

MamaMagic Milestones

Your Essential Pregnancy & Parenting Guide

The Love Issue

new year,
new you!

The Benefits of
Tummy Time

7 Steps
To Planning
Your
Baby's
Birth

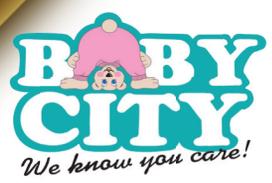


-  PREGNANCY
-  BABY
-  TODDLER
-  FAMILY

Surviving
**ARSENIC
HOUR**
(You Can
Do It!)

Understanding
Love Languages
– For a Happier Family

GAMES TO PLAY
With Your Baby &
Toddler



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- 2 speed soothing vibration
- SoftTouch, 5 point harness with lower buckle cover



Lift-off Snoozer
converts to a Bouncer



Change table



Sound & Light Unit
with vibration



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Cost: 2. Each SMS entry costs R1; free minutes do not apply. Readers may SMS an entry as many times as they wish.
Rules: 3. Prizes will be awarded to the first entries drawn at random and received before the competition closing date. The judge's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. 4. Winners will be notified by telephone, email or post to arrange delivery of the prize. 5. Winners must be willing to be photographed for possible publication in the MamaMagic Milestones magazine or the MamaMagic website or social media platforms, free of any fee. 6. All prize values are correct at the time of going to print. Prizes are not transferable and cannot be exchanged for cash. 7. Prizes awarded are the responsibility of the competition sponsors. 8. Prizes must be claimed within one year from date of issue they appear in and cannot be re-issued should they expire, or resent if they are returned. 9. We reserve the right to forward contact details of entrants to the competition sponsors. 10. All entrants agree to receive further promotional material from Exposure Marketing. If you do not want to receive further communication please ensure that you unsubscribe to any email newsletters or SMS that you may receive. 11. Participation in this promotion constitutes acceptance of these rules. Any violation or attempt to violate any of the above rules will result in the immediate disqualification of the transgressors.
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feel the love

As summer draws to an end and we revel in the holiday afterglow, reminiscing about the wonderful playtime and bonding with our families, we can be confident that we have cast a solid foundation for the year ahead.

I am sure by now you have all got back into the routine of school and work and early bedtimes. And you have to admit, as wonderful as the holidays are, it's good to come back to the routine that grounds our children and gives them comfort and confidence in knowing what follows next.

Adjusting to a new year can sometimes be a bumpy journey, but hey, nothing is perfect! What makes us such incredible parents, as grownups, is how we can adapt and amend as we go along. After long days away from each other, we can prepare ourselves for outbursts of tiredness, anxiety, or joyfulness from our children. To help you do just that, Laura Markham gives you several tips on *Surviving Arsenic Hour* on page 8.

Big congratulations to all our pregnant mums! You have so much to look forward to with the birth of your baby this year – I'm sure you can't wait. But while you do, take note of our story on *7 Steps to Planning Your Baby's*

Birth on page 20. Even if it doesn't go according to plan, it's a great way of preparing yourself physically and mentally for that ultimate moment when your baby arrives.

After the arrival of your beautiful baby, there is still so much to be aware of, so we have filled this issue with pertinent content to help you through those crucial times. From vaccinations for your children, to nappy rash for babies, with tips on potty training, to managing nightmares with your toddler – we have it all covered.

Autumn gives you the opportunity to create new traditions with your family or build on your old ones. Valentine's Day isn't just about the two of you anymore; it has become a celebration of family love, so embrace the day with your partner and children. And then there are more holidays with Easter around the corner, which provides you with more wonderful moments to create lasting memories with your children.

Don't forget to capture all these cherished moments and share your pics with us. We want to hear from you! ♥

Projeni Pather

Projeni Pather - EDITOR



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Share Your Stories!

my little miracle

I am 31 years old and 27 weeks pregnant with my first baby. When my man and I decided to try for a baby, I had no idea that it would be such a process. In September 2013, I thought I was pregnant, but the test came back negative. We were so disappointed. Weeks later I went to see my doctor who told me it will take a miracle for me to fall pregnant naturally as I have low iron and other complications. I did not lose hope or faith, and more than 9 months later I fell pregnant. It was the happiest day of my life. Then, when I was 11 weeks pregnant, I was involved in an accident. My baby survived. At 21 weeks, my water broke. I was very scared, but my baby survived again. And when I was 25 weeks pregnant, I started bleeding. She survived all of that and my gynae told me after all the tests that she is healthy and I don't need to worry about anything.

I can't wait to meet this miracle baby on 21 January 2015!

Elizabeth Dikobe (Fourways, Johannesburg)

We caught up with Elizabeth, and her little girl was born on 5 January 2015. Her name is Azaniah, which is Hebrew for "God is listening".

it's not all roses & sunshine

I just wanted to say thanks for the article on postnatal depression in the *Winter 2014 issue of Milestones* (p. 8). I think it was great that Busi Mahlaba could open up and speak about her own experience of it.

As an anxious Type A personality who's experienced panic attacks in the past, I was worried at the start of my pregnancy that I might be prone to depression afterwards. This feeling was only compacted by the fact that I don't actually consider myself a baby person and found it very difficult to relate to all the mommy imagery I was constantly bombarded with. I became nervous that I wouldn't know what to do, that I wouldn't feel that immediate love that everyone talks about, and that I would basically be a terrible mom.

I had to make a conscious decision to take a step back from my usual anxious/perfectionist state and accept that my body knew what it was doing and could be trusted to get on with things. Reading articles like this one makes me wish more new moms would open up about the harder side of motherhood; the initial loneliness and isolation that can be overwhelming, the feelings of inadequacy and the fact that not everyone has an immediate bond with their baby. These feelings are all ok to have; no one should feel abnormal for having them and by accepting them hopefully we can get some help in overcoming them. Maybe by accepting all possible outcomes we would all feel a little less pressured to be perfect and be able to accept motherhood – the good and the bad – with a more relaxed state of mind.

Machteld Vandecasteele (Vredehoek, Cape Town)



Win a R500 Baby City Voucher

Email your letters to milestones@mamamagic.co.za. The winning letter will receive a prize. In this issue, Machteld Vandecasteele wins a R500 Voucher with compliments from Baby City. www.babycity.co.za



Facebook Fans Have Their Say

movie mania

We asked our Facebook Moms which movies their kids love the most – the ones which they watch over and over, and which they know all of the words to.

Here are the results:



33%



8%



6%



5%



OTHER

48%

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Meet our cover kids

Harriet and Graeme Rogers-Greensmith are the adorable brother and sister duo gracing our cover this issue. Harriet (2 years & 10 months) loves wearing her gumboots and splashing in puddles. Her puppies, Bollo and Naboo, are her favourite friends and she loves playing with them in the garden. Graeme's (16 months) favourite thing to do is read books – especially ones with lions, tigers and bears. He also loves music and spends lots of time making it by banging drums and clashing cymbals! Both of them enjoy baking up a storm with their mom and dad, Debbie and Chris.

Cover girl: **Harriet Rogers-Greensmith**
 Cover boy: **Graeme Rogers-Greensmith**
 Photographer: **Nicholas Huisman**
 Clothing: **Cotton On Kids**
 Stylists: **Pippa Naudé & Berna Hancke**



Our competition winners from the last issue of Milestones are: Lebo Monyake (JHB), Lorraine Mari (DBN), Michelle De Villiers (JHB), and Rynhardt van Reenen (CPT).

TO STAND A CHANCE TO WIN ONE OF THIS MONTH'S GIVEAWAYS, GO TO PAGE 6.

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<https://www.facebook.com/jumbabyZA>



Win Win Win



Winning is easy with Milestones; simply enter by sending an SMS for your prize of choice, and your name could be picked in our lucky draw.

SMS Code: ENTER CABOODLE

Win a Caboodle and Pigeon hamper to the value of R550! The hamper will contain:

- 1 x Caboodle Everyday Bag
- 1 x 2-pack Chamrose Pigeon Wipes (82s)
- 1 x Pigeon Skincare Combo Pack

Caboodle and Pigeon are giving away a stunning Caboodle Everyday Bag together with Pigeon Chamrose Baby Wipes plus a Pigeon Skincare Combo Pack. You are definitely going to need these on outings! The Caboodle Everyday Bag with adjustable shoulder straps can be worn, or hung on your stroller, and has plenty of pockets, a large changing mat together with insulated bottle pouch.

Available from Baby City, pharmacies and selected retail outlets, and online at www.baby-time.co.za, www.brands4you.co.za and www.takealot.com.



SMS Code: ENTER SNAPPI

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Please go to www.snappi.co.za for more information about this product.

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To stand a chance to win one of these prizes, SMS the prize code (e.g. ENTER CABOODLE) with your full name, postal address and email address to 32015.

Each SMS is charged at R1. Free minutes do not apply. Competition closes on 27 March 2015. Winners will be notified within 3 weeks after the competition has closed. Standard Competition Terms and Conditions apply – see page 2.

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MMM/ISSUE4/JHB/01/2015

Surviving *Arsonic* Hour

By Dr Laura Markham

Every parent knows arsenic hour, when hunger, homework, and exhaustion merge into one big emotional accident waiting to happen. One obvious reason that kids have meltdowns at the end of the day is that they're hungry and tired, whether they've been home with you or out at school. But there's another reason: after having spent the day apart, your child feels disconnected from you. Until he reconnects, he'll let you know how alone he feels by acting ornery and uncooperative. It's also typical for kids who are at daycare or at school all day to lose it when they're reunited with you.

Why arsenic hour happens

It's hard work for little people to keep it together all day in the face of all those developmental challenges, disappointments and rules. All day they store up big feelings they can't process, waiting to be safe with Mom or Dad to let those emotions fly. The minute they see you, their "executive self" relaxes and their "baby self" comes out to seek comfort. Be ready to be emotionally present for your kids, focus on connecting with them, and you'll stave off some meltdowns and set a pleasant tone for the evening. How?

1 *If you can manage it, change into your jeans before you leave the office.*

I know, it sounds crazy, but the minute you do, you begin to relax. And be sure to use the bathroom before you leave the office! What if you've been home with little ones all day? Steal 5 minutes to wash your face, have a cup of tea, and do nothing. Really, nothing.

“ Be ready to be emotionally present for your kids, focus on connecting with them, and you'll stave off some meltdowns and set a pleasant tone for the evening. ”

2 *Before you pick up your kids, sit in the car for 5 minutes by yourself.*

Put on some soothing music. Breathe deeply. Notice the sensations in your body. Acknowledge how you're feeling. Then, pretend your heart is doing the breathing, and imagine the breath going in and out through your heart (this has been proven to lower stress hormones). Tell yourself what a good job you did all day. Think of 1 nice thing you can do for yourself this evening (a hot bubble bath? Call an old friend? Go to bed early?) and promise yourself that present tonight. Acknowledge that after the kids go to sleep, it's your time, while the next few hours are "kid time", then, get in touch with how much you love your kids and how much you want a nice connection with them. Once you've filled your own cup, you'll find you have a lot more to offer your kids.

3 *Give your kids lots of hugs and "pre-emptive" attention when you pick them up.*

When your kids get into the car, what they need is to reconnect with you. Turn off the radio and focus on them. Give everyone a big hug and a loving look in the eye. Make a ritual of starting with the youngest and ask them each about their days. Be sure to ask open-ended questions to get them talking while you drive. You'll find your kids will come to love this ritual and wait for their turn with great anticipation.

“ Research shows that music can lift our moods, calm us down, and make us happy, so as soon as you walk through the door, put on soothing music. ”

4 *Keep your kids with you when you walk into the kitchen to start dinner.*

Why? Because they haven't seen you all day and they need to reconnect with you. Until they do, they're much harder to manage and much more likely to fight with each other. They're also more likely to get into trouble while you're preoccupied with getting dinner on the table – paediatricians will tell you that kids have more accidents at this time of day. They're overstimulated from being tired, which means they have stress hormones coursing through their veins – that's how kids manage to get through the afternoon when they're tired, and it's what makes them so cranky and often hyperactive at this time of day. Using TV at this point can become an addiction because it tamps down the feelings your child has stored up all day, and numbs children out, so when it's time to turn off the TV, all those unprocessed emotions

come bursting out.

Instead, start a routine of sitting your kids down at a little table in the kitchen with a healthy snack and some paper to draw on if they're toddlers or pre-schoolers. Ask

“ After having spent the day apart, your child feels disconnected from you. Until he reconnects, he'll let you know how alone he feels by acting ornery and uncooperative. ”

them to draw you a picture of their day. If they're older, they can sit at the kitchen table and do homework while they snack. Young children may show you with their crankiness that they need your help to restore emotional regulation; the best way

to do that is a short roughhousing game in which you get them giggling to let off their tension. It's not a structured game, but any silly little interaction in which you express your affection and undying love in such a hammed-up way that it gets your child giggling. Be a bucking bronco, sing silly songs, arm wrestle, etc. You'll find that 3 minutes invested in reconnecting this way can transform your evening.

5 Put healthy snacks in front of the kids as soon as you walk through the door.

If you're worried that you'll spoil their appetites, make sure the snacks are healthy. Crackers with peanut butter, cheese slices, carrots, olives, broccoli florets, raisins, bananas, apple slices, cucumber slices, cherry tomatoes, red pepper slices, raw or cooked green beans, hard boiled eggs, even a healthy smoothie... anything nutritious that takes less than five minutes to prepare, or that can be prepared the night before. In fact, think of this snack as the first course of dinner, and make sure your kids are getting

protein or vitamins from it. It's amazing how many more veggies kids consume when they're served as a snack rather than competing with the carbs on the dinner plate. Don't forget to feed yourself a bit as you prep dinner, so you recharge your own batteries.

6 Are your kids antsy and unable to sit in one place to draw and snack?

Put them to work and tell them how much you value their help. As you chop the veggies, they can put them in the bowl; or they can get ingredients out of the fridge for you. When it's time to eat, have everyone set the table together.

7 What to do when your youngest is a baby or toddler.

If your youngest is just too tired even to sit and snack in a high chair, get out the sling or baby backpack and let her watch from your back as you make dinner.



8

Simplify so you can connect.

Don't answer your phone and don't return phone calls before dinner. In fact, turn your phone off. Don't go through the mail or complete school forms. Do not turn on your computer to "quickly check email". Just get everyone fed as soon as possible. Once that's completed, everyone will have more internal resources to draw on to tend to any other tasks that need to be accomplished, including any kid chores.

9

Use the power of music.

Research shows that music can lift our moods, calm us down, and make us happy, so as soon as you walk through the door, put on soothing music.

10

As a matter of simple survival, don't spend more than 20 minutes getting dinner on the table.

Anything that's quick and nutritious is fine to serve for dinner on weeknights. When you cook a meal on the weekend, why not cook several batches and freeze some? You can do this with stews, soups, beans, lasagne,

“The daily stress of being hungry and not knowing what you'll serve hungry kids for dinner can ruin your life and sabotage everything positive you do with your kids.”

casseroles, etc. You should be able to get out a frozen meal twice a week before you leave for work, and just add a salad and bread that evening as the meal is heating. The other three meals? Pasta, eggs, beans or broiled fish or meat. If your gourmet sensibilities are offended by this simplicity, think about what's more important – an easy, happy family evening or a gourmet meal? You can always cook on weekends when you have all day and (hopefully) adult backup.

I know it seems like extra work to cook and plan ahead, but the daily stress of being hungry and not knowing what you'll serve hungry kids for dinner can ruin your life and sabotage everything positive you do with your kids. If you're more of a free spirit, you don't have to plan, just look in your freezer every morning. If you can't find anything, make the decision right then: will you order pizza or make scrambled eggs?

11

Feed young kids as early as possible.

Seriously, why wait? They're starving. They're tired. You need to get on with their baths and get them to bed. Why not feed little ones at 17h30 or even 16h30 if possible? What if one spouse can't get home until later and the kids are too young to wait? Feed the kids early, finish homework, bath everyone. When the other partner gets home, everyone can sit down for Happy Hour together. Serve fresh fruit to the kids while Mom and/or Dad eats. That way, kids get some experience with family meals even during the week, and get to connect with both parents, but they get fed at a developmentally appropriate hour, they have time for a soothing bath, and they get to bed on time. ♥

“As a matter of simple survival, don't spend more than 20 minutes getting dinner on the table.”



The Importance of **VACCINATIONS**

for Your Children



By Ina Opperman

Vaccinations are one of the greatest gifts you can give your children, as they protect them against dangerous, preventable childhood diseases. And yet it is only in recent years that we have been able to benefit so greatly from vaccinations; it was in 1974 that the World Health Organization (WHO) launched the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) to target 6 vaccine-preventable diseases, namely polio, diphtheria, tuberculosis, pertussis (whooping cough), measles and tetanus. In 1974, about 5 % of the world's children were protected against these diseases and, according to the WHO, presently 83 % are protected. The WHO estimates that the EPI averts 2.5 million premature deaths a year and protects millions of people from illness and disability.

The effectiveness of herd immunity

The reason that vaccinations have been so successful is that they ensure "herd immunity"; where if 90 % of a community is immune to a disease it will be eradicated completely. This is why schools require proof of vaccination before enrolling a child. By ensuring all of the children have immunity to specific illnesses, the school can rest assured that there will not be an outbreak of those illnesses.

“ *The reason that vaccinations have been so successful is that they ensure 'herd immunity', where if 90 % of a community is immune to a disease it will be eradicated completely.* ”

A South African example

The National Institute for Communicable Diseases said in December 2014 that there has been an increase in laboratory-confirmed measles cases in Gauteng,

Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Cape and Western Cape, while sporadic laboratory-confirmed measles cases have been noted in the Eastern Cape and Free State. Measles is a notifiable disease in South Africa – it is highly infectious and spreads rapidly amongst people who are not immune, leading to significant morbidity and mortality, the Institute says.

If enough of the population had been vaccinated against measles, there would have been herd immunity for this disease and no outbreak would have happened. Vaccinations are important, not only for your own child's health, but for the health of others.

FAQ's

How are vaccines made?

Vaccines are usually made from dead bacteria or viruses, while some vaccines contain live viruses in a very weak form to stimulate the body to produce antibodies against the disease.

What do vaccines do?

Vaccines are used to train the immune system to recognise and fight certain germs, bacteria and viruses and build up resistance to prevent disease.

Are these vaccines safe?

Vaccines are produced in a sterile

environment and new technology has ensured that they are safe for use in babies.

Do vaccines have side effects?

Babies can experience side effects such as a slight fever, drowsiness and soreness and, in extremely rare cases, very high temperatures. However the benefits of vaccination far outweigh the risks. The measles vaccine can, for example, cause a temporary reduction in platelets in 1 in 30,000 children, but 1 in 2,000 will die if they get measles.

Who can afford vaccinations?

The vaccines on the EPI are provided free of charge by the South African Government at government and municipal clinics. These are also available from private clinics and private nurses and doctors, but they charge a consultation fee.

How do you know which vaccine and when?

Babies born in a hospital get a "road to health" chart and those born at home will get one from the local clinic. This chart is the most important document for your child after her birth certificate. It contains your baby's complete medical history and you will need it to enrol your child in any school.

“Babies can experience side effects such as a slight fever, drowsiness and soreness and, in extremely rare cases, very high temperatures.”



Vaccinations and autism?

