

Advice from New Parents to New Parents

By Judy Arnall

1. Ask for help

- Hire help if you can. Ask for help and be specific when people offer.
- Use I-statements "I feel unappreciated for all the baby care work I do."

2. You are the best person for your baby, even when you make mistakes

- 2 months the baby begins to smile and you feel like you really matter most!

3. Trust your instincts about your ways of parenting

- Gut feeling is reliable.
- In 10,000 years babies needs haven't changed, but our recommendations are changing every week with new studies and information. Go with your gut feeling!
- You can't spoil a baby by picking them up when they cry and responding to them.

4. Decide what information is right for you

- In every parenting book, there is a chapter missing – the one about your baby.
- A parent's role is information decipherer – use critical thinking skills about studies. Who is the sponsor? How many people were studied? What type of study was it?
- Advice is for every baby, not your baby.

5. Be flexible in getting things done

- First year job is nurturing baby and nurturing you. Everything else can wait.
- Self care is important; relax.

6. Don't stress about the worry, guilt, and fear that is very normal

- Defensiveness = uncertainty; make choices and be confident they are right for you.
- Fear is a normal part of parenting and even as a Grandparent it never goes away. Elizabeth Stone quotes "To have a child is to decide forever to have your heart walking around outside your body." Learn to manage it.

7. Mistakes are okay! We learn from them. Love and safety is all baby really needs to thrive.

- Sharing them with humour lessens the guilt.

8. Have food ready and frozen

- Sandwiches, vegetable trays are handy to grab and go. Order in.

9. Bank sleep before baby comes

- Look at ways to cope with sleeplessness. It shall pass, but you have to manage tiredness.

10. It took 9 months to gain weight and will take a year to reduce again.

- Breastfeeding – 500 calories a day extra. The weight will come off when you are running around with a toddler.

11. Don't try and be Supermom. You are good enough!

12. Find your community – for your philosophy, parenting style and values

- Online, groups, clubs, activities, support, classes.

13. Dad's are parents too

14. Enjoy your baby and new life!

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