

Get out and meet others

As soon as you're able it can be helpful to get out and meet up with friends, family and other parents. A local toddler group is an ideal place to meet other parents and carers for support and friendship. When you've only had three hours of sleep, having someone else say 'me too' can be amazingly reassuring.

Be kind to yourself

If you've gone through a pregnancy to become a parent it can be tempting to expect that your body will spring back to normal once the baby has been born. Be patient and kind to yourself. It may take some time to return to something resembling your pre-baby shape.

Make time for each other

If you have a partner it's easy to neglect your relationship, but you will need each other's love and support for this big change in your lives. Keep talking, and don't forget to show how important you are to each other.



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When it comes to your children, there are no experts! So above all, have confidence in your own parenting

Katharine Hill



Care for the Family creates resources that help to build firm foundations for family life and support those who face family difficulties.

Resources

Attend a local parenting course
cff.org.uk/courses

Read *If You Forget Everything Else Remember This ... Parenting in the Primary Years* by Katharine Hill cff.org.uk/shop

Visit our Parent Support page for parenting podcasts, blogs, and other resources
cff.org.uk/parenting

cff.org.uk
029 2081 0800
mail@cff.org.uk



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Top Tips For Parents

When a Baby Arrives



You've welcomed a new baby into your home, and perhaps you are feeling great joy, but you may also be exhausted, anxious and apprehensive. There will be good days and challenging ones. You may even, at times, wonder where you'll find the strength to keep going. Here are some helpful tips on how to manage those early days as a new parent.

Give your baby lots of time and attention

Right from the start your baby needs lots of time and cuddles from you, which will help you to develop a strong bond. Prioritise spending time together as a new family.

Give yourself time

If you do not have strong feelings of love to begin with, allow some time for this to develop as you care for and protect your baby. If you are worried about how you feel then talk to your doctor or health visitor.

Keep them close



Pick up your baby and hold them close. This will help them feel more secure and will increase their bond with you.

Keep them safe

Remember to support your baby's head as you carry them or when you lay them down. Be very careful not to shake your newborn, whether in play or in frustration. When on the move make sure your baby is securely fastened into the baby carrier, buggy or car seat.

Talk to them

Babies usually love vocal sounds, such as talking, singing and cooing. Your baby will probably also love listening to music. Try singing, reciting nursery rhymes or reading aloud as you sway or rock your baby gently in a chair.

Play with them

Play little games with your baby as early as the second or third month, such as peek-a-boo and clapping hands. You may be surprised at how soon your baby will start to join in. It can also be a lot of fun!

Help them learn

Allow some time each day for your baby to stretch, kick and roll around on a blanket. Their intelligence and awareness develops faster in the first few years than ever again, so give them colourful things to look at and play with.

Take a lot of photos

The early days and years with your child will fly by, though it may not feel like this if you're on the go all day and most of the night! Take lots of photos/videos to help capture the memories, and write down 'firsts' for you to look back on with your child in years to come.

Resist competition

Parenting can feel like a competitive sport. Your baby is unique so resist comparing them with others and just enjoy them for who they are. Also, try not to compare yourself to other parents; it can lead to feelings of insecurity about your own ability. Do follow good advice, but also go with your own instincts.

Take your time

Give yourself time to relax and enjoy your baby. Learn to enjoy the little things like their first smiles, the way your baby holds your finger and their grunts and gurgles – not to mention the quiet when the crying stops!

Rest when you can

Take chances to nap in the daytime when your baby sleeps, and allow others to help you in small ways, such as leaving visitors to help themselves to tea and coffee. Relatives and friends can be a great resource and their experience can be useful. Be willing to take up offers of a meal delivered to the house, or someone to sit with the baby while you take a shower.

Look after yourself

It's perfectly normal for mums and dads to feel a little down and tired in the early days. Don't be surprised if you feel this way, but don't ignore how you're feeling. Give yourself a treat if you can: take a long bath, read a magazine or watch some television. If your mood does not improve or you begin to feel worse, talk to your doctor or health visitor.