In recent years some parents have also become concerned after rumours that vaccinations can cause autism. This has resulted in a small but passionate number of parents choosing not to vaccinate their children – a group referred to as “anti-vaxxers”.

The debate about vaccinations causing autism spectrum disorders started in 1998 after Dr Andrew Wakefield, a British gastroenterologist, published a study of 12 children in the well-known British medical journal, *The Lancet*, which stated that the combination vaccine for measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) caused intestinal problems (colitis) and autism. The debate was further fuelled by a warning about thimerosal, the preservative in most vaccines, which contains mercury – a neurotoxin.

The debate became even more heated when actress Jenny McCarthy said on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* in 2007 that she believed that vaccines caused her son’s autism. All of this scared many parents into stopping or delaying vaccines for their children.

Since then *The Lancet* has officially retracted Dr Wakefield’s article. More than 7 larger studies, all published in major medical journals, have since found no association between the MMR vaccine and autism. A group of US judges appointed to handle cases of families who believed immunisations were responsible for their children’s autism, ruled that thimerosal in vaccines does not increase the risk of the disorder. However, parents are still wary of vaccinations despite no conclusive evidence of a link to autism. As a result, more children contract the diseases that vaccinations are there to prevent, and some die as a result.

Why are these diseases dangerous?

- In 2013, the WHO revealed that up to 80,000 children die from TB each year and children account for more than half a million new cases annually.
- Poliomyelitis affects children under 5 years of age, with one in 200 infections leading to irreversible paralysis and 5 to 10 % dying when their breathing muscles become immobilised.
- Diphtheria is caused by a bacterium that produces a toxin, which can harm or destroy human body tissues and organs. One type affects the throat and another type causes ulcers on the skin. Patients can develop abnormal heartbeats leading to heart failure or inflammation of the heart muscle and valves, leading to chronic heart disease and heart failure. The most severe complication of diphtheria is respiratory obstruction, causing death.
- Hepatitis A is a viral liver disease that can cause mild to severe illness. The WHO estimates that 1.4 million people contract hepatitis A every year. The virus is transmitted through contaminated food and water or direct contact with an infectious person.
- Hepatitis B is a viral infection that attacks the liver and can cause both acute and chronic liver disease. It is spread through contact with the blood or other bodily fluids of an infected person. More than 780 000 people die every year due to hepatitis B.
- Mumps is a viral infection that primarily affects the salivary glands. The virus is transmitted by direct contact or via airborne droplets from the upper respiratory tract of infected people. While the virus usually causes mild disease in children, in adults it can lead to complications such as meningitis and orchitis.
- Varicella (chickenpox) is an acute, highly contagious disease caused by varicella zoster virus (VZV), a member of the herpesvirus family. The infection can cause pneumonia or encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) with serious or fatal consequences.
- Rotavirus (gastroenteritis) is the most common cause of severe diarrhoeal disease in young children throughout the world. The WHO estimated in 2004 that 527 000 children under 5 die each year from vaccine-preventable rotavirus infections.
- Pneumococcal infection is a major cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide. In 2005, the WHO estimated that 1.6 million deaths were caused by this agent annually, including the deaths of 700 000 to 1 million children younger than 5.
- Tetanus is caused by exposure to the spores of a bacterium universally present in the soil, which is a potent neurotoxin produced during the growth of the bacteria in dead tissue. The WHO estimates that about 200 000 babies die annually from tetanus infection.
- Pertussis is a major cause of infant death worldwide and continues to be a public health concern even in countries with high vaccination coverage. The WHO estimated that about 16 million cases of pertussis occurred worldwide in 2008 and that about 195 000 children died as a result.
- Haemophilus Influenzae type B is a leading cause of bacterial meningitis and pneumonia in children worldwide, resulting in at least 3 million severe illnesses and 386 000 deaths each year, according to the WHO.
- Rubella is a contagious, generally mild viral infection that occurs most often in children and young adults, but infection in pregnant women can cause foetal death or congenital defects known as congenital rubella syndrome (CRS).

Are there any other vaccinations available?

There are various other vaccinations available, but these are not free of charge. These include:

- Infanrix Hexa, called the 6-in-one injection, is given at 8, 12 and 16 weeks, and 18 months against diphtheria, tetanus, A cellular pertussis, HIB, hepatitis B and polio (an inactivated polio vaccine).
- Varilrix is given from 9 months against chickenpox.
- Havrix Junior or Avaxim is given at 12 and 18 months against hepatitis A.
- Havarix is given after the age of 16 for hepatitis A.
- Engerix B is given at 6, 10 and 14 weeks, and to children up to 15 years old against hepatitis B.
- Twinrix is given between the ages of 1 and 15 years for hepatitis A and B.
- Priorix or Trimovax (MMR) is given at 15 months and 4 to 6 years for measles, mumps and rubella.
- Infanrix is given at 4 to 6 years for diphtheria.
- Cervarix Mencevax is given to females 10 years and older for cervical cancer protection.
- Typherix is given to children aged 2 years and older and adults for typhoid. ♥

“ The WHO estimates that their Expanded Programme on Immunization averts 2.5 million premature deaths a year and protects millions of people from illness and disability. ”



* Private and government vaccination schedules vary slightly, both in terms of some of the vaccinations given, as well as when they are administered. If you are concerned that you are not up to date with your child's vaccinations, consult your health practitioner.

AGE	VACCINE*
Birth	Oral Polio Tuberculosis Hepatitis B
Visit 1 6 weeks	Oral Polio Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis (whooping cough) Haemophilus Influenzae type B (HIB) Hepatitis B Polio (inactivated polio vaccine) Rotavirus (gastroenteritis) Pneumococcal infections (meningitis, lung infection, blood infection and middle ear infection)
Visit 2 10 weeks	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Haemophilus Influenzae type B (HIB) Hepatitis B Polio (inactivated polio vaccine) Pneumococcal infections – if not given here, then given at 9 months
Visit 3 14 weeks	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Haemophilus Influenzae type B (HIB) Hepatitis B Polio (inactivated polio vaccine) Rotavirus Pneumococcal infections
9 months	Measles Varicella (chickenpox)
From 12 months	Hepatitis A Pneumococcal – If private schedule is followed
15 months	Measles, Mumps & Rubella (German measles) (MMR)
18 months	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Haemophilus Influenzae type B (HIB) Hepatitis B* Polio (inactivated polio vaccine) Hepatitis A
4 – 6 years	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Measles, Mumps & Rubella (MMR)
12 years	Diphtheria Tetanus

MAGIC MOMENTS
Beautiful Bumps

READERS' PICS



Candice Stacy-lee Paxton



Yolindy Jordaan



Maureen Maluleka



Annien van Wyk

All featured photos receive 2 comp tickets to MamaMagic, The Baby Expo, and the winning photo also receives a **R250 Baby City voucher**.
If you'd like to enter our next Magic Moments competition, "like" our MamaMagicSA  page to be notified of the details.

Pregnancy

"A mom's hug lasts long after she lets go."

Unknown



Congratulations! At weeks 24, 26 & 28 you have passed the halfway mark. Find out what exciting milestones you can expect for both mom and baby.

PG. 16 – 17

Discover the 7 steps to planning your baby's birth. Knowing what's important to you will help you feel prepared and empowered for the big day.

PG. 20 – 22

Stem cells: safeguarding your child's future health?

All you need to know about stem cells and why you might want to keep your baby's stem cells.

PG. 18 – 19



Pregnancy Milestones – 24, 26 & 28 weeks

By Jude Polack

Congratulations! You have passed the halfway mark and are well and truly into the second half of your pregnancy. Your baby is beginning to look more like an actual baby human and less like an alien, and it's time to start preparing for your little one's arrival. Let's have a look at what's going on for the 2 of you.

24 Weeks

Gestational milestones

- >> Your baby's lungs are starting to develop a mature structure and the ability to inflate.
- >> More fat is being distributed around baby's body, smoothing out her skin and making her look more like a newborn.
- >> Your little one's taste buds are forming.
- >> She can now identify and respond to noise – this is the perfect time to start singing or playing gentle music to your tummy.

What's happening to Mom?

- >> You may begin to experience some dizziness as the growing baby and placenta put more pressure on your veins.
- >> As a real baby bump emerges, so too can a few stretch marks. This is a good time to invest in good, supportive underwear.
- >> A growing baby bump can also mean itchy skin – use a good lotion or body oil to keep your skin soft and supple.

26 Weeks

Gestational milestones

- >> Your baby has started to make breathing movements.
- >> This is a period of rapid brain development in your baby. Her head begins to look larger in relation to her body than earlier in the pregnancy.
- >> Baby begins to open her eyes and is capable of noticing the difference between night and day.
- >> You will begin to notice definite periods of sleep and wakefulness as baby's movements become stronger and more conspicuous.



What's happening to Mom?

- >> The size of your baby bump means that you may begin to feel noticeably hotter than people around you. Dress comfortably and stay hydrated.
- >> You may also notice an increase in your appetite as the rapid development and growth of your baby kicks in. Be sure to stick to nutritious meal options as often as possible.
- >> As you transition to your third trimester, you may notice your nesting instinct taking hold. This is a great time to think about your nursery or sleeping arrangements and making your home baby friendly.

28 Weeks

Gestational milestones

- >> Your baby's heartbeat is now strong and is very audible through a stethoscope or Doptone.
- >> Her lungs are also more mature and preemie babies born at 28 weeks have a strong chance of survival with the right care.
- >> The fine downy hair and thick white vernix that have covered your baby now begin to recede as she prepares for her home stretch before birth.
- >> In the last 12 weeks of pregnancy, your baby will likely double in size as she gains muscle strength and body fat.

What's happening to Mom?

- >> You are now officially in your final trimester.
- >> You may be experiencing shortness of breath and indigestion as baby's size puts pressure on your body.
- >> This is a good time to start taking it as easy as you can!
- >> Experiment with ginger, soda water or bicarb to alleviate heartburn.
- >> Although not typical for a few more weeks, some moms may begin to experience Braxton Hicks contractions. Try to relax, take a warm bath and practise your breathing. If you experience sharp or unmanageable pain, contact your caregiver.
- >> As you head into the final stage of pregnancy, it is a good time to begin planning your baby's birth. Think about your beliefs about birth, what you would like your experience to be like and start having these discussions with your birth partner and caregiver. (See *7 Steps to Planning Your Baby's Birth* on page 20.)

This later stage of pregnancy can bring a mix of emotions – relief that your baby is now viable and strong and that the birth is in sight; but also tiredness and despondency about your possible decrease in energy and heightened discomfort. Just know that baby is really responding to how you're feeling at the moment and try to gather as much support from those around you as you can. Enjoy the movements of your little one and keep your eye on the soon-to-be birth of your precious child. ♥



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Pampers
Premium Care



By Pippa Naudé

Stem Cells: Safeguarding Your Child's Future Health?



Who can use the stem cells?

The use of the stem cells to treat medical conditions is not limited to treating the baby the stem cells came from; they could also be used to treat the siblings or parents of the donor because of their genetic proximity to each other. The stem cells have a 1 in 4 chance of being a suitable match for the baby's siblings, and a 1 in 8 chance of being suitable for the parents. (The stem cells represent a perfect match for the baby from whom they have been collected.) It is for this reason that families with a known history of diseases treatable by stem cells may be more inclined to take advantage of stem cell storage.

"There is a 1 in 100 000 chance that you will find a matching stem cell donor when looking on an international registry."

It should be noted that despite having a 100 % match, there are some situations

Modern medicine is constantly evolving and offering new (and quite amazing) benefits. Stem cell harvesting and storage is one such development, which involves collecting stem cells from the blood and the tissue in a newborn baby's umbilical cord (known as cord blood and cord tissue) and cryogenically storing them at a stem cell and human tissue bank. The cells can then be used to treat a variety of life-threatening diseases, should they arise in the child's family.

where a baby would not receive their own stem cells as treatment. For example, if the baby had a genetic disorder, the stem cells would carry the same genetic information and therefore could not be used to treat the disorder.

Is stem cell harvesting safe?

The collection of stem cells is quick and easy, and does not pose a risk to either mother or baby. Once you have decided which stem cell storage facility you would like to use (the 3 companies offering this in South Africa are Salveo Biotechnology, Netcells Biosciences, and Cryo-Save), you will receive a kit that you need to take with you when you go to the hospital for your baby's birth. You will hand over the kit to the medical team delivering your baby and, after the baby has been born and the umbilical cord has been clamped, they will collect the blood and tissue from the umbilical cord. It is a quick and unobtrusive process.

The stem cell facility will then arrange for the kit to be couriered from the

hospital directly to their facility to be cryogenically frozen and stored for potential future use. Although one hopes to never have to use them, parents are assured that they have their baby's stem cells safely stored should they need them one day.

Kept in the right conditions, stem cells should be healthy and viable indefinitely. Currently there is scientific evidence that stem cells can be stored for 23 years, and as time passes and more data is published, stem cell banks will offer longer storage contracts.

"The collection of stem cells is quick and easy, and does not pose a risk to either mother or baby."

What are the costs?

An unfortunate downside of stem cell storage is that the technology is still very expensive, so the service is not affordable for everyone. The packages available normally include the collection, processing and testing of either cord



A cryogenically frozen cord blood sample



Umbilical Cord Tissue containing Mesenchymal Stem Cells.



The stem cells are cryogenically frozen and stored in the vapour phase of liquid nitrogen at -196°C.

blood, cord tissue or both. Some banks include their storage fees while other banks charge an annual storage fee to store the stem cells. The costs vary depending on the options selected, but to bank cord blood and tissue, the cost is between R13 450 and R20 900.

However, as the companies behind stem cell storage note, if you have the misfortune of needing stem cells and you do not have your own on hand, the cost of trying to find a donor is far higher than the cost of their service – and your chances of successfully finding a donor with a close genetic match is lower. There is a 1 in 100 000 chance that you will find a matching stem cell donor when looking on an international registry; whereas stem cells taken from birth will always be a 100 % match for the baby they are collected from.

What diseases can stem cells treat?

The stem cells found in cord blood are called haematopoietic stem cells, and they have been used to treat blood related illnesses such as:

- Leukaemia
- Lymphoma
- Blood disorders (thalassemia, Fanconi anaemia, sickle cell anaemia, other various inherited or acquired anaemias)
- Inherited immune system disorders
- Metabolic disorders

The stem cells found in the cord tissue are mesenchymal stem cells. Mesenchymal stem cells are being researched and used in experimental studies for regenerating connective tissue. This is hoped to one day be used for:

- Wound healing
- Skin regeneration
- Cartilage and bone repair
- Heart muscle repair
- Nerve repair

Fast Facts

- Stem cells are the original building blocks of life, which differentiate into all the specialised cells that make up the human body (skin, blood cells, muscle, bones and nerves, etc.) and therefore can be used in a number of different applications.
- Stem cells are not only found in the umbilical cord, but the umbilical cord has higher quantities and a better quality of stem cells (as they are brand new and at the beginning of their life span), making them suitable for medical use.
- Stem cell research is constantly growing and there is optimism that more illnesses will become treatable with stem cells in the future. For example, it is expected that stem cells will one day be used for organ regeneration and to treat Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, diabetes, heart disease, spinal cord injuries and retinal diseases.
- People of African descent or mixed marriages are less likely to find a matching bone marrow sample in existing tissue banks, which can be another incentive to decide to store their baby's stem cells. ♥

The Umbilical Cord Contains Life Saving Stem Cells



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7 Steps To Planning Your Baby's Birth

By Jude Polack

The months leading up to your baby's birth are the perfect time to take your birth planning a step beyond just having a packed bag waiting at the front door. Use this special time to find out what's important to you when it comes to bringing a new life into the world, by creating a birth plan.

What is a birth plan?

A birth plan is a pregnant woman's way of communicating her expectations of her baby's birth to her obstetrician or midwife. It covers both the things she would like to happen, and the things she'd prefer to avoid (where possible).

Most importantly though, a birth plan is about learning what's important to you and your partner. It's about empowering yourselves with knowledge about your needs and values, and about birth options and medical procedures, so that both before and during the birth, you'll have the information you need to make decisions that will feel right for you.

Step 1: Know yourself

The first step in making a birth plan is to examine your views about birth and your body. What are your views about natural birth versus a Caesarean section? Will you feel more comfortable in a hospital environment or a more homely one? Do you need the security of knowing exactly when your baby will arrive? If your baby is overdue, do you want an induction or would you like to try alternative methods?

How do you feel about medical interventions like augmented labour (induction), an episiotomy and instrument deliveries? Are there family or religious issues to consider? Only once you've asked yourself questions such as these, should you make decisions about birth options.

Step 2: Choose your birth option

Assuming you're having a healthy, complication-free pregnancy, you have three birth options:

- a vaginal or C-section birth at a hospital (a small number of hospitals also offer water births)
- an active natural birth or water birth at a birthing centre
- an active natural birth or water birth at home

Birth can be unpredictable and needs to be managed in the moment. You should also give yourself permission to change your mind on the day.

When researching your preferred option, talk to people who specialise in each area (asking a gynae about a water birth or a midwife about an elective C-section is not going to get you thorough, objective information). Also, find other moms who went the same route and ask them about their experiences.

Step 3: Choose your team

No birth plan is fool-proof. On the day, you might well have to change your plans, but to give your birth plan the greatest chance of success, you need to back it with the right team. What's important to you will influence your choice, so don't be afraid to "shop around" for a practitioner who shares your birthing values and is supportive of your chosen birth option.

Step 4: Choose your environment

Your choice of birthing facility will determine the kind of birth you can have. You can't choose an active birthing facility and insist that you want a C-section if you haven't delivered in 3 hours. Similarly, you can't opt for a hospital birth and then refuse to accept the standard maternity



Real Birth Stories



Second time's a charm

Ewa

After a healthy and uneventful pregnancy with my first child, I gave birth at a private hospital in Johannesburg with one of their top gynaes. At the time, I thought it best to leave the details up to the experts and take things as they came. My "natural birth" was as unnatural as I could have imagined. When I fell pregnant with my second child a year later, I decided that there had to be a better and more beautiful way of giving birth. I wanted to avoid the trauma of my first labour and the months of depression that followed the birth.

I wrote up a birth plan and went to see a midwife who respected my choices for my baby and my body. During my labour with Bella, my body's needs and responses were respected and nurtured, leaving me feeling empowered and strong. Her birth was unimaginably beautiful and left me feeling like a goddess. Writing a birth plan and finding a practitioner that respected it and me resulted in the most awesome experience I've ever had and left me feeling so strong.

Life on life's terms

Bev

I had given a lot of thought to what I wanted the birth of my baby to look and feel like. I put plenty of time and effort into creating a birth plan that best captured what I wanted from this experience. I arrived at the hospital ready to walk through the early stages of labour, armed with my books and snacks, ready for the long haul. I realised very quickly that it wasn't going according to plan as I could not move a muscle, let alone stand or walk through contractions. I had developed hypertension and Kate was born via an emergency Caesarean. Through that process, none of the smaller things seemed that important.

It took some time to come to terms with the fact that Kate's birth had been nothing like I planned, but in the end I knew that she was a miracle baby and I was grateful that she had arrived safely. I don't regret at all the time I spent researching my birth plan. I know plenty of women who've had beautiful births and had their birth plan expectations met, but I would definitely recommend that new moms be open to all eventualities.



