold your baby as often as you want. Don't worry about friends and family who say you will "spoil" the baby. You are meeting your baby's needs. Holding and cuddling helps baby feel secure and loved.
  7. Listen to your friends, family and others 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 takes a nap... use that time to get some rest yourself.
    11. Keep a running list of questions for your pediatrician and take it with you to your baby's appointments.
    12. Establish a bedtime routine such as bath, book, breast or bottle, then bed. Your baby will soon learn where this sequence of events is leading and will be prepared for sleep.
    13. Learn how to swaddle your baby and use a blanket which is large enough for the job. Babies are born with a startle reflex that can interfere with them drifting off to sleep and swaddling can help.
    14. Always place baby on their back to sleep unless your pediatrician has advised you to use another position. "Back to sleep" has been proven to reduce the chance of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.
    15. Make sure all your 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 your baby away from cigarette smoke.
      18. Find a way to talk with other new parents. Join a support group or find an online blog to read and write.
      19. Take time for each other as well as for your baby. You were a couple first!
      20. What your baby needs most is you and your love. Enjoy!



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