Planned to perfection

Susan

When I fell pregnant with my first baby I had never heard of a birth plan. We decided to choose a doctor who we liked and trusted, and then ask him to guide us with our decisions. I then did some reading and discovered the idea of having a birth plan. I am an events planner, so I happily took to planning the birth I wanted.

We had the opportunity to discuss all of our wishes and preferences with our doctor beforehand. I had decided on an elective Caesarean and my other requests included skin-to-skin contact after the delivery, and that I really wanted to breastfeed. All of this went into my birth plan. I felt like having had these discussions prior to the birth helped to make everything more calm and positive on the day. I'm not sure that the hospital staff were particularly aware of my birth plan, but everything fell into place as I wanted it to, making Megan's birth a beautiful experience!



protocols, such as being induced if you don't dilate 1 centimetre per hour.

Some facilities also offer more birth and post-birth options than others. Whatever the facility, it should offer you a birthing environment that gives you safety, dignity and privacy – this plays a critical role in ensuring your labour progresses smoothly.

Step 5: Mapping out the big day

Here are some questions to ask yourself about how you'd like the actual birth to unfold:

- Who will be in the room with you? Birth partner, doula, other siblings? Check your facility's policy on this.
- What do you feel about pain relief? Is it epidural all the way, or would you rather start with less strong options like Entonox (laughing gas) or pethidine and move up the scale?
- If labour slows, what will your caregiver do, and are you in agreement with this?
- Does Dad want to cut the umbilical cord?
- If you need a C-section, can your partner and midwife go into theatre with you? Do you want skin-to-skin contact as soon as your baby is born?
- Do you want photography during your delivery?

When researching your preferred option, talk to people who specialise in each area – asking a gynae about a water birth or a midwife about an elective C-section is not going to get you thorough, objective information.

Step 6: After the birth

Your final research should cover issues that come up after baby is born, such as:

- How do you plan to feed your new baby? Know what to expect if breastfeeding, so you won't be pushed into accepting top-up feeds unnecessarily. Find out if your hospital has a lactation specialist on call if you need guidance. If you

don't want to breastfeed, check your hospital or clinic's policy on bottle-feeding.

- In most hospitals, it's routine to bath your newborn right after birth, removing the vernix, which is, in fact, very beneficial to your baby. If you'd prefer your baby to remain unscrubbed, stipulate this.
- What routine tests will be performed, and what immunisations will be given? Educate yourself and stipulate your preferences.
- It can be exhausting fielding a constant stream of well-wishers. If you'd prefer peace and privacy after the birth, let people know beforehand that you'll see them once you're home.

Use this special time to find out what's important to you when it comes to bringing a new life into the world, by creating a birth plan.

Step 7: Communicate your wishes

Once your research is done, it's time to communicate your wishes. You can write up your plan and give it to your caregiver, or it might be enough for you that your birthing partner knows what you want. Remember, it's the process of researching that's important, not the actual plan itself.

Resist the urge to extract promises from your caregiver that your plan will be carried out to the letter. (If you don't trust your practitioner to support you as far as possible in your plan, consider finding a new caregiver.)

Even a caregiver who is perfectly supportive of your wishes, however, can't give you any guarantees. Birth can be unpredictable and needs to be managed in the moment. You should also give yourself permission to change your mind on the day. You might have to think on your feet, but since you've armed yourself with information, you'll be better prepared to deal with any off-plan changes as they happen.

And ultimately, if you and your baby are safe and well after the birth, it may not really matter that the nurse forgot to play that specific track while baby was crowning. ♥



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jude Polack is the director and founder of Joburg-based active birth facility, Genesis Clinic. Jude is a mother of 3 young children whose births, she claims, changed her life. She considers herself primarily a women's advocate and works to challenge and empower women to take back ownership of their bodies and their births.

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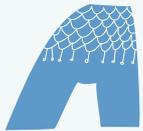
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The A-Z of Pregnancy



Announcing

There is no "right" time to announce your pregnancy. Many women choose to wait until after the first trimester has passed and the risk of miscarriage has greatly reduced. However, other women prefer to share the big news sooner so they can have their friends' and family's support for the emotional rollercoaster ride they are on. Do what feels right for you!



Why not have a gender reveal party? When you have your scan to reveal the gender of your baby, ask your gynae not to tell you what it is, but to write it down on a piece of paper and put it in an envelope. Next, find a baker or friend (one who can keep a secret) to bake you a cake for your party. Give them the envelope, and ask them to make the cake pink if it's a girl, and blue if it's a boy. Very importantly, the cake must be iced in a neutral colour so that you cannot see the colour of the cake at all. This means the gender will only be known once you cut the cake at your party.

To make things even more exciting, you can get friends and family to guess what gender they think the baby will be and to make up a Team Boy and a Team Girl. The gender reveal will decide which team wins!



Baby Blues

Up to 80 % of new moms experience the baby blues a few days after giving birth. This is thought to be related to hormonal changes in your body, and manifests as moodiness, anxiety and feeling sad and weepy. This normally passes after a few days without intervention. Just make sure you are taking good care of yourself and getting lots of sleep. If these feelings last for longer than 2 weeks, however, you could be suffering from Postnatal Depression (PND), in which case you should see your GP and voice your concerns. You can also visit the Postnatal Depression Support Association website (www.pndsa.org.za) for more information and support on PND.



Car Safety

Even when your bump gets very big, it is important to always buckle up. The safest way to wear your seat belt is with the bottom strap under your tummy and across your hip bones, and the long strap crossing between your breasts.



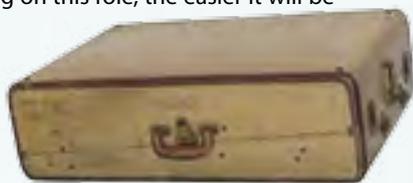
Diet

Your diet during your pregnancy will have a huge impact on your baby's growth and development, so it's important to eat healthily. Avoid empty calories and junk food, and instead opt for lots of lean proteins, whole grains and fresh fruit and vegetables (especially leafy green vegetables and yellow fruit and vegetables). Roughage is also important in for a regular tummy and to combat haemorrhoids. Ask your gynae about supplements in case of any gaps in your diet. It's also important to stay hydrated, so make sure you are drinking lots of fluids!



Emotional Baggage

If you have a lot of emotional baggage, especially around your upbringing and your relationship with your parents, now is a great time to try and resolve it and get closure. Having a small baby to care for is a tough job, and the more grounded and balanced you feel taking on this role, the easier it will be for you.



Folic Acid

Folic acid helps prevent birth defects of the spinal cord (like spina bifida), the brain (anencephaly), the heart and also the palate (like cleft lips and palates). Pregnant women are advised to take 600 micrograms of folic acid per day, either through diet alone (think leafy greens, oranges and black beans) or through diet and a prenatal multivitamin.

Glow

Ever heard comments about how pregnant women sometimes glow? Well, it's true! Your body increases your blood supply by 50 % when you're pregnant, pushing more blood to the surface of your skin. This, combined with hormonal changes, will give most moms a beautiful, rosy look.

Heels

It's safer to ditch those sexy heels when you're pregnant, since dizziness, hormones and weight changes mean you're more likely to be off balance and could take a nasty tumble. And if you really can't do without some added height, rather opt for wedges, which are a little more stable.



Identity

Being pregnant is new territory and it will change your identity. No longer are you "only" a woman, a lover, a wife, a girlfriend, an employer or employee... you are now also a mother. And this is a role that also requires you to be a teacher, a nurse, a counsellor and more! Embrace your new role, but remember to also make time for yourself.



Journal

Have you thought about keeping a pregnancy journal? Writing and reflecting on all the changes happening in your life can help you to make sense of them. Recording your experiences means you will be able to capture many details that you could otherwise forget. You will be able to look back on this journey one day, re-live memories while you read your journal, and also see how far you've come. There is no right way to keep a journal as it's such a personal thing, but it helps to set aside a specific time each day for it so that it becomes a regular habit.



Kegel Exercises

The muscles and tissues of your pelvic floor can become stretched and weakened through childbirth, which can lead to reduced sexual enjoyment and even incontinence. Sounds pretty depressing, right? But the good news is that Kegel exercises can help you to regain muscle tone and mitigate this, and they're easy to incorporate into your daily routine. To get started, when you urinate, simply clench your muscles to stop the flow of urine. Once you know how this feels, you'll be able to clench these same muscles at any other time during the day. Regular repetitions will help build up strength more quickly.

Labour

A labour contraction feels like severe period pain. For some women, most of the pain is felt in the lower back, but most women experience concentrated pain deep in the pelvis where the cervix is, behind the pubic bone. Contractions become longer, more painful, and closer together as labour progresses. They should not be confused with Braxton Hicks contractions, also known as "practise" contractions, which are the result of the uterus tightening. They shouldn't be painful, but, because the uterus goes rigid, they can be uncomfortable.



M Mood Swings

Premenstrual syndrome (PMS) and pregnancy are very similar in a number of ways, including that they may make you feel moody. If you experience moodiness with PMS, you're more likely to experience mood swings during pregnancy, especially in the first trimester and again at the end of the pregnancy. It can be quite difficult to feel so many emotions and not be in control of them, but just understand it is a side effect from all the amazing changes happening in your body. Be kind to yourself and ask your partner, family and friends to please support you regardless of how much of a mad woman you may turn into.

About 10 % of pregnant women experience depression during pregnancy. If your mood swings seem exaggerated and last for longer than 2 weeks, and especially if they are accompanied by changes in your eating and sleeping habits, talk to your doctor about this, just in case.



N Nesting Instinct

As your due date approaches you might start "nesting", or preparing your home for the baby – much like a bird would prepare the nest for its eggs. This can include cleaning rooms, sorting clothes, organising the garage, throwing things out, etc. This can be a great way to prepare for your baby, so that when you come back from the hospital everything is ready. Just don't overdo things!



Okay

Becoming a parent is a big deal. No doubt you are thinking about so many of its implications, such as what kind of parent you want to be, how you will discipline your child, how you will inspire and encourage him or her, exactly how you want the birth to go and so much more. While thinking about all of these things and discussing them with your partner is very important, we want to remind you that not everything will go as you want or plan, and many things will not be perfect. Prepare yourself to be okay with this. Enter parenthood with an open mind. Make peace with the fact that you can only do your best and your best is more than good enough.



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Patience

Very few babies are born on their due date – internationally this statistic sits at about 5%. If you are overdue, do not panic, as it is pretty normal. Your gynae will keep an eye on you and, if she feels the baby is taking too long to come out, she is likely to induce labour. Once again, this is not that unusual and should not alarm you. So as tough as it is, try to relax and be patient for the Big Day to come.



Questions

During pregnancy you will have so many questions. Antenatal classes are a great way to educate yourself about the birth, as well as caring for your newborn baby. Doulas and midwives can also be an invaluable source of information and support. Moms' groups and other moms, books, magazines, and the internet can also be a great source of support – cast your net wide to find the answers and support you need during this period of exciting (but at times daunting) change. Just remember to get a second and third opinion if something doesn't sound right to you.



Relaxin

During pregnancy a hormone known as relaxin loosens the ligaments in your body. This is thought to help prepare your pelvic area for labour. However, it can also make you more prone to injury, as it's easy to overstretch or strain yourself. Take it easy when you exercise or lift heavy objects, and avoid sudden and jerky movements.



Sex

If you have a normal pregnancy with no complications, sex is perfectly safe for both you and your baby. However, if you are having a challenging pregnancy, consult your gynaecologist as a precaution. There are some instances where it is not recommended.

Your libido may also take a dive at this time, leaving you completely uninterested in sex. Do not worry about this as it is also quite normal.

And after the baby is born? Doctors recommend you wait a minimum of 6 weeks before you try anything, including oral sex.



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- Features eco-mode
- High sensitivity microphone
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- Rechargeable Battery – Parent unit
- Room temperature monitor
- Two-way communication
- Infrared Night Vision & low battery alert



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Teetotaller

Most agree that it is safest to avoid any alcohol during your pregnancy. This is because alcohol is known to harm your baby, but the amount it takes to become harmful is not clearly defined. This means your pregnancy is a great opportunity to try some delicious virgin cocktails. We especially love this take on the Shirley Temple: pour a dash of grenadine into a glass of ginger ale and garnish with a maraschino cherry and/or an orange wedge. Simple and tasty!



UIF

UIF, or the Unemployment Insurance Fund, will pay you up to 60 % of your salary during your maternity leave – if you have been paying UIF from your salary while working. Double check with your employer that this is indeed the case. Your employer may choose to top up the UIF payments so that you are receiving a full salary while on your 4-month maternity leave, but there is no legal obligation for them to do so.



Varicose Veins

Varicose veins are caused by blood pooling in your veins, making them swell, usually in the legs or groin. Because of your increased blood flow while pregnant and because your veins are enlarged by certain pregnancy hormones, you are more at risk of developing varicose veins at this time. They should disappear after giving birth, but you can lessen them by: avoiding standing or sitting for long periods of time, wearing loose-fitting clothing, wearing support hose and putting your feet up when sitting.



Weight Gain

Weight gain is normal during your pregnancy and could be as little as 8 kg or as much as 20 kg. How much you gain will be influenced by many factors, such as your pre-pregnancy weight, your body type, how big the baby is, if you are carrying twins, and more. You should not worry too much about how much weight you put on, as long as you are eating a balanced diet full of nutritious foods. Now is not the time for dieting. At the same time, do not tell yourself you are eating for 2; you only need to increase your caloric intake by about 200 to 300 calories each day.



X-Ray

Most diagnostic x-rays are safe during pregnancy as the levels of radiation are minimal. However, your doctor might postpone x-rays if they are not urgent, just to be cautious. If you do need an x-ray, let the technician know you are pregnant so that they can shield your foetus appropriately. And if you work in an environment with radiation, talk to your employer to find ways of eliminating or reducing exposure.



Yeast Infection

Pregnant women are more prone to vaginal thrush because of the increased glucogen their body produces, which makes their vagina even more habitable and appealing for this microscopic fungus. Symptoms include a milky white discharge, itching and discomfort and sometimes pain while urinating or during sexual intercourse. Your doctor can prescribe a suitable treatment. And to avoid it? Taking probiotics and wearing loose-fitting and natural fibre fabrics can help prevent thrush; while stress, poor diet and sugar have also been linked to increased susceptibility.



Zzzs

It is thought that hormonal changes are to blame for pregnancy fatigue, which tends to happen in the first trimester and often returns in late pregnancy. Go easy on yourself and get a lot of rest. Besides, when else will you have this excuse for taking afternoon siestas? Iron deficiency (anaemia) can also cause fatigue, so if you are concerned, ask your doctor to test your blood. ♥



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Here are our favourite MamaMagicSA Facebook fans' photos of their smiling babies.

All featured photos receive 2 comp tickets to MamaMagic, The Baby Expo, and the winning photo also receives a **R250 Baby City voucher**.

If you'd like to enter our next Magic Moments competition, "like" our MamaMagicSA  page to be notified of the details.

" While we try to teach our children all about life, our children teach us what life is all about."

Angela Schwindt

Baby



Dr Melodie de Jager looks at the benefits of getting your baby to spend adequate amounts of **tummy time for core muscle development**, between the ages of 0 and 6 months.

PG. 32 – 33

Your guide to dealing with nappy rash: from identifying the different causes to how to treat and prevent nappy rash.

PG. 34 – 36

SIDS, or Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, is something that parents-to-be and new parents fear. Reduce your baby's risk of SIDS by following these simple steps.

PG. 40 – 41



tummy time & Rolling Over

Dr Melodie de Jager looks at the benefits of getting your baby to spend adequate amounts of tummy time for core muscle development, between the ages of 0 and 6 months.

Does your baby like tummy time? Most don't. Until infants are able to roll into the tummy position on their own, most of them find it uncomfortable, immobilising, and highly discouraging. This can be very confusing when a new mom hears how important tummy time is.

Tummy time is critically important for a number of reasons:

- >> It helps to change the shape of your baby's spine from the in utero C-curve to the S-curve in readiness

for crawling and walking.

- >> It helps her build her neck, back and supporting muscles, so she develops core strength and can support herself.
- >> It helps to wire the left and right sides of the brain, for cognitive development.
- >> It prevents plagiocephaly, or flat-headedness, as it allows the baby to round out the back of her head by turning from side to side unhampered.

Rug time vs tummy time

Rug time is time spent on baby's tummy or back while exploring her body and what it can do, instead of sitting cooped up in a pram or reclining chair. Tummy time is the rug time that is spent on baby's tummy, and should comprise 50 % of rug time.

Tummy time starts the moment after your baby is born and she's placed on your chest. Here, she feels safe and secure, and after a short while she wants to start raising her head to see further afield. She repeatedly fights the pull of gravity by lifting and turning her floppy head, which helps her to strengthen her neck and core muscles.

When strong enough, she also begins to use her arms to help her push herself up off the floor so that she can see further when she raises her neck. By 4 months she should be strong enough to roll over on her own.

Rolling over starts with tummy time

From time spent on her tummy, your baby does not only strengthen her neck and back, but also her shoulders, arms, hands, hips and legs. She needs strong muscle tone to reach her milestones like rolling over, sitting, crawling and walking. And when her core muscles are strong, her eyes and ears will also start to work together to help her to properly explore her world.

The long-term benefits of a properly developed core

Physical development means a baby's big muscles (gross motor) are developing in sequence from head to toe, and from inside out, or the core to limbs and extremities. The clever muscles of the hands and eyes (fine motor skills) can only develop properly once her neck and core muscles are strong.

“Unsupported tummy time is crucial for muscle development so baby can reach each milestone in sequence.”



“ Proper core development means she’s able to sit up, to sit still and concentrate, and will find it easier to read and write. All this from tummy time! ”

Fine motor development is really important because the smaller muscles control:

- the mouth – for feeding and speech
- the fingers – to grasp and later to create and write
- the toes – for coordinated movement and balance
- the eyes, which team up in order to see the wonders of the world.

All the skills your baby will need during school time come from a strong core. Proper core development means she’s able to sit up, to sit still and concentrate, and will find it easier to read and write. All this from tummy time!

What happens when baby doesn’t develop a strong core?

A poorly developed core and low muscle tone result in a baby who would:

- >> rather lie down or slouch, than crawl or play
- >> find it difficult to roll over
- >> rather sit quietly in a pram or chair and be mistaken for “the good baby”
- >> need props like a cushion, an armrest or a supporting chair to sit up
- >> sit with a rounded back and her legs in a W shape to create a wider base to support herself
- >> find crawling very difficult, since it requires a strong core, and would rather bum-shuffle
- >> probably start to walk later than expected, and walk with wide legs to help her balance
- >> rather lean against something than stand up straight

Babies who are constantly supported by reclining chairs, push chairs, walking rings or pillows, or otherwise restrained in their movements, do not have the freedom to develop their muscles. Unsupported tummy time is crucial for muscle development so baby can reach each milestone in sequence. ♥

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Melodie de Jager is a qualified nursery school teacher with a doctorate on the role of movement in brain development and learning, which led to her developing BabyGym®, Mind Moves® and Mind Dynamix Profiling®.

About Pampers Premium Care

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Pampers Premium Care, our driest and softest diaper, has breathable micropores for that fresh air feel on baby’s skin. Developed by Pampers’ leading R&D team to let humid air out and fresh air in, Pampers Premium Care’s breathable quilted outer cover with micropores gives baby’s diaper area a good environment for skin health. All sizes provide micropores for air exchange, helping to ensure a fresh air feel on baby’s skin, even when he’s inside the diaper. For complete Skin Protection use Pampers Sensitive wipes. They’re soft like cotton with a strong flexible texture, they contain unique Pampers lotion and clinically proven mild cleaning that moisturizes baby’s skin and helps ensure he is well cared for before you put his diaper on. Pampers Premium Care, our driest and softest diaper, offers the following benefits:

- **Breathable technology** – All sizes provide micropores for air exchange, helping to ensure ideal humidity levels for baby’s skin inside the diaper.
- **Unique DryMax™ core** – Unique DryMax™ technology means Premium Care is our driest and thinnest diaper, clinically tested to keep baby’s skin dry for up to 12 hours.
- **Unique honeycomb layer** – Pampers Premium Care is the only diaper with a honeycomb layer in sizes 1-3 that absorbs wetness and runny mess away from baby’s precious skin.
- **Soft like cotton materials** – Super-soft materials inside and out that give baby’s skin the gentle protection it needs for a comfortable, snug feeling.
- **Stretchy sides designed** – Pampers Premium Care’s stretchy sides are designed to help avoid red marks.





your guide to dealing with nappy rash

By Katinka Fourie

So often we hear: “I feel terrible; I have been so careful, but my baby has developed a nappy rash. I don’t know what I have done wrong!” Mothers tend to feel guilty and responsible for nappy rash, or they blame the caregiver, the milk feeds, food or any other circumstances for this condition. However, almost all babies will develop a nappy rash sometime during their diaper days.

What is nappy rash?

Nappy rash, also known as nappy or diaper dermatitis* accounts for about 10 to 20 % of all skin disorders managed by a general paediatrician.

The rash may develop as early as the first week of life, while the most frequent time period is between 9 and 12 months of age. Studies have indicated that 7 to 35 % of children in this age group are experiencing a nappy rash at any given time.
(*inflammation of the skin)

What are the signs and symptoms?

Nappy rash is easy to identify: the skin in the nappy area on the buttocks, thighs and genitals looks red, puffy and (sometimes) raw. It can be spotty in appearance, particularly at the edges of the rash. The area is often sore or itchy, so your baby may cry when the buttocks are wiped or washed. Your baby may be more uncomfortable and irritable than usual.

“Babies can also develop a rash in reaction to introducing new diaper wipes, nappies, laundry detergents, soaps, lotions, or sometimes even the elastic in plastic pants.”

What causes a nappy rash?

There are a number of different causes of nappy rash, many of which you will be able to identify according to the appearance of the rash.

1. Skin irritation

Usually nappy rash is the result of skin irritation, which develops because of moisture in the nappy; and no matter how absorbent the nappy is, it will leave some moisture on the skin. If left for long periods, the dampness can cause a skin rash.

It can also happen when baby’s bum isn’t cleaned properly, especially when your baby has diarrhoea. When the stools and the urine come into contact with each other, this creates a chemical reaction that changes the pH, which can cause a nappy rash.

Skin irritation rashes can vary from a mild redness to broken skin on the area that was in contact with the stool or urine. A combination of heat, moisture and urine can cause a red, burn-like appearance in the skin folds and groin area where the skin rubs together.

2. Sensitivity

It is common for babies to develop a rash when you introduce a new food into their diet, because it changes the composition

of the stool. This can also happen when you are breastfeeding and have eaten something different, which can change your baby’s stools.

Babies can also develop a rash in reaction to introducing new diaper wipes, nappies, laundry detergents, soaps, lotions, or sometimes even the elastic in plastic pants. Always check if there is something new you have started using that could cause a rash, and if you identify something, discontinue its use to see if this helps.

3. Allergies

If your baby has a food allergy, they could develop a rash in the form of a circle round the anus. This will be caused by a specific food that the baby has eaten, or you have eaten when still breastfeeding.

4. Bacterial infections

A bacterial infection can be a complication of an already inflamed skin. The rash will have tiny blisters and pustules that easily rupture. Bacterial infections risk spreading to skin creases and to the groin.

5. Antibiotics

Any antibiotic administered to either you or your baby while breastfeeding kills both the good and bad bacteria in your bodies, and can therefore cause a yeast infection.

6. Yeast infections

Babies can get a yeast infection in the mouth or in the diaper area. Yeast infections will cause a nappy rash that will look very similar to the rash from a bacterial infection; there will be bright red patches on the skin with an extra swelling, or dots on the edges of the rash. Typically, the nappy rash caused by a bacterial or yeast infection spreads to the creases in the skin and to the groin.

7. Sensitive skin

Babies with other skin conditions like eczema and seborrhoea dermatitis can develop a similar rash in the diaper area.

“Since nappy rash affects your baby’s skin, he will become irritable and unsettled. Nappy changes can become a nightmare.”



How to prevent nappy rash

- Change your baby’s nappy frequently, especially in hot weather and when travelling.
- Use a very absorbent nappy, especially during the night or when travelling.
- Change the nappy after your baby has passed a stool.
- Clean baby’s bum with a baby wipe or soft wet cloth after he’s passed a stool, and ensure you remove the entire stool. Allow his bum to dry before putting a clean nappy on.
- Be careful not to rub the skin too much or too harshly.
- Apply a thin layer of protective ointment to the skin, such as a cream that contains zinc oxide or petroleum jelly.
- When putting on a fresh nappy, don’t secure it too tightly; rather allow some air to circulate.
- Try to use nappies that are treated with petrolatum in the surface that touches your baby’s skin.
- Be extra careful when your baby is taking antibiotics, or when you are on antibiotics and are breastfeeding.
- Also be extra careful when baby has diarrhoea.
- A good quality nappy is key as it will allow the moisture to be absorbed quickly and keep the skin dry.

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“Usually nappy rash is the result of skin irritation, which develops because of moisture in the nappy; and no matter how absorbent the nappy is, it will leave some moisture on the skin.”

How to treat a nappy rash

- Frequent changing is essential to prevent contact of the stool and urine with the inflamed skin.
- Letting the baby sit in a tub with warm water for 10 to 15 minutes can be very therapeutic and help clean the diaper area.
- If necessary, use a very mild soap and/or water to clean the area when very soiled.
- Let the skin breathe a bit and let baby play for some time without a nappy, after cleaning the bum.
- Apply a good paste ointment that contains zinc oxide or petroleum jelly on the affected area to form a barrier against irritants. However, be careful when applying it on a broken skin as it slows down the healing process.
- Protect the healthy skin with a barrier cream or petroleum jelly.
- Do not put plastic pants on your baby.
- Baking soda can be used in the bath tub water to soothe the baby's skin – add 2 tablespoons, but no more, as higher concentrations are not good for baby.
- Your doctor or paediatrician will prescribe an antibiotic or cortisone ointment to be applied to the affected area.
- When the cause is a fungal infection, an antifungal cream will clear it up.
- Try a different nappy brand or type.
- When you suspect the nappy rash is due to food sensitivity, try an elimination diet and discontinue the food or other allergen.
- Some conditions, such as eczema or a skin infection, can be found on any area of the body. They will not

respond to the treatment used for nappy rash, so if the rash is not improving, see your local doctor or dermatologist.

What not to use

- Most paediatricians find no benefit from using corn starch or baby powder.
- It is not advisable to use baby powder while a rash is present. The powder can build up in the skin creases and hold moisture, which may help bacteria to grow and cause an infection.
- Do not use corn starch on a rash in the diaper area as it also allows bacteria to grow.
- It is not advisable to use soap to clean the area when it is soiled.
- When a rash is present, do not use baby wipes to clean the skin if they have alcohol or propylene glycol in them. These may burn the skin and spread bacteria on the skin.

When to seek medical advice

It is usually not necessary to call the doctor for a simple diaper rash. Keeping the diaper area clean and dry should treat the area and help to prevent it from happening again. However, even the best prevention is sometimes not enough. The following will be an indication that a doctor is needed to prescribe something to help heal your baby's sensitive skin:

- When there is no improvement in the rash after 4 to 7 days
- When the rash becomes worse, and is not responding to any of the treatments
- When the rash starts to spread to other areas

- When blisters or pus-filled bumps appear, or there is a yellowish colour crusting. This needs to be treated with antibiotics
- When an allergy is suspected to be the cause
- When there are signs of a secondary infection, or fungal infection
- If the rash is accompanied by diarrhoea continuing for more than 48 hours.

Key points to remember

Since nappy rash affects your baby's skin, he will become irritable and unsettled. Nappy changes can become a nightmare – this is a situation you want to prevent at all costs.

Keep your baby's skin clean and dry by changing nappies frequently, and use a barrier cream to prevent urine and faeces from coming into contact with the skin.

Use a good quality nappy. If possible, in between changes, allow some time for your baby to be without a nappy, so his skin can breathe. ♥



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Katinka Fourie is a registered nurse and midwife, lactation consultant (IBCLC), childbirth educator and consciousness coach. She helps new mothers adjust in their new role by supporting them and offering consultations, coaching, classes and workshops.

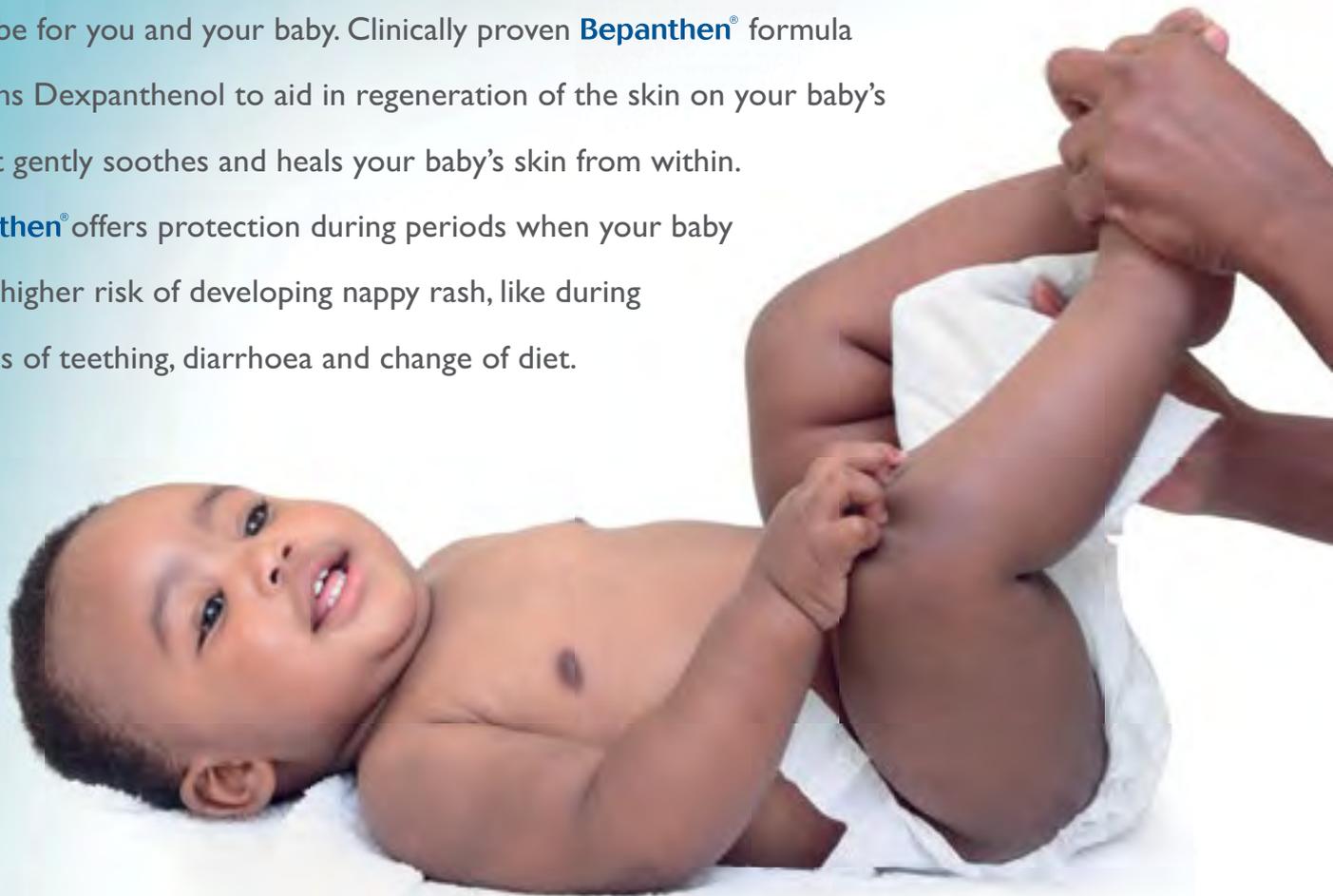
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Sweet dreams are made of these

Is your child getting enough sleep? Sometimes it can be hard to tell, because an overtired baby is the one who is the hardest to get to sleep!

Below are guidelines for how much sleep your baby needs at different ages. Since every child is different, he could need slightly more or less sleep, so you will need to find out (through trial and error) how much sleep your little one needs. When you've figured it out, be consistent with his bed- and naptimes to ensure he gets enough sleep.

Age	Hours of Sleep at Night	Hours of Sleep in the Day	Number of Naps in the Day	Total Sleep
Newborn	8 – 10 (will wake to feed)	8 – 10	6	16 – 20
1 month	8 – 12 (will wake to feed)	7	5	15 – 18
3 months	8 – 12 (will wake to feed)	4 – 5	4	15
6 months	8 – 12 (might wake for feeds)	4	3	14 ¼
9 months	10 – 12 (should sleep through)	3	2	14
12 months	10 – 12	2 ½	2	13 ¾
18 months	10 – 12	2 ½	1 – 2	13 ½
2 years	10 – 12	2	1	13
3 years	10 – 12	1 ½	1	12

clues that your baby is not getting enough sleep include:

-  He falls asleep before his bedtime
-  You have to wake him every morning
-  He becomes cranky and irritable as the day wears on
-  He likes being fussed over and jiggled
-  He is very hungry ♥



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Understanding SIDS

By Andrea Klinkenberg

SIDS, or Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, is something that parents-to-be and new parents fear. Also known as “cot death” or “crib death”, it’s a parent’s worst nightmare because it is the sudden death of an infant, with no known cause or explanation.

The mystery of SIDS

SIDS is the sudden and unexplained death of an otherwise healthy infant, occurring when they are younger than 1 year old. SIDS is most common in the 2 to 4-month old age group, but babies are generally considered to be at risk any time from birth up to 1 year old. SIDS most commonly occurs after a baby has been put down to sleep, and post-mortem autopsies show no obvious causes of death and no signs of struggle. Although the rate of SIDS has been declining over the years, it is still valuable to know the possible factors that may put your baby at risk, and how you can take steps to avoid it from happening in your family.

What are the risk factors?

Although a singular cause for SIDS has yet to be identified, research has shown that there are certain factors that increase the risk of SIDS. It is believed, however, that one risk factor alone is not enough to cause SIDS – it is rather multiple risk factors combined that increase the chance of SIDS occurring.

Sleeping conditions

Research found that babies sleeping on their stomachs had a higher incidence of SIDS, which is why we now recommend that babies sleep on their backs. A warmer room also increases the chances of SIDS, as well

as excessive objects in the crib, so extra bedding, stuffed toys, and bumper pads aren’t recommended. A soft mattress should be avoided. Sharing a bed with parents and siblings also increases the risk drastically.

Tobacco

SIDS rates are higher in babies whose mothers smoked while pregnant, and an increased incidence is seen in babies living in a household with a smoker. It isn’t advised to let anyone smoke around your baby, nor to let a smoker sleep in the same room as your baby, as the toxins from smoke stick to skin and hair, meaning your baby will always be exposed to these toxins, which affect their breathing and deprive them of oxygen.

Pregnancy factors

The risk of SIDS decreases as the age of the pregnant mother increases – in other words, the babies of teenage mothers have a higher risk of SIDS. The risk also increases with delayed or improper antenatal care, low birth weight babies and premature babies, and in babies who are not breastfed.

Genetics

Male babies are more prone to SIDS, and a family history increases the risk as well. Researchers in the laboratory

of Hannah Kinney at Children’s Hospital Boston and Harvard Medical School found that some babies are born with an abnormality of the brain stem that controls breathing and arousal from sleep, and this abnormality has been linked to SIDS.

“*Research found that babies sleeping on their stomachs had a higher incidence of SIDS, which is why we now recommend that babies sleep on their backs.*”

How to decrease the risk of SIDS

Go for regular antenatal check-ups with your midwife or obstetrician so that your pregnancy can be monitored and any problems can be picked up and dealt with early on. Once you have given birth, breastfeed your infant, as this has also been shown to reduce their chances of SIDS.

When putting your baby to bed, rather have him sleep on his back, with the bed slightly elevated. Keep the nursery (or the room he’s sleeping in) slightly cooler – 16 to 20 °C is ideal. It may be worth having your baby sleep in the same room (but not in the same bed) as you, as this is thought to reduce the risk of SIDS by half (provided you are not a smoker). Let your baby sleep on his own in his crib, without

It is now routinely recommended that all infants use a pacifier or dummy for the first year of life as it reduces the risk of SIDS.



unnecessary bedding, and as firm a mattress as possible. Organic mattresses are recommended.

It is now routinely recommended that all infants use a pacifier or dummy for the first year of life as it reduces the risk of SIDS. How it reduces the risk of SIDS is not fully understood, however, it is thought that an infant sucking on a pacifier keeps an open airway at all times, and that it prevents them from falling into a very deep sleep. Make sure that your breastfeeding routine is well established before you introduce a pacifier (this usually takes around 4 to 6 weeks). Using a

sleep sack is a new way of reducing the risk of SIDS as there is no risk of blankets moving over the baby's face and head, they have their arms free, and it reduces the chances of them rolling over in the night.

It seems that increased education and worldwide campaigns to spread knowledge about SIDS and the risk factors, are the most likely cause for the decrease in the incidence of SIDS, and it is reassuring to know that there are ways to reduce the chances of it affecting your family. For further information you can contact the Cot Death Society of South Africa on 031 765 4034.

“ *The risk of SIDS decreases as the age of the pregnant mother increases – in other words, the babies of teenage mothers have a higher risk of SIDS.* ”

The Facts About SIDS

- SIDS rates are decreasing. Worldwide SIDS statistics showed a drop from 30 000 SIDS deaths in 1990 to 22 000 in 2010.
- SIDS was the third leading cause of infant deaths in the US in 2011, but rates have been decreasing since 1988.
- The United States has the highest rate of SIDS in the world with around 2 500 annual SIDS deaths in infants younger than a year.
- There is a higher incidence of SIDS in poorer families.
- The incidence in developing countries, such as South Africa, is generally difficult to establish. Research has shown, however, that South Africa's incidence of SIDS is ranked seventh highest in the world, relative to 53 other nations. ♥

“ *SIDS is most common in the 2 to 4-month old age group, but babies are generally considered to be at risk any time from birth up to 1 year old.* ”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Andrea Klinkenberg is a registered Midwife and a BCur (Hons) graduate. She currently works in a busy Well Baby Clinic and gives classes as a childbirth educator.



games to play with your baby



Playing simple games with your baby is the perfect way to bond as well as to stimulate and aid his development, and also to just have fun. Remember, babies need a lot of repetition as this is how they learn, so be prepared to repeat these activities over and over and over again, and then some more!

0 – 3 months

Your baby is still very young and can tire easily, so look for cues that he is getting tired. If he is, give the games a break and try again later. Also try to talk to him a lot. Explain the games you are playing, talk about what you are doing while you do it, and repeat yourself.

sing song

Sing to your baby. Even if you don't have Adele's voice, your baby will love listening to you singing songs to him. Tickle songs like "This little piggy went to market" tend to go down especially well.

peek-a-boo

This classic game never gets old. Hide your face, then pop out into your baby's range of vision and say "boo!"

textures

Let your baby explore different textures. Brush his skin with a clean feather or float a silky scarf across it. Give him a crinkly foil chip packet to crumple in his fingers. Stroke his arm with a fluffy toy. Just make sure you do not leave him unattended with any of these textured objects.

3 – 6 months

Your baby will be developing his muscles and his neck strength will help him to move his head, track sounds and focus on objects.



bubbly bath

Add some baby bubble bath to his bath water and make lots of foamy bubbles for him to look at and touch.

blow bubbles

You can also blow bubbles for him and let him watch them floating past. He will also be able to reach out to touch them – and will be surprised to see them pop and disappear!

story books

Help your baby learn to love books and story time by reading to him from a young age. He will love listening to your voice and looking at the bright shapes and colours in his books. You can buy books with textures on their pages, which he will also love to touch and explore (often with his mouth!).

6 – 9 months

By now your baby might be sitting and even crawling. Encourage him to move about with games using movement.

knock down

Babies love knocking things down and watching them fall and scatter. Collect an array of lightweight items that you can stack for your baby – perhaps empty plastic containers or plastic milk bottle lids. Stack them into towers and watch his delight as he knocks them all down. You might need to show him how to knock them down the first few times.

hide and seek

Hide your baby's favourite toy and help him to look for it. You could hide it in different rooms and then walk around the house with him looking for it. Or you could place it within crawling distance and encourage him to look around the room for it, then crawl to it to get it.

sponge blocks

Get sponge blocks for bath time. Show your baby that when the sponges are full of water, they sink, but if he squeezes out the water, they will float.

Be creative – mix and match games, or make up your own new ones. Each child has different likes and dislikes, so work out what he enjoys the most and go with that. Enjoy!



“Playing simple games with your baby is the perfect way to bond as well as to stimulate and aid his development, and also to just have fun.”

9 – 12 months

Your baby is now much better at communicating with you, which means you can play games that have verbal instructions.

my turn, your turn

You do something (“my turn”) and then your baby has to copy you (“your turn”). You can pull funny faces or stack blocks and knock them down, or roll a ball... whatever game he already enjoys.

create a shower bath

Get a plastic bottle and poke lots of holes in it. When it's bath time, show your baby how, when you fill it with water, the water all pours out. Let the leaking container pour water on to him. “Shower” his other toys and also let him try. ♥

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1



2



3



4



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6



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Ann Landers

Toddler



Because every child is different, the **potty training methods** that work for one child may not work for another. What's important is to recognise when to start.

PG. 52 – 53

Help, my toddler is having bad dreams!

Learn how to help your child deal with nightmares and not fear bedtime.

PG. 54– 55

Should your toddler learn to speak more than one language?

Discover the cognitive and social advantages to speaking multiple languages.

PG. 50 – 51



social skills

Milestones for Toddlers

Dr Dinelle Faul explains how toddlers acquire social skills and how parents can help them through these important milestones.

We are not born with social skills, but have to learn and develop the ability to socialise with other people. Our first encounters with social skills happen when we bond with our mothers. Here we learn about love, support and trust, so healthy bonding with our mothers gives us the confidence to explore the world and build positive relationships with others.

Social awareness

Babies become aware of other people at a very young age. From about 3 months old they notice and become excited when they spot another baby. A few months later they want to intensify their contact and will smile or make sounds to draw the attention of the other child.

From about 10 months old, communication becomes even more intense when babies begin to reach out. They may crawl towards and try

to touch the other child's face. These social contacts tend to last only a few seconds, but are all part of developing these crucial social skills. Remember, however, that your little one's hand-eye coordination is not fully developed and an intended friendly touch may suddenly seem like a nasty slap. Pulling hair happens because he does not yet know how to open his hands after grabbing hold of something! Have patience with these little social accidents.

“When toddlers begin to move around it is a good time to start teaching them consideration for others and to comply with appropriate rules of society.”

5 Tips to help toddlers develop social skills

- Use language and explain why certain actions are done. Keep it short and simple: "Jumping on the bed is not allowed. You will hit your head when you fall and get hurt."
- Children want to earn praise and avoid disapproval. Compliment them for things done right: "Wow, you know how to put the blocks in the toy box! You're helping me clean up."
- Choose films, stories, and television programmes that concentrate on sharing, caring, cooperation, respect, helpfulness and generosity.
- Toddlers behave socially inappropriately when they are tired, ill, or scared. Acknowledge your child's needs and be flexible and supportive rather than teaching or scolding them during these times.
- Most importantly, always remember that toddlers learn social skills by imitating parents' behaviour.



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- **Unique honeycomb layer** - Pampers Premium Care is the only diaper with a honeycomb layer in sizes 1-3 that absorbs wetness and runny mess away from baby's precious skin.
- **Soft like cotton materials** - Super-soft materials inside and out that give baby's skin the gentle protection it needs for a comfortable, snug feeling.
- **Stretchy sides designed** - Pampers Premium Care's stretchy sides are designed to help avoid red marks.

3 Stages of social development

Taking a closer look will reveal that social skills usually develop in 3 stages for toddlers:

Stage 1: He is more interested in the object or toy that is held by a friend, rather than the friend. When he snatches the toy, he does not mean to be nasty. He only wants to see how the specific toy operates.

Stage 2: His focus shifts from toys to the friend herself. Here he will want to see if he can elicit a response (such as a smile) from the friend. He will initiate actions like giving the friend a toy to see the friend's reaction. Communication is still merely happening from one direction: *Me giving to you.*

Stage 3: He will be reacting to interactions with the friend. Communication becomes more bi-directional: *I give to you, and you respond by giving to me.*

Toddlers as copycats

Usually, before 3 years of age, toddlers make use of parallel play. This means that they don't actually play with one another; they tend to play next to one another and imitate each other's play. When one throws a ball, the other will do the same with his toy.

It is only from about 3 years of age that toddlers really start to make friends and play with each other. This is a good time to send your toddler to nursery school as his new friends will help to teach him social skills such as problem solving and sharing – with the assistance of adult caregivers.

Terrible 2s

Believe it or not, the terrible 2s are a necessary part of your toddler's social skills development. From about 24 months of age toddlers develop and practise new social skills. They want to exercise self-control, make their own decisions, and want to test their own judgement. This is the underlying reason for their obstinate behaviour. Allow them to exercise these skills, but always within socially appropriate limits.

Teaching social skills

When toddlers begin to move around by crawling or walking, it is a good time to start teaching them consideration for others and to comply with appropriate rules of society. These are the cornerstones of social skills. If a toddler is left to his own devices and allowed to act as he pleases, parents are actually setting the child up for rejection in later years. Yes, it is time to start disciplining children as soon as they start crawling or walking. If you wait until your toddler is 4 years old, it will be too late!

Have patience and remember you will have to use repetition many times, since they learn through repetition. Without discipline, children feel unsafe and that they cannot trust their caregivers. Let your Yes be your Yes and your No be your No – be consistent. ♥

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Dinelle Faul is a clinical psychologist and public speaker specialising in working with children. www.kindersielkundige.co.za





Should your toddler learn to speak more than one language?

By Meryl Bailey

Many people lament the fact that they never learnt a second or third language when they were younger. The benefits of being able to speak isiZulu, French or Chinese are often apparent only once we are older and wiser. However, beyond the ability to speak another person's language, learning an additional language during the developmental years has undisputed cognitive and social benefits, which might just be the best start you can give your child.

Language acquisition during the developmental years

It is well researched and documented that young children acquire additional languages better than adults. Dr Robyn Moloney, a multilingual expert and senior lecturer at Macquarie University in Australia, states that children have the ability to understand and use multiple languages without inhibition or confusion, and with a perfect accent. Essentially, everything a child does and hears from birth is steering them towards communication with the world around them, and so from the outset it seems like a waste to utilise this critical period of language learning to teach only one language.

“It is important to remember that no one language is more important than another, and by speaking two or more languages, your child will already be reaping the benefits of multilingualism.”

The benefits of learning more than one language during childhood

There are cognitive benefits and social skills that only develop in a child who is brought up with more than one language. Research from across the world has proven that multilingual children have:

1. An increased sensitivity to different sounds and language patterns

Studies in children as young as 1 year old have shown how children from bilingual families are increasingly more sensitive to sounds and language patterns than children who only speak/hear 1 language. It is also well documented that children who speak more than 1 language find it easier to acquire additional languages. “Young children have a lovely ability to mimic, use and play with an additional language without inhibitions. And after learning a secondary language, subsequent languages are easier to learn – patterns can be recognised a lot faster,” explains Moloney.

2. Advanced thinking patterns, memory, literacy and logic

Dr Moloney goes on to say that there is much research showing “second-language learning increased cognitive power, divergent thinking and creativity, enhanced literacy ability in the first language and communicative abilities.” For example, a study at the University of Nanjing in China assessed memory skills in monolingual and bilingual children and discovered that bilingual children are noticeably better (faster and more accurate) at remembering number sequences. Bilingual children assessed in Israel were also found to have more creativity when asked to draw a picture of a creature or plant that didn't exist; and despite receiving half their education in Spanish, bilingual students attending an English-Spanish school were able to

read English at a higher level than their English-speaking peers who received a full education in English. In fact, linguists and child development experts the world over are in agreement that children who learn more than 1 language in their formative years develop cognitive skills that enable them to outperform their monolingual peers in areas like divergent thinking, mental flexibility, abstract thinking, creativity, memory, problem solving, learning ability, confidence and social skills.

3. Better social skills

Perhaps one of the most undervalued skills we can pass onto our children is the ability to relate well to others. Multilingual children grow up to be more confident, adaptable and accepting of people from different races and socio-economic conditions. They are also more culturally sensitive and have a higher emotional intelligence.

What options are available if you want to raise a multilingual child?

An immersion environment has been proven as the most effective way to learn a new language. There must be a necessity to speak the language and speaking it must serve a purpose. Children are incredibly efficient when it comes to retaining information, and if the language does not serve a purpose, it will quickly be rejected.

There are a number of different South African languages, which makes teaching your child to be multilingual relatively easy

in our country. Consider speaking your mother tongue at home and educating your child in a different language. Or you could send your child to a bilingual or trilingual preschool – there are a few pioneering schools that are already getting the model right and that is an ideal place to start. If you are fortunate enough to have a nanny who speaks a different language to you, ask her to only speak to your child in her native language.

“Multilingual children grow up to be more confident, adaptable and accepting of people from different races and socio-economic conditions.”

Which language?

It is important to remember that no 1 language is more important than another, and by speaking 2 or more languages, your child will already be reaping the benefits of multilingualism. But if you are debating which language to introduce to your child consider:

- > **Heritage** (what language do you, your parents or your grandparents speak?):
Having close family with whom you can relate is a great way to introduce and sustain language learning.
- > **Access:**
Consider the language most widely spoken around you, or accessibility to a new language. Do you have neighbours who speak a different language, language programmes in your area, or a dominant African language that your child will have opportunity to practise?
- > **Usefulness:**
Consider the global economy and potential work environments your child might one day find themselves in. Try to give them a language that is recognised globally, or spoken by a lot of people internationally – these could include Chinese, Spanish, French and German. ♥

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Meryl Bailey is a wife and mother of 3 amazingly smart toddlers. Together with her husband Kyle, she co-founded **LinguaMites®** Multilingual Education in 2013, the first trilingual pre-school in South Africa (Chinese, isiZulu and English).
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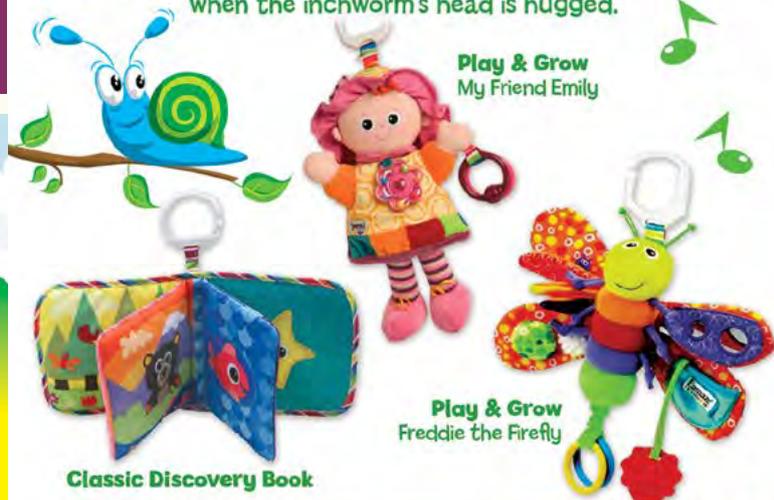


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toddler's gotta go!

Recognising When It's Time to Potty Train.

By Kerry McArthur



There are so many different opinions and methods for potty training your toddler. Since every child is different, the methods that work for 1 child may not work for another. So, instead of giving you different things to try, I would rather like to help you recognise when your child is ready for potty training and how to accommodate his process as an individual.

but it's scary!

We tend to forget that our toddlers are still little and everything is new to them. Take the time to get down to his level – yes, crawl around on your hands and knees and look at that huge white bowl with swirling water. The white “thing” is taller than you and now your mom or dad (whom you trust) wants you to sit on it above this huge gaping hole. Wouldn't you be terrified?

If you don't want to use a toddler-sized potty, then you need to take away the

“ *Since every child is different, the methods that work for 1 child may not work for another.* ”

“ *An added bonus is pull-ups often have characters printed on the front, so you can tell your toddler, 'Don't wee on Dora or Winnie.'* ”

fear of the unknown. Pick your toddler up before you go into the bathroom, sit him on the closed toilet seat for a while and allow him to play. Children learn best through playtime, so let him open and close the lid as much as he wants; let him flush the toilet; put a little rubber duck or ping pong ball in the water and let him watch it bounce around in the water. Toilet time will go from being scary to being fun!

the potty process

Remember that this new process can be very scary and daunting, so every child will develop at their own pace. My older daughter took a lot longer than my son, and my youngest daughter is just really not that interested yet, so I am leaving it for a while.

- Don't rush anything – a lot more harm can come from rushing it, and it really doesn't take that much longer if you follow your toddler's process patiently.
- The most important step is teaching by example. Allow your toddler to accompany you to the toilet; even if he is still fully clothed, you can sit him on his own mini potty or toilet and he will mimic your actions. Oh, the discussions you will have while on the potty!

- In the beginning, you will need to remember to take him to the toilet every half an hour or so, or watch for the signs that he needs to go. Eventually your toddler will start telling you when he has to go.
- When I found pull-ups, I wanted to kiss the manufacturer! Pull-ups allow for easier toilet breaks while giving your child the feeling of pulling down underwear, and even if there is an accident, they are just as absorbent as normal nappies. An added bonus is they often have characters printed on the front, so you can tell your toddler, "Don't wee on Dora or Winnie." It adds the fun factor and makes them really aware of where they shouldn't wee.

potty praise

The most important step in the potty training process is praise, praise and some more praise. Everyone must get involved in praising your toddler for going to the toilet or staying dry. Children thrive on encouragement and will strive to please you, and potty training is no different.

The internet is full of resources for how to know, how to do and when to worry, but I want to end off with a quote by Alexis Carrel: "Intuition comes very close to clairvoyance; it appears to be the extrasensory perception of reality." No one knows your child like you do, so trust yourself and your instincts, and you can't go wrong. Read and listen, but most of all hear your heart.

“ The most important step in the potty training process is praise, praise and some more praise. Everyone must get involved in praising your toddler for going to the toilet or staying dry. ”



“ Children are normally ready for potty training between 18 and 24 months, sometimes earlier; while some are not ready until they are 4 years old. ”



Knowing when it's time to potty train

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There are so many signs you can look for to tell if your toddler is ready for potty training. Not all of them will apply to your child, though, because as you know by now every child is different.

Children are normally ready for potty training between 18 and 24 months, sometimes earlier; while some are not ready until they are 4 years old. There are many resources and checklists available to tell if your child is ready. The main signs I would like to point out include:

- Your toddler has started feeling uncomfortable in a dirty diaper – pulling at it or even taking it off.
- He has dry periods of about 2 hours at a time.
- He wants to go to the toilet with you, but just to have a look.
- His nappy changes are predictable – you know that he has a bowel movement before 10h00, for example.
- He is able to do basic undressing, such as pulling down shorts.
- Once you feel confident that your child is ready for potty training, you can get started. ♥

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kerry McArthur is a teacher and the owner of the nursery school, Inn-Tuition Academy. She is also mom to 3 children, aged 13, 8 and 2.



Help, my toddler is having bad dreams!

By Charine Glen-Spyron

Why does my toddler get nightmares?

Children between the ages of 1 and 4 have a hard time separating reality from make-believe, so any number of things in their waking life can cause nightmares. Everyday incidents and observations – from seeing a scary-looking insect or animal, to having an argument with a friend at preschool, or getting reprimanded by the class teacher – can all lead to your child having nightmares. Your toddler's nightmares can also be linked to something that happened just before bed, like listening to a story that scared him or watching an upsetting show on TV.

Another big contributing factor to your child's nightmares is change. Whether these are changes in routine such as mum or dad changing drop-off and pick-up days from school, or new people coming into their lives, such as a new nanny or teacher; even illness can cause nightmares. Stress can also lead to nightmares – bedtime itself can be a cause of stress, especially for a toddler who has separation anxiety and is struggling with time away from mum and dad.

How do I soothe my toddler after a nightmare?

The best treatment for a nightmare is to respond immediately to your scared and confused toddler. Physical reassurance is important, so hold him or rub his back until he calms down. You may also want to make sure his favorite toy is tucked in

with him. Use soothing words, reassuring him that you're right there, and that everything's all right. Explaining that "it was just a dream" most likely won't mean much to him, but you can say something like: "You were just pretending in your sleep" or "It's like watching a movie in your head, and when you woke up, you turned the movie off."

Keep the night-light on, switch on some calming music, and keep the bedroom door open so he knows you're close by. Instead of upsetting your child further by asking him about the dream, you may want to wait with these questions until morning. It's important to remember that allowing him to sleep in your bed may become a nightly habit, which could be very difficult to break. Instead, spend a little extra time consoling him; talking about his favorite toys and friends.



“Children between the ages of 1 and 4 have a hard time separating reality from make-believe, so any number of things in their waking life can cause nightmares.”

An occasional bad dream is perfectly normal at this age as your child's nightmares will function as a means to process and work out everyday anxieties and fears. Since nightmares are common in the latter stages of lighter, REM sleep, they typically occur closer to morning.

“ Nightmares may signal emotional distress in his waking life, which needs to be addressed with the help of a professional. ”

Can nightmares be prevented?

As the odd nightmare is a normal part of processing fears and anxieties, there is not a lot you can do in terms of completely getting rid of bad dreams. There are however a few things that may lessen the frequency and intensity of your child's nightmares, which include a peaceful bedtime routine that involves:

- >> a warm bath, a calming story, a quiet song
- >> reading bedtime books that link sleep with cozy, happy situations
- >> keeping his room at a comfortable temperature
- >> leaving the bedroom door ajar
- >> leaving on a night light bright enough to keep monsters (but not the sandman) at bay

If the nightmares are frequent and persistent, and your child is extremely afraid of going to bed, you would need to bring up the subject with his doctor. In some cases, nightmares may signal emotional distress in his waking life, which needs to be addressed with the help of a professional.

Are nightmares different to night terrors?

Nightmares shouldn't be confused with night terrors – a less common sleep disturbance that normally strikes during the first third of the night and occurs most frequently in children who are between 3 and 5 years old (however, children as young as 16 months can have them too). Children having a night terror



episode remain fast asleep in a deep, non-dreaming state, yet they're extremely agitated and hard to console. Afterwards they go back to snoozing soundly and don't remember the incident in the morning. If your child has a night terror, don't pick him up or hold him, as his confused state may result in him hurting either you or himself. Make sure he is safe and can't fall off his bed or bump himself against a wall; talk to him in a calm voice, reassuring him that you are there; softly stroke his hair or back and just wait for it to run its course.

As with nightmares, if your child has frequent night terrors, you may have to discuss this with your doctor and seek professional guidance on managing it. ♥

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Charine Glen-Spyron is a Clinical Psychologist, practicing at The Psychology and Wellness Centre in Bryanston.

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Decoding *The Canine* Language Of Love

Rhiannon Cecil shares this crucial information on how to ensure man's best friend becomes your children's best friend without any bites or altercations.

Enjoying a dog's love and affection almost always benefits young children. It teaches them not to fear animals, to develop compassion for animals, and how to care for and look after another being. However, a recently mobile, spontaneous and physical youngster is an adjustment for any dog, and displays of affection can be easily misinterpreted by the canine mind. This is why 61 % of child dog bites come from the family dog, or the dog of a friend or family member. For this reason, a mixed species home needs to be a safe place where both human and canine kids are guided and taught how to love each other the right way, by parents who can see their children's actions as the dog sees them, and anticipate the animal's response.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rhiannon Cecil is a qualified canine trainer, handler, instructor and behaviourist. She gives bite prevention seminars for parents and caregivers, and runs the Happy Hound Canine

When it's not okay to love your dog

It's important to set consistent boundaries with your toddler so she knows when it's okay to interact with your dog, and when to leave him alone. Doing this helps parents to avoid situations that may trigger unwanted reactions from the dog, and also gives the dog the option to escape a stressful situation or person, without being followed.

The most important rule is that **NO CHILD MAY LOVE THE DOG UNLESS MOM OR DAD IS AROUND**. This is the simplest and easiest way to prevent a tragedy, and cannot be emphasised enough. Dogs and children should never be left together unsupervised.

A mixed species home needs to be a safe place where both human and canine kids are guided and taught how to love each other the right way.

You also need to teach your toddler that she is NOT allowed to love Fido if:

- he's eating or sleeping
- he's in his basket or kennel
- he's sick or in pain
- he's cornered in an enclosed space, like under a table
- he's playing with another dog or older child
- he has a toy – even if he stole it from the child
- he is in a situation that is likely to make him feel possessive over something; scared, forced to compete, or protective of space, food, possessions or people.

Growling is nearly always punished harshly, but you need to understand that when a dog growls he wants to be left alone.

It's important to set consistent boundaries with your toddler so she knows when it's okay to interact with your dog, and when to leave him alone.

When it's a good time to love your dog

Teach your toddler she is allowed to love Fido if:

- mom or dad is there
- you are outside in a large open space
- you are away from the kitchen and the dog's sleeping space
- he comes to you – chasing is not allowed
- his ears are up, his tail is down but relaxed, and his mouth is open or his tongue is out
- you are talking softly and touching gently

NO CHILD MAY LOVE THE DOG UNLESS MOM OR DAD IS AROUND.

Fido needs instruction too

Giving your dog the tools to understand human love is as important as setting boundaries for your child when expressing it. Obedience training is a must for the parents with small children. Whether the dog weighs 4 or 40 kg, basic commands must be learnt and consistently followed, including 'sit', 'stay', 'leave it', 'wait for food', and 'go to your bed'.

Always remember that play-biting is not cute, even in puppies. They grow up and so do their teeth.

Remember to relax and have fun watching your child and your dog learn to love each other the right way. There isn't much that can top the bond between child and dog, and as you watch you'll notice that in many ways they always speak the same language.

6 Basics for Mom & Dad

1. Dogs may tolerate hugs, but they don't necessarily like them. Affectionate cuddles are seen as a challenge or a threat of physical harm, and may cause an unwanted reaction. This is a difficult concept for little ones to understand, but providing them with the alternative option of "giving a little tickle" on the chest or neck can be quite fun.

2. Unexpected kisses are unacceptable everywhere, but licking the dog on the mouth is submissive and acknowledges inferiority. Children who kiss the dog on the mouth may get corrected the same way he would correct other members of his pack – with a bark, nip or bite.

3. Looking directly into a dog's eyes for more than a second means "I want to have a physical fight with you", and cannot be allowed. Preventing eye contact between youngsters and dogs of roughly the same height can be especially challenging for parents, but explain to your toddler why she should not stare at the dog, and encourage her to give the dog lots of gentle tickles (which should prevent them from making eye contact).

4. While most dogs have adjusted to human laughter and smiles, bearing teeth or snarling are clearly not actions of love. Laughter and lots of smiling is always encouraged – that's one of the reasons we have dogs. However, facing a dog head on and laughing in his face should be discouraged, just to be safe.

5. Toddlers are too small to play rough with dogs. Even if the dog knows they're playing, he may get hurt accidentally and nip.

6. Growling is nearly always punished harshly, but you need to understand that when a dog growls he wants to be left alone. Never prevent a dog from being left alone if it is what he has asked for (with the growl). It is his warning that he's unhappy, and if ignored you may end up with a nip that seems to come from nowhere. If your dog is growling at your toddler often, consult a professional trainer or behaviourist for help. ♥



games to play with your toddler

It's important to spend developmental time with your toddler, but you don't need to concoct elaborate games to ensure she has fun. These simple games – using everyday household items – will spur on her development physically, cognitively and even emotionally.

12 – 16 months coming to life

Make your toddler's favourite toys come to life by moving their legs to walk, their arms to wave, and making up special voices for them to talk. A larger toy can hug your child or kiss her, which will have her in stitches!

story time with sound effects

Read story books to your little one and make sound effects or put on different voices for each character to make the stories even more exciting. This is a great way to help your child develop a love for books, stories and using her imagination.

treasure hunt

Hide something while your toddler is distracted and then encourage her to find it. Don't make it too hard to find. If she is struggling, help her by making suggestions as to where she could look or going with her to lift up blankets or look behind doors.

hide and seek

You can also teach your toddler to play hide and seek. Tell her to find a hiding spot and that you will look for her. Count loudly while she hides, and even if you can see her easily, pretend you can't and look for her in a few places before you find her. Talk loudly about where you are looking and what you are doing – such as, "I wonder where she has gone... Maybe she's in the cupboard. Let me look in there to see if I can find her."

16 – 20 months pouring water

On a sunny day, put a plastic basin full of water outside on the lawn. Give your toddler lots of little containers so she can play with them in the water, and practise pouring water into and out of the containers. Make sure you do not leave your child unattended at any time, as even very shallow water can result in drowning.

"It is strongly recommended that children under 2 years old are not exposed to any screen time – that includes television, and games on your computer, tablet or smartphone."



“A larger toy can hug your child or kiss her, which will have her in stitches!”

screen time

It is strongly recommended that children under 2 years old are not exposed to any screen time – that includes television, and games on your computer, tablet or smartphone. After age 2 you can start introducing television and games, but it is recommended you limit their screen time to short bursts of 10 to 15 minutes at a time, and restrict it to age-appropriate programmes or games. While this can seem quite strict, it is much easier to relax these rules as your children grow older than it is to try to reduce the amount of screen time they have become accustomed to.

collecting

Go for a walk and take a small bucket with you. Encourage your toddler to look for interesting things like stones, leaves or fallen seeds or flowers. Talk about what she picks up, including the colour, size, texture, function, etc. Let her collect these by putting them in the bucket. After your walk, she can empty out her bucket and look at everything again, and then put them all back in.

kick ball

Practise kicking a large ball to each other. This won't be easy for her, but it will be fun and will teach her important coordination skills.

table fort

Create a table fort by hanging a large blanket over a table, so it hangs down to the ground on all sides. Your toddler can then crawl inside her fort, take her toys with her and play there. Join her under the table, and use a flashlight to make light patterns on the blanket.

20 – 24 months balloon ball

Blow up a balloon and encourage your toddler to knock it up into the air and try to keep it off the ground. This will delight your toddler as she runs around and tries to make sure it stays airborne.

pillow jump

Place pillows on the floor around your lounge and encourage your toddler to jump from pillow to pillow. Be ready to catch her in case she missteps.

playdough

Make playdough for your little one (see our easy recipe on page 58). Show her how to roll the playdough into long thin worms, and also into round balls and then how to flatten the balls into flat circles. Show her how to pull the playdough into lots of pieces and then smoosh them back into one piece.

catch

Play catch (also known as “tag”) with your toddler. You can tickle her or cover her with kisses every time you catch her. This is a great way to burn off lots of excess energy and tire her out a little bit (although the chances are you will be tired well before she is!). ♥





CRAFT TIME:

By Karen van Lelyveld

MAKE YOUR OWN

PLAYDOUGH

A quick and easy recipe to make playdough – something that will keep your child creatively entertained for hours.

Playdough is a great playtime favourite as it stimulates children's imaginations and inspires them to create so many different things from it. It can be rolled, poked, squashed, chopped and cut into shapes – and while children are playing, they use their fine motor skills and strengthen the muscles in their

hands. This in turn prepares them for a good pencil grip and for scissor control.

PLAYDOUGH AND THEN SOME

If you add other objects to the playdough, your child's imagination will soar. For example, you can make a ball of dough and push toothpicks in to create

a porcupine. Another favourite is to roll the playdough out into a pizza shape and let your child add various objects for the toppings. Cookie cutters can be used to cut shapes out of playdough. And as your child gets older, they can roll out long playdough sausages and shape them into numbers and letters.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups of water
- ½ cup of salt
- 1 Tbsp of cream of tartar
- 1 Tbsp of oil
- 2 cups of flour
- 1 tsp of food colouring

Warning:

Supervise your child to ensure they do not eat the dough, or put any other objects in their mouth.

HERE'S HOW

1. Place all ingredients in a pot and mix well until there are no lumps.
2. Put the pot on the stove and, over a medium heat, keep stirring until the mixture starts to thicken. After 2 to 3 minutes a ball of dough will start to form.
3. Remove the pot from the stove and allow the dough to cool.
4. When it has cooled down, the playdough is ready to use.



Storage:

Playdough is best stored in a sealed plastic bag or plastic container (a margarine tub works well), in the fridge. It will become dry and crumbly if left out in the open. ♥

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Family Fun

READERS' PICS



*Kavendree Muthu-Kurten
& her 2 little boys*

*The Omars' very special first Eid
with little Zeeshan*



*The Archers on
their special day*



*The Bianco-Badenhorst
family*



Our MamaMagicSA Facebook Competition theme was families having fun or sharing a magic moment.

All featured photos receive 2 comp tickets to MamaMagic, The Baby Expo and the winning photo also receives a **R250 Baby City voucher**.

If you'd like to enter our next Magic Moments competition, "like" our MamaMagicSA  page to be notified of the details.

"Children want your presence, not your presents."

Unknown

Family



The 5 Love Languages and how to recognise them.

Learn to identify the love languages your family members "speak", so you can speak to them in their language.

PG. 64 – 65

Do children really need vitamins and supplements?

Popping a pill may promise a quick solution, but is it the answer to a healthy diet?

PG. 68 – 69

New year, new you!

You will only be able to change things in your life if you can see how the change is of value to you. Find out how from psychologist Ilze Alberts.

PG. 66 – 67



Understand How Your Family Wants to Be Loved

By Kerry McArthur

Every day we are exposed to language – from saying, “Good morning,” to the sales language in TV adverts, directives in road signs, interactions at work, and chatting to family. We think in language, and our mother tongue is the language that we know the best and feel the most comfortable using.

Do you speak Love?

Just as we all have a spoken language we feel comfortable with, we also have a Love Language that resonates best with us. This Love Language is the way that we feel the most loved, the most appreciated and the way that we naturally express love towards people around us. For example, if your Love Language is Acts of Service you will naturally “speak” this by doing things for other people – from washing dishes, making coffee for them, or giving them lifts. Whatever “speaks” service is what you do to show others you appreciate and love them, and if people do acts of service for you, you feel tremendously loved.

The consequences of different Love Languages

Without recognising Love Languages, you could be in a house with 3 other people who all speak different Love Languages, with the result that none of you understand each other. You are all busy speaking your own Love Language, but the others don’t understand this language, so you may as well be speaking Italian to a Chinese person. Everyone else in your home isn’t feeling loved or appreciated, no matter how hard you work at it.

Once you understand the different Love Languages and you have identified what Love Languages your family members use, you can then speak to them in their Love

Language, and by doing this you are telling them in their language – in a way they understand – that you love and appreciate them. Your relationship with them will improve tenfold and your home will be a happier place.

The 5 love languages

There are 5 Love Languages, a system developed by Dr Gary Chapman to show how people love and want to be loved. Most of them are self-explanatory, and you will kick yourself when you realise how logical they are!

- **Acts of Service**

These are doing things for other people, e.g. helping them with a task or making them a cup of coffee.

- **Physical Touch**

This would be holding hands, hugging, or even wrestling.

- **Quality Time**

Spending alone time together; doing something that the other person enjoys.

- **Words of Affirmation**

This is using words of encouragement, building someone up using your words.

- **Gifts**

Making or buying something for someone; the gift is normally matched to their interests and not simply material.

“Our Love Language is the way that we feel the most loved, the most appreciated and the way that we naturally express love towards people around us.”

My story... and how Love Languages work

My Love Language is Gifts, with a secondary Love Language of Acts of Service. It is normal to have 2 different Love Languages and they can switch priority based on how much each of them is being spoken. My husband’s, on the other hand, are Physical Touch and Words of Affirmation. I would come home every day, make sure supper was ready, make him coffee and possibly have bought him a small gift – showing my love.





“Understanding and using Love Languages with your children and partner is an effective way to let them know you love them, which in turn will help to build their self-confidence and happiness.”

Identifying your child's Love Language

The easiest way to identify your young child's Love Language is by watching what they do around you. Remember, a young child lives in their own self-centred world, which is normal. They do not have the emotional maturity yet to realise the needs of others – this comes with time. We all naturally speak our own Love Language, more so with young children.

- Does your little one run up to you and hang on you, and insist on being “uppy” all the time? Chances are their Love Language is Physical Touch.
- Does she constantly draw you pictures, or give you things from her room? Her Love Language is possibly Gifts.
- Are you always being given cups of tea (even if you don't know where the water came from)? Does he always want to “help” you sweep? You are looking then at an Acts of Service child.
- A young child that always calls you pretty, or constantly wants you to look at her and tell her how pretty her dress is, would be a Words of Affirmation child.
- Your child that always wants to be where you are, to cuddle with you on the couch, sit next to you at supper time, talk to you in the kitchen, is a Quality Time child.

The effects of Love Languages

Remember, your child will speak to you in their Love Language. If you start speaking back to them in this language – that is, giving them the kind of love they understand – you will have a happier child; and a happier child becomes a more confident child. You will see a difference in all-round behaviour and attitude. ♥

He, on the other hand, would constantly want me to cuddle up to him on the couch or hold his hand in the shops. When we were dating, I would say, “Show me you love me,” and he would say, “Tell me you love me”.

As you can see, we continued speaking our own Love Languages to each other and as far as we were concerned, we were doing as much as we could to tell each other how much we loved each other. But we were speaking completely different languages and neither of us was feeling loved. It was only when we found out about Love Languages and started using these that our relationship completely transformed.

“We all naturally speak our own Love Language, more so with young children.”

Love Languages and your children

Everyone has a primary need to feel loved – how much more effective would this be if we were shown love in our own Love Language? Understanding and using Love Languages with your children and partner is an effective way to let them know you love them, which in turn will help to build their self-confidence and happiness.

A more comprehensive quiz for older children & adults can be found at www.5lovelanguages.com, or read Dr Gary Chapman's book, *The Five Love Languages*, which explains the concept in much more detail.



new year, new you!

By Ilze Alberts



You will only be able to change things in your life and stick to commitments like New Year's resolutions if you can see how each area of change is of high value, priority and importance to YOU.

Do you ever stick to your New Year's resolutions or are you, like so many people, disillusioned with the very idea? Do you want to change your life so much so that on 1 January you find yourself saying, "This is going to be my best year ever!"? But do you then abandon your resolutions by the end of February and find yourself in the same routine and habits as last year?

Same old, same old

One of my clients asked me why she is unable to stick to her New Year's resolutions. She said, "I so desperately want to lose weight, stop smoking, start exercising, be a nicer mother and have a happier marriage. Every year I write down my resolutions and every year I promise myself that I will stick to them. But after three days of not smoking, I start to smoke again – only this time it's where nobody can see me and I keep it a secret until I get caught out. I start my diet on 2 January and by the fifth, I'm sneaking food and snacks into the bathroom where nobody can see me eat. The sooner I promise myself to be a nicer mother, I shout at my kids, and my husband and I have a big fight. I am so tired of not being able to change the things I want to change and I wish I could just wave a magic wand to make it happen." I could see the frustration on her face and I knew that without a different perception and understanding, nothing in her life would change.

It's all about value

You will only be able to change things in your life and stick to commitments like New Year's resolutions if you can see how each area of change is of high value, priority and importance to YOU. Change won't happen if you believe you want to make it because medical articles warn about smoking and being overweight, parenting articles chastise shouting parents and label it bad behaviour, and if you want to change for someone else rather than for yourself. You will only be able to stick to decisions and keep to your plans to transform your life if you

New Year's resolutions have to be your authentic decisions because you're the one who has to take the action to achieve what you want to achieve.

can see the value for you, and how those things will serve you.

A lesson in prioritising

Think of all the areas of your life – from your health, your friends, your family life, your finances, your career, your interests and what drives you internally. Ask yourself the following 5 high quality questions:

1. How do I spend most of my time when I am awake?
2. What do I love to talk about, so that I become extroverted when I am with people who talk to me about the topic?
3. What specifically do I spend most of my money on each month?
4. What truly inspires me?
5. What do I love to learn and read about?

Answering these questions will give you a more concise idea of what is truly important and has value for you. You might notice your kids, your friends, your work, or your health is of highest importance to you. The purpose of this exercise is to determine what drives you internally; what inspires you, what gets you out of bed in the morning.

Once you have figured out where your priorities lie and you can set your New Year's resolutions according to those priorities, you have a much higher chance of success.

How it works

I asked my client the five questions and we determined that her highest value lies in her children and raising them to become independent and confident. I prompted her to set her resolutions on this basis, so she came up with these:

1. I want to learn more about the world of my children.
2. I want to do a workshop on increasing children's self-confidence.
3. I want to invest more time in myself and in my self-confidence as a woman.
4. I want to read about good marital relationships and learn how I can improve myself in our marriage.
5. I want to focus on the following: "I cannot change anybody but myself".

Guess what happened for her the following year? She stuck to her resolutions because they were based on her (and no one else's) priorities. This is what makes New Year's resolutions work. They have to be your authentic decisions because you're the one who has to take the action to achieve what you want to achieve. ♥

Once you have figured out where your priorities lie and you can set your New Year's resolutions according to those priorities, you have a much higher chance of success.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ilze Alberts is a Psychologist and Parenting Expert from Bella Vida Centre in Bryanston.



Do Children Need Vitamins & Supplements?

By Azza Motara-Abraham



In an age where our children seem to live lives as hectic as ours and “popping a pill” may promise a quick solution, many parents are left asking if their kids need to take a multivitamin or other nutritional supplement. Those opting to supplement their children’s diets with a basic multivitamin may feel that it serves as a safety net for filling in the gaps of a sub-optimal diet. However, a UC Davis Health System study found that vitamin use was greatest in children who did not in fact need them. It begs the question: should you supplement your child’s diet?

Which children need supplements?

Generally, if a child is eating a balanced diet from a variety of healthy foods and is developing accordingly, a multivitamin should not be necessary. However, like adults, every child is biologically unique and should be independently assessed. Children who may benefit from vitamin supplementation include those who:

- are immune-compromised and fail to thrive
- present with chronic illnesses
- are allergic or intolerant to specific foods
- follow restrictive diets such as being strict vegetarian or vegan

Commonly prescribed supplements

Parents may typically choose a supplement on the basis of which label has the longer vitamin list. This should make it better, right? But it seems not

– most multivitamins contain low doses of vitamins A, B, C, D and E as well as some minerals, and research indicates that 87 % of children from medium-income homes meet the requirement for these through diet anyway. Vitamin D, calcium, omega-3 fatty acids and fibre, however, have been identified as the elements deficient from most kids’ diets and for which I generally advise supplementation for children under the age of 8, particularly if they do not eat sources of these often (see table).

Vitamin D

Vitamin D is made naturally by the body when we’re exposed to the sun, but because of many parents’ sun phobia (due to cancer awareness), they lather their children with sunblock, which results in kids getting an inadequate amount of proper sunshine. 20 to 30 minutes of unfiltered sunshine per day is adequate. Furthermore, many foods are fortified with vitamin D, such as

orange juice, milk, and soy products, so children consuming these and other sources like oily fish (salmon, tuna, mackerel, etc.) are often less likely to be deficient. When supplementing, ensure that the multivitamin contains D3 (cholecalciferol), which is the most potent form of vitamin D.

“A UC Davis Health System study found that vitamin use was greatest in children who did not in fact need them.”

Calcium

Calcium is essential for healthy bones and teeth, and good dietary sources include dairy, almonds, pumpkin seeds, leafy greens and sardines. Ensure that the calcium supplement also contains vitamin D, which assists with calcium absorption.

“Most multivitamins contain low doses of vitamins A, B, C, D and E as well as some minerals – and research indicates that 87% of children from medium-income homes meet the requirement for these through diet anyway.”

Daily recommendations for vitamin D, calcium and omega-3 fatty acids

	Vitamin D	Calcium	Omega-3 fatty acids
Amount per day (according to age)	0-1yrs: 400 IU 4-8: 1000 mg	2-12: 800 IU 0-3: 0.7 g	1-3: 700 mg 4-8: 0.9 g
Example	75 g of pink salmon = 435 IU	2 cups of milk = 600 mg	1 cup of kidney beans = 0.3 g

Omega-3 fatty acids

Often called brain and mood boosters, omega-3 is found in fish oils, fortified eggs, dairy products, flaxseed and walnuts. A child not eating 2 servings of fish per week may not be getting adequate amounts of omega-3, so opt for a supplement that contains GLA (omega-6), DHA and EPA, which are the most important omega-3 fats for development. There are many forms of the supplement on the market, ranging from soft-gels to drinks and vegi-caps (many capsules are flavoured to reduce the fishy taste).

Fibre

Children’s diets are typically low in fibre, which helps to regulate mood and weight and reduce constipation. Calculate the amount of fibre your child needs per day by adding 5 g to their age, for example: a 4-year-old needs about 9 g a day, which

is the equivalent of 2 cups of blueberries. Natural sources like fruit, vegetables, pulses and whole-grains are the best option, while also ensuring your child drinks enough water. Generally, a supplement is only prescribed if a child is extremely constipated.

Food for thought

Vitamins and supplements may be appropriate and beneficial to certain kids in individual circumstances, but it is important to bear in mind that the concentrated doses of nutrients in pills are not buffered in the same way as nutrients from food – often making these more potent. Perhaps a more practical long-term approach would be to incorporate more nutrient-dense, less refined foods into your current family meal plan. ♥



Tips for using supplements

- You may choose chewables, liquid or vegi-caps depending on your child’s preference.
- Chewables may be crushed and added to flavoured yoghurt or custard.
- Choose supplements formulated for children, which do not exceed 100 % of the RDA for all the vitamins and minerals listed.
- Follow the dosage on the bottle and ensure kids understand that despite the favourable taste, vitamins are not sweets. If taken in large quantities, supplements can cause side effects ranging from vomiting to kidney damage.
- Supplements should ideally be taken with breakfast and lunch, but not just before bed, as the B-vitamins have a mild stimulatory effect.

“Supplements should ideally be taken with breakfast and lunch, but not just before bed, as the B-vitamins have a mild stimulatory effect.”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Azza Motara-Abraham is a registered dietician who consults independently to organisations, and a mother of 2.



Choose the Right Medical Aid

For You & Your Family

By Lauren Wheatley



Medical care is expensive, and if you don't have a medical aid plan, you would either accumulate a lot of debt with medical bills, or need to make use of government healthcare facilities, most of which unfortunately leave a lot to be desired. Choosing the right medical plan for you and your family can be difficult because of the wide range of schemes and plans available for different needs and budgets. So, if you're looking to sign up for the first time or want to make a change, here's how to decide which medical aid is right for you.

Choosing a scheme: where to start

Everyone should at least be on some sort of hospital plan. This is a plan that pays for your hospital bills when you need to be booked in (usually at selected hospitals, according to your scheme's provider network). It's imperative that you have a plan like this so that should you be in an accident, you are at least covered when taken to the hospital. A hospital plan also covers some or all of your medical bills for pre-authorised procedures. This includes the birth of a child, surgical procedures, and some outpatient procedures like dental surgery. Each scheme has its own policies regarding what they pay for and how much they pay, which are important considerations for your decision. Even if you are on a tight budget, just signing up for a hospital plan that includes a hospital in your area would be a wise choice.

Before starting a family

If you're planning on starting a family, you should choose a medical aid based on this decision even before you fall pregnant. Most schemes will not cover your pregnancy and childbirth if you sign up when you're already pregnant (the exception for this being the Government Employees Medical Society). If you are trying to fall pregnant, you absolutely have to be on a medical aid.

"Many schemes will not cover your pregnancy and childbirth if you sign up when you're already pregnant. If you are trying to fall pregnant, you absolutely have to be on a medical aid."

Questions to ask to find the right medical aid

• Which hospitals am I covered for?

Each medical aid plan has its own network of hospitals and healthcare providers. They may cover you at a different hospital to your network, however it won't be for much and you may be liable for a large cash fee upon arrival at the hospital. This fee is non-refundable. Samantha*, mother to a toddler, found herself in a difficult situation after she fell pregnant with her son. "I was at my third check-up with my gynaecologist and the receptionist there asked me what type of plan I was on. When I told her, she warned me that I would be liable for a cash fee upon admission to the hospital and that it would probably not cover me in full. Thank goodness she told me because when I asked my medical aid, they confirmed this. I had to change gynaecologists and find another hospital that was on my medical aid's network."

• What percentage am I covered for?

Many hospitals charge 300% or 400% of the National Health Reference Price List (also known as medical aid rates). So if you're only covered for 200%, then you will be responsible for a portion of payments for your stay at the hospital. This also applies to individual medical practitioners including gynaecologists, anaesthetists, midwives, and for procedures like ultrasounds.

• Does my medical aid plan cover c-section births?

There are some medical aid schemes that do not cover c-sections, irrespective of whether the procedures are emergency or elective. Ensure that you know whether c-sections are covered before signing up, because a c-section is extremely expensive. It's something to consider even if you are adamant that you will be having a natural birth because you never know what could happen (see page 20 for advice on planning your baby's birth). Paying for the services of the gynaecologist or obstetrician and especially the anaesthetist for a c-section is not a set of expenses that many moms can afford without the help of a medical aid.

"Even if you are on a tight budget, just signing up for a hospital plan that includes a hospital in your area would be a wise choice."



• **How is my new baby covered?**

When a baby is born, he or she will immediately be checked by a paediatrician and will get check-ups every day while in hospital. If there are any complications following the birth, such as jaundice, the baby will need to be treated immediately. Discovery Health, BestMed and Fedhealth, for example, will cover the baby as soon as he or she is born, provided you apply for their cover within a certain time period following the birth.

• **Do I get a medical aid savings account?**

Many medical aid plans include a savings pocket, which means a portion of what you pay each month goes towards an annual savings amount for costs like prescription medication, bloodwork and other tests. Ensure that you know how much you are allocated each year and keep an eye on the account balance because once it runs out, you will need to pay out of your own pocket.

• **Do I need cover for chronic medication?**

If you take medicine for a chronic condition such as diabetes or asthma, you will need to make sure that your medical aid plan pays for this medication under your day-to-day cover rather than paying for it out of your medical aid savings. Chronic medication will quickly deplete your medical aid savings account, so make sure that the plan you choose offers day-to-day cover for chronic medication when you sign up.

Choosing a medical aid with a family in mind

When choosing a medical aid for your family, there are many more considerations, especially in terms of child dependants, foreign travel, and changing your cover.

• **How long will my child be considered a dependant?**

There are different policies for this across all the medical aid schemes. Some state that once your child turns 21, they are no longer a dependant and their rate will be increased to that of a full member. Others offer special policies that allow your child to qualify for the medical rate even over the age of 21 if they are full-time students and rely on you financially.

• **What am I covered for while out of the country?**

If you and your family travel internationally, it's important to be covered for accidents, illnesses and other medical issues while outside of our borders. Find out how much you'll be covered for while overseas, should you need medical care.

• **Can I upgrade or downgrade my plan when needed?**

Most medical aid schemes will provide you with the opportunity to upgrade your plan at the end of the year for the new plan to be in effect for the new year. Should you need to upgrade, you'll need to wait until then to do so. However, you may downgrade at any time of the year, but make sure you understand what benefits you will no longer have access to once the downgrade takes place.



Elnarie Hendricks from BestMed says that it's really important to figure out what you will require from your medical aid, as every plan is made to suit people at different stages in their lives. After considering your specific family needs, contact a financial advisor to discuss which plan would be most compatible. "Falling pregnant forced me to research exactly what I was paying for," says Samantha, "and it has been empowering to know what I am entitled to with my medical aid plan."

*Name has been changed.

"Many hospitals charge 300% or 400% of the National Health Reference Price List (also known as medical aid rates). So if you're only covered for 200%, then you will be responsible for a portion of payments for your stay at the hospital."

How much will my hospital birth cost?

Procedures at government hospitals are free; all rates given here are for private care facilities. These rates are estimates, and you must always confirm the costs to you with your hospital or health care provider before a procedure. Rates vary according to the hospital in question, as well as the doctor or specialist you use.

- For a natural birth, which normally includes 2 nights and 3 days in the general ward, you can expect to pay in the region of R20 000 to R29 000 for the hospital's fees.
- For a c-section birth, which includes 3 nights and 4 days in the general ward, you are looking at anything from R28 000 to R31 000. Some hospitals include the epidural in this cost.
- The gynaecologist's fee is an additional cost for both natural and caesarean deliveries. These rates will differ from doctor to doctor, but for a natural birth you can expect to pay anywhere from R9 000 to R10 000, and for a c-section, from R9 000 to R12 000.
- Often the paediatrician's fee is not included in the cost of the hospital delivery. The paediatrician will be present when your child is born, and then will do a check-up each day you are in the hospital. Additional nights in the ward and upgrading from a general to a private ward will also incur further costs. ♥





Celebrate

Your Family's Love

this Valentine's Day

By Leanne Mitchell

Oh, Valentine's Day: summer days filled with love, long lie-ins, romantic sunsets and candlelit dinners... Okay, so that was life BC (before children). These days the whole affair may feel a million miles away as you cook, bath, feed, change (or yell, "get your pyjamas on!") and try to get the kids to sleep before falling into bed, exhausted. Not much romance in that.

Reason to celebrate

You may smile wryly as you remember what Valentine's Day used to be like; but this holiday is maybe even *more* important after you've had kids. Your kids are, after all, the ultimate expression of your love, and celebrating Cupid's good work with the whole family can be a lot of fun. Children (especially the young ones) love a celebration, so including them in your Valentine's Day festivity will make it a very special celebration.

Start a family tradition this Valentine's Day and make it something they will always remember fondly and look forward to each year. Think: heart-shaped biscuits, red streamers and balloons around the house, love notes

from Mom in their lunch boxes, and dressing them in red and/or white for school.

Home activities for Valentine's Day

At home, create an art station – it can be outside as the weather is always brilliant in February – and encourage them to make cards for Mom and Dad. Use lots of glitter and insist on big red hearts.

Do something different for supper – have a picnic on the lawn or balcony, or take your Valentine's Day picnic to the local park or child-friendly beach. Make it special, with red napkins and a flower from your garden at everyone's seat. It doesn't matter whether you

make decorations yourself or buy a few goodies to liven things up, but don't forget to take photos!

"Your kids are, after all, the ultimate expression of your love."



Classic romance on the small screen

Borrow a data-projector, string up a white sheet on the washing line or use an outdoor wall and play family-appropriate movies that are about love. Movies like *Finding Nemo* and *Up* are good options with toddlers, or, if your kids are a little bit older, a movie like *The Journey of Natty Gann*. You could even play old family movies of you and your children growing up. Don't forget the speakers.

Time for Mom and Dad

Once the kids are tucked into bed, their happy glow may just ignite another kind of spark. It's important for Mom and Dad to make time for each other too. Wear something pretty to bed, offer a massage or light a few candles to get into the mood. Making an effort is a good reason to feel closer and have some fun together.

Valentine's nostalgia

Think back to high school when Valentine's Day was all about secret admirers, hoping you'd get a rose, and wishing you were that popular girl who got so many. In your 20s it was date night with your boyfriend or fun singles parties, followed by those fabulous few years of wining and dining with the love of your life. And now it's time to celebrate love with your little ones, because it won't be long before they'll be in high school, wondering if someone will give them a rose.

In the daily routine of our fast-paced lives, we often ignore commemorative days like St Valentine's, but celebrations and fun family rituals could bring families, partners, communities – and especially parents – closer. Make this Valentine's Day one to remember – after all, what could be a better reason to celebrate, than love? ♥



Heart-shaped French Toast for Valentine's Day Breakfast

Kids can help:

Stir egg mixture,
dip bread & cut hearts.

You will need:

- ♥ Bread
- ♥ Egg
- ♥ Skim milk
- ♥ Maple syrup
- ♥ Strawberries



Here's how:

- ♥ Beat an egg, using a fork, in a medium-sized bowl. Add about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of milk for each egg used.
- ♥ Dip all bread pieces into the egg mixture and set them onto a pancake griddle or large skillet over a medium heat. Brown lightly on both sides.
- ♥ Using a heart-shaped cookie cutter, cut out heart shapes from the center of bread slices. Fill the heart shape with cut strawberries, and drizzle maple syrup on top.





Step Away From The Baby



& Put Down That Banana



By Chris Forrest

Something that has always struck me as strange about the whole having-a-baby thing is how you lose your right to dignity and personal space. Suddenly it seems that the mom, baby and, in some cases, the dad become public property, with zero right to personal space, privacy or their own opinion on how the child should be raised.

Getting bumped

We've all been there during the latter stages of pregnancy, when the mom-to-be is showing beyond a shadow of a doubt, and an absolute stranger will feel nothing of it to come up and congratulate her and then, for some bizarre reason, feel the need to place their hand on her stomach. I've never quite understood what they hope to achieve here. Perhaps they suspect that the mom-to-be is faking it, and want to make sure that there really is a baby in there. Or maybe they're hoping to transfer some of that baby goodness to themselves – which is quite mean to the foetus, I feel. One person said that they were hoping to feel a kick. I offered to give them what they wanted, but apparently it's only socially acceptable when your unborn child obliges.

One for one

Personally, I feel that fair is fair – if you get to feel my partner's stomach, I should get to reciprocate. This didn't always work in my favour – usually I just got a weird look, but I also got two slaps to the face; and on another occasion, a coffee invitation and phone number (turns out Geoff was just her friend).

Coo-coo-ca-choo

Sadly, it doesn't end there. Because even when your little bundle of joy has entered the world, people still seem to feel that it's okay to come up to their pram and, without

invitation, encouragement or permission of any kind, poke, prod and tickle your child while mumbling baby-like coos and hellos as if they were greeting an old friend – which, considering your baby's age, is impossible. I find this behaviour quite distasteful. Can you imagine me doing this to you as a fully grown adult; just walking up to you in a shopping centre and tickling the length and breadth of your body, uttering, "Hello you, aren't just soooo cute! Who's cute? Who?" I'm fairly certain you would assume I'm a pervert or a nutcase, or both.

Unsolicited input

What really bothers me though, are the "helpful" folk. Not the ones who assist in carrying your pram up the stairs – they're great. The helpful folk I'm referring to are the ones who assume that your skills as a parent are somewhat inferior to theirs, and feel the need to assist you, unasked. I'll give you an example: recently I was shopping at a local supermarket when my child decided she wanted a banana, right then and there. Now just to put you in the picture, my child is not starving. In fact she's rather well-fed, and while not fat, is far from a UNICEF poster child. She is, however, going through the tantrum stage, and wants what she wants, NOW! So there I was, in the middle of a crowded shop, trying to reason with my toddler as to why she couldn't have a 'nana immediately and feeling

a bit embarrassed about the fuss, but also quite proud of myself for not giving in, since I was teaching my child a valuable lesson.

Suddenly a Helpful Lady approached and, sensing that she may have a solution to this crisis that I had somehow missed, offered my child a banana. Summoning up a fair amount of restraint, I politely explained to the Helpful Lady that I was trying to teach my child that she can't always just achieve her life goals by screaming them out at the top of her lungs repeatedly while kicking her legs and ejecting liquid from her tear ducts. The Helpful Lady reacted by ignoring this statement, peeling the desired fruit, handing it to my child, and then – deciding she had spotted the real problem – looked at me sympathetically and said, "Don't worry, I'll pay for it." Did she really think I couldn't afford a banana?! Did she not notice that behind my child in the trolley was a load of groceries, including an entire box of bananas?

Action... reaction

That's great, Helpful Lady, you've made my life so much easier, and I hope you're still around when my daughter is 21 and is crying and kicking her legs in the middle of a luxury car lot, screaming, "Waaaaaah! I want an SUV!"

The only problem was, when I got to the till, Helpful Lady was nowhere to be found, and I still had to pay for the only half-eaten banana...♥

What's happening In your City!

Please note that all details of events and venues published here were correct at the time of going to print, and are subject to change at the discretion of those responsible for them.



There is a lot to celebrate over the next few months, starting with **Valentine's Day** on 14 February. **Human Rights Day** falls on 21 March. **Good Friday** and **Easter Sunday** are 3 and 5 April respectively, followed by **Family Day** on 6 April. **Freedom Day** is 27 April. And, finally **Workers' Day** is on 1 May.

CAPE TOWN

Events

The Galileo Open Air Cinema invites you to a memorable movie experience under a ceiling of stars. Featuring all-time classic films in its unique open air setting, with delicious local food on sale.

Cost: Online ticket purchase: R70 – R95; onsite ticket purchase: R80 for a ticket, R10 for blanket hire and R20 for chair hire

CAPE WINELANDS

When: One Saturday a month

Where: Various wine estates

DURBANVILLE

When: 18h00 every Tuesday, until April

Where: Hillcrest Quarry, M13 Tygerberg Valley Road

KIRSTENBOSCH

When: 18h00 every Wednesday, until April

Where: Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens

V&A WATERFRONT

When: 18h00 every Thursday, until April

Where: V&A Waterfront, Cape Town

Contact: www.thegalileo.co.za

Hope@PaulCluver Summer Festival – Kids' Theatre Festival.

Round up the kids, pack a picnic basket and take a trip to this woodland amphitheatre for a day of magical entertainment for the whole family! Roald Dahl's *Fantastic Mr Fox* returns as well as 2 other plays, which will be interspersed with improvisation fun. There will also be crafty activities, fun and games.

Cost: R150 – all profits go to support the Thembalitsa Foundation. Tickets are limited to 600 people.

When: 28 March, from 13h00

Where: Paul Cluver Wine Estate, Grabouw

Contact: 021 844 0605 or www.computicket.co.za

The **Kirstenbosch Summer Concert Series** is back and happening every Saturday until 5 April.

Cost: Varies according to the performance: from R100 to R365 for adults & from R75 to R365 for youth (6 to 21 years old – ID is required)

When: Every Saturday until 5 April. Gates open at 16h00 and concerts are held from 17h30 to 19h00.

Where: Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens

Contact: www.webtickets.co.za

Catch the end of the world-renowned **LEGO® art exhibition, The Art of The Brick**, which will be the first internationally acclaimed exhibition to take place in this space! It has been proclaimed by CNN as one of the world's 10 must-see exhibitions.

Cost: R140 for adults and R95 for kids. Entry for children under 2 is free.

When: 12 December 2014 to 28 February 2015

Where: Jubilee Exhibition Hall, V&A Waterfront

Contact: www.computicket.co.za

Classes & workshops

TOPTOTS Mother and Child Workshops use mind, music and movement to stimulate your child's development (8 weeks to 4 years).

Cost: Free trial classes are offered

Contact: www.toptots.co.za

Venues

The Giraffe House Wilderness Awareness Centre allows you to enjoy the outdoors while experiencing and learning about animals and why they are special. An important member of the team is Gerry, a hand-reared giraffe. Gerry is joined by some other animal friends that have been selected to form part of their wildlife programme.

Cost: Adults: R45. Seniors: R30. Kids (2 to 15 years): R25.

When: Open 7 days a week, from 09h00 to 17h00. The popular daily interactive encounters are at 11h00, 13h00 and 15h00. Please contact the centre to confirm shows on Monday to Friday, as show times may vary according to school or large group visits.

Where: Corner of the R304 (Stellenbosch/Klipheuwel Road) and the R101 (Old Paarl Road)

Contact: 021 884 4506 or visit www.giraffehouse.co.za

FAMILY



DURBAN

KZnKids is an online events directory. Here are their top recommendations for young families in Durban. For more ideas, visit www.kznkids.co.za. Please note: Events and venue information is subject to change – please check online for the most up-to-date information.



Events

Who's Your Daddy? – proudly brought to you by Huggies – is a one-man comedy show about a clueless guy's journey to fatherhood; all the ups and downs, from trying to fall pregnant, all the way through to the first months of infancy. Written and performed by Chris Forrest, and directed by Bevan Cullinan.

Cost: R100

Where: Seabrooke Theatre at Durban High School, 255 St Thomas Road, Musgrave

When: 7 – 12 April

Contact: www.computicket.co.za

Classes & Workshops

TOPTOTS Mother and Child Workshops use mind, music and movement to stimulate your child's development (8 weeks to 4 years).

Cost: Free trial classes are offered

Contact: www.toptots.co.za

Venues

Africa Whispers Country House, Café and Party Venue is a licensed, child-friendly restaurant on the border of the Valley of 1000 Hills overlooking the Inanda Dam. The restaurant is particularly focused on child-friendly activities and outdoor fun, and provides home-from-home country cooking and ambience. Kids' activities include free pony rides, a jumping castle and an extensive play area. The Country Café is the perfect location to hold kiddies' parties, corporate team building events and family functions and birthday parties.

Where: 11 Ridgemont Road, Crestholme, Hillcrest Durban

When: Wednesday to Sunday and all public holidays: 08h00 to 17h00. Friday and Saturday night: private and group bookings.

Contact: Sheena Lott on 031 776 3075, or visit www.facebook.com/africawhisperscountrycafe

Go Bananaz Adventure Park. Ready... steady... go bananaz is a new concept outdoor adventure park and party venue for kids up to 12 years old; a place where the kids can play mini sports on a play court, learn balance and co-ordination in a uniquely designed air gym. In addition to the air gym and play court there is a foofy swing, 2 waterslides, swings, pedal cars and bikes. Whether you are looking for a day of fun or want to have your child's birthday here, there is something for everyone.

Where: 20 Rockview Road, Amanzimtoti, South Coast

When: Weekends and holidays from 10h00 to 17h00

Cost: R60 per child

Contact: Allison on 031 822 1035, or visit gobananaz.co.za

Epic Karting features imported go-karts with Honda engines on challenging indoor circuits. Every kart is fitted with a state of the art AMB TransX timing transponder. There are no speed limits – it's a place where you can test your skills. Children between the ages of 10 and 101 years old will find this the most fun they can have legally in a vehicle! NB: All children need to be over 1.4 m tall in order to race.

Cost: R50 to R200

When: Call for details

PIETERMARITZBURG

Where: 5 Trek Road, Mkondeni

Contact: 033 386 3384 or email pmb@epickarting.co.za

AMANZIMTOTI

Where: Shop P1, Woolworths Entrance Level 2 Carpark, Galleria, Amanzimtoti

Contact: 031 904 5470 or email galleria@epickarting.co.za

DURBAN

Where: 6 Aloefield Crescent, Springfield Park, Durban

Contact: 031 579 3753 or email durban@epickarting.co.za

Lucky Linton Gold Mine & Animal Farm is an old farm house that has been beautifully restored, offering accommodation on both a self-catering and bed and breakfast basis. The property boasts large gardens, a small dam for bass fishing, and a swimming pool. The safe and secure children's play area includes a fun scratch patch. Party hire facilities and activities available.

Cost: R20

Where: Glendale Road, Shakaskraal, Umhlati

When: Monday to Sunday from 07h00 to 16h00.

Contact: 032 947 1459 or www.luckylinton.com



JOZI & PRETORIA

JoziKids is an online events directory. Here are their top recommendations for young families in Joburg. For more ideas, visit www.JoziKids.co.za. Please note: Events and venue information is subject to change – please check online for the most up-to-date information.



Events

MamaMagic, The Baby Expo is South Africa's biggest and best parenting expo with everything you need under one roof, including exciting show specials, competitions and daily shows with Barney.
Cost: Children under 10 enter for free, adults for R70 and pensioners for R50.

Where: the Coca Cola dome

When: 14 – 17 May from 09h00 to 18h00

Contact: www.mamamagic.co.za

Who's Your Daddy? – proudly brought to you by Huggies – is a one-man comedy show about a clueless guy's journey to fatherhood; all the ups and downs, from trying to fall pregnant, all the way through to the first months of infancy. Written and performed by Chris Forrest, and directed by Bevan Cullinan.

Cost: R130

Where: Sandton Theatre on the Square, Nelson Mandela Square, Rivonia Road

When: 19 – 31 May

Contact: www.strictlytickets.co.za

Classes & workshops

The little wooden spoon kitchen – "Creating a passion for cooking, stir by stir". Specialising in cooking classes for children as young as 3 years old. We focus on healthy eating and help kids to overcome fussy eating through taste, touch, play and gardening. We also do classes for teenagers, adults and training for domestic workers. Why not have a cooking party at our venue or a venue of your choice.

Cost: Starting from R150

Where: 51 Eleven street, Linden, Randburg

When: Friday, 10h00 to 11h30 (3-6 year olds)

Contact: info@thewoodenspoonkitchen.com or 074 635 7023

TOPTOTS Mother and Child Workshops use mind, music and movement to stimulate your child's development (8 weeks to 4 years).

Cost: Free trial classes are offered

Contact: www.toptots.co.za

Venues

Adventures with Elephants is an educational elephant interaction facility/venue located on a beautiful 300 hectare wildlife reserve, situated an hour's drive north of Pretoria. Activities include: 1 hour educational interaction; combination elephant interaction and elephant-back safari; combination elephant interaction, safari and swimming with the elephant; and tailored events and activities: teambuilding, corporate functions, weddings, filming, starlight safaris, etc. (Times are approximate, some activities are seasonal)

Cost: Call for details

Where: D1000, Waterberg Limpopo (1 hour north of Pretoria)

When: From 08h00 in summer or from 09h00 in winter (June to August), and 12h00 and 15h00 all year round

Contact: 014 734 7730 or www.adventureswithelephants.co.za

Angelo's Kitchen is the original kids' pizza-making family fun restaurant. Enjoy a family meal together and keep an eye on your kids from your seat as they play on the playgrounds or make their own pizza. Both branches also make a perfect party venue for kids.

When: Monday to Sunday, 07h00 to 22h00

BRYANSTON

Where: Coachman's Crossing, Peter Place Rd, Bryanston

Contact: Chelci on 011 463 5800 or visit www.angeloskitchen.co.za

PARKTOWN NORTH

Where: 32 7th Ave, Parktown North

Contact: Angelo on 011 447 8001 or visit www.angeloskitchen.co.za

Grant's Dairy is a great place for your children to learn about how dairy products are processed and goats are milked. In season the baby goats can be bottle-fed. There is also a coffee shop offering farm breakfasts and kids' menus. Kids can play freely in the large sandpit and interact with the geese, ducks, pony, pig, donkeys, and chickens. School tours and kids' parties can also be arranged.

Cost: Call for details regarding school tours and parties

When: Monday to Saturday, 07h30 to 16h00

Where: 114 Jacoba Street, Norton Small Farms, Alberton

Contact: Delene on 011 902 8490

JOZI & PRETORIA

Casting Memories

3D Imprints
of Babies
Hands & Feet

We are based in JHB

Samantha
076 385 0326



3dbabyimprints@gmail.com
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Mind, Music and Movement

Creative messy play Perceptual development
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www.buddiesplaygyms.co.za
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Jingle Jangle tea garden and party venue is a family friendly restaurant with a playground and petting zoo for children. The facility includes jungle gyms, sandpits, trampolines (1 enclosed), plastic scooters, jumping castle, swings and a large play area, electrical rides plus a toddlers' theme play park with horse carousel, 12-seater swing, tombola games tent and an electrical train.

Where: Cnr Rubenstein and Wekker Roads, Moreleta Park Tshwane/Pretoria East

When: 7 days a week from 08h00 to 17h00

Contact: Laura Ferula on 012 997 0134, or visit www.jinglejangle.co.za

Just Darling holds creative workshops including mosaic, ceramic painting, Chalk Paint™ and cake decorating for young and old. You can pop in for lunch or take the family on a raspberry picking outing. The season runs from November to March.

Cost: Berry Picking Rates: entrance to the fields: R35 per adult, R20 for children. Eat as much as you like while in the fields. Any berries picked to be taken home are weighed at R100/kg. Please contact us to book.

When: Wednesday to Sunday, 09h00 to 16h30

Where: 68 Judith Avenue, Walkerville, Johannesburg South

Contact: Abigail on 074 135 6572

Plantation Cafe is situated in the heart of Midrand with a secure kiddies' fun zone, perfect for your kids to play in while you enjoy your meal and child minders keep a watchful eye on your little ones. If you book a party they do not charge for the venue.

When: Open 7 days a week. Monday and Tuesday: 06h30 to 18h00. Wednesday to Saturday: 07h30 to 21h00. Sunday: 09h00 to 18h00

Where: Cnr New & 6th Road, Carlswald, Midrand

Contact: Diaan Fourie on 011 318 0401 or visit www.plantationcafe.co.za

The PWC Bike Park is a mountain biking and family entertainment venue in Bryanston, where you can enjoy riding your bike, trail running or watching your children play. A selection of kids party and venue hire options are available.

Cost: Riders: adults, R60; kids under 12, R50; kids under 5, R20

Where: 1A Libertas Street, Bryanston

When: Monday to Sunday including public holidays: 06h00 to 18h00

Contact: Marcellus Hoods on 083 725 2453, or visit bikepark.co.za

Service

Genesis Clinic Private Maternity Hospital respects the right of every woman to make her own choices and be in control of her birth experience. Genesis believes that while a healthy baby is the first priority of childbirth, it is not the only goal. Birth can and should be an amazing experience. Genesis is not only a private maternity hospital, but also offers a variety of classes, talks and workshops to educate and empower moms-to-be. These include antenatal classes, hypnobirthing classes, labour and water birth workshops, pre-natal yoga, baby gym, breastfeeding courses, and CPR courses. They also host a moms and babes support group.

Where: 5 Northwold Drive, cnr Jan Smuts Avenue, Saxonwold

Contact: For the full event listing, visit www.genesisclinic.co.za or call 011 646 3923



PE

Events

The 7th annual **CANSA Relay For Life Port Elizabeth** community event aims to raise awareness and funds for the Cancer Association of South Africa. It's a fun-filled overnight event that celebrates with survivors, remembers those who have lost their fight and in relaying raises much needed funds to continue the fight to find a cure for the disease.

When: From 18h00 on Friday 6 March 2015 to 06h00 on Saturday 7 March 2015

Where: Victoria Park High School Sports Complex, Walmer, Port Elizabeth

Contact: Lee-Ann Jones on 082 924 8366 or visit www.cansarelayforlifepe.co.za

Taste of PE – Calling all food fanatics, drinks devotees, cuisine queens, gourmands and gastronomes! Taste, the International Culinary Festival, best described by many as an unforgettable experience of foodie and restaurant heaven, has announced their first Port Elizabeth based event, Taste of PE.

Cost: R80, which includes a tasting glass – from www.itickets.co.za

When: 6 – 8 March

Where: Boardwalk Entertainment Complex

Contact: Alex Mayne on 011 463 0355 or visit www.tasteofpe.com

Venues

Addo Elephant Park is now the third largest national park in South Africa, covering about 180 000 hectares (444 700 acres) and including the Bird and St Croix Island groups. The original elephant section of

the park was proclaimed in 1931 when only 11 elephants remained in the area. Today this finely-tuned ecosystem is a sanctuary to over 600 elephant, lion, buffalo, black rhino, spotted hyena, leopard, a variety of antelope and zebra species, as well as the unique Addo flightless dung beetle, found almost exclusively in Addo. The park can exclusively claim to be the only national park in the world to conserve the "Big 7" – the Big 5 as well as the southern right whale and great white shark off the Algoa Bay coast. Activities available include game drives, hiking trails, horse trails, 4 x 4 trails and water activities.

Cost: SA residents: R54 per adult and R27 per child, per day

When: Day visitors: 07h00 to 19h00

Where: Close to Addo – visit website for maps and directions

Contact: 042 233 8600 or visit www.sanparks.org/parks/addo

Apron Strings Garden Restaurant is a family restaurant set in a beautiful garden with lots of space for the kids to roam in. It is very sheltered from the wind and has a cosy cottage style venue with a large fireplace for those cold and rainy days.

When: Wednesday to Sunday, 09h00 to 17h00

Where: Sardinia Bay Road

Contact: 041 366 1217 or visit www.theapronstrings.co.za

The Pink Fig is a family friendly restaurant with a farm feel, within the city limits, which will delight children and parents alike. The secure playground offers a scooter track, trampoline, hi-fly swings, slides, see-saw, animal rockers, gummy-spring motorbike, boat, sandpits, suspension bridge, 4 play structures, hop-scotch, four square, climbing ropes, natural obstacles, mini soccer field, toddler swings, hanging barrel, push cars, Land Rover play structure and plenty of space to run and play! There is also a separate play area for children under 6 years old.

Cost: Entrance is free

When: Wednesday to Saturday from 09h00 to 16h00, and Sunday 09h00 to 15h00.

Where: 3 Heatherbank Rd, Charlo

Contact: 041 368 6278 or www.thepinkfig.co.za



Brothers

By Laura le Roux

Growing up, it was just my brother and me, and we fought... a lot. In fact, we spent most of our childhood fighting with each other. Once we had both left school, the playing field levelled somewhat and our bond strengthened and we became closer. When I had my first 2 children, their relationship was so similar to mine and my brother's that I assumed that's how relationships are with siblings. This all changed when I had my third child, who is 9 years younger than my first.

You would assume because of the age difference that, other than being siblings, they would have nothing in common. But the immediate bond that was formed between these two was incredible. You would also think that a 9-year-old boy wouldn't be very interested in a newborn, but their bond was reinforced with every bottle Cameron gave Jack and every outfit he changed.

The relationship between these two boys has proved wrong many assumptions I had about siblings. It has also amazed me and shown me how incredibly strong this bond can be. Even though Cameron had never really been

around newborns or babies much, he took naturally to Jack, wanting to be involved as much as he could. He was gentle, soft and kind. He rocked Jack, held him, made silly faces and as Jack grew older, he played tirelessly with him. He would throw the ball over and over; make funny sounds until he started sounding like a farting elephant and make aeroplane noises to help get Jack to eat.

When Jack gets upset, he asks for Cameron. When he can't figure something out, he asks for Cameron. When Jack is having a tantrum and we can't calm him, we call Cameron. When we fly anywhere, Cameron has to sit next to Jack and they spend the flight playing games on the iPad and generally being silly. When Jack visits his granny for the night, Cameron asks repeatedly when he is coming home; he buys treats for Jack, offers to bath with him and holds his hand to cross the road.

As close as I am now to my brother, our bond is nowhere near as strong as that of my two sons. Where the one goes, the other one goes, despite their age difference. Cameron understands Jack – he speaks his language. They are

almost each other's comfort blanket.

This isn't just a little brother looking up to his older brother – this is a bond between two boys that is unbreakable. The ties that bind them are more than blood. As their mother, I am in awe of their relationship; in some ways even a little envious. It's something that has developed naturally, which is what makes it more beautiful. Watching their relationship strengthen and grow over time is probably one of the best things about being their mother. ♥

"Sometimes being a brother is even better than being a superhero." Marc Brown

About the Author

Laura le Roux has 4 kids, a husband, a dog and a swimming pool. When she is not trying to make sure they all remain alive, fed, clothed and loved, and trying to keep the pool from turning into South Africa's very own Loch Ness, she is baking, writing the next bestseller – or writing funny and touching stories on her blog – www.harassedmom.co.za





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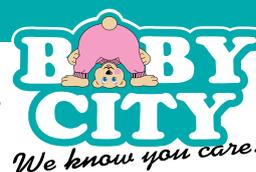


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