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# Enjoy Your Baby!

IT'S GOOD FOR BOTH OF YOU



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[NYC.GOV/HEALTH](http://nyc.gov/health)

# ENJOY YOUR BABY

It's Good for Both of You



## Contents

1.

Love and Attention

2.

Can You 'Spoil' a Baby?

3.

Make Ordinary Things Count

4.

Healthy Mother, Healthy Baby

5.

Nobody Can Do This Alone!

6.

When You're Afraid  
You Can't Cope

# 1

## LOVE AND ATTENTION

Your love and attention are the most important things in your baby's life.

**As important as food and a place to live.**

When your baby cries, comfort her. When you hold her close, it calms her down.

She knows it's YOU – she knows your voice and your smell.

She remembers the beat of your heart from when she was still inside you.

When you rock your baby she feels safe, when you cuddle her she feels happy. Sometimes all your baby needs is a touch or a smile to show her you care.

**Even when she cries no matter what you do,** knowing you're close is so much better than crying alone.



## 2

CAN YOU  
'SPOIL' A BABY?

Some people say it's good to let a baby cry – that if you pick him up too much, you'll spoil him. Or they say if you cuddle a baby too much – especially a BOY baby – it makes him *weak*.

It's not true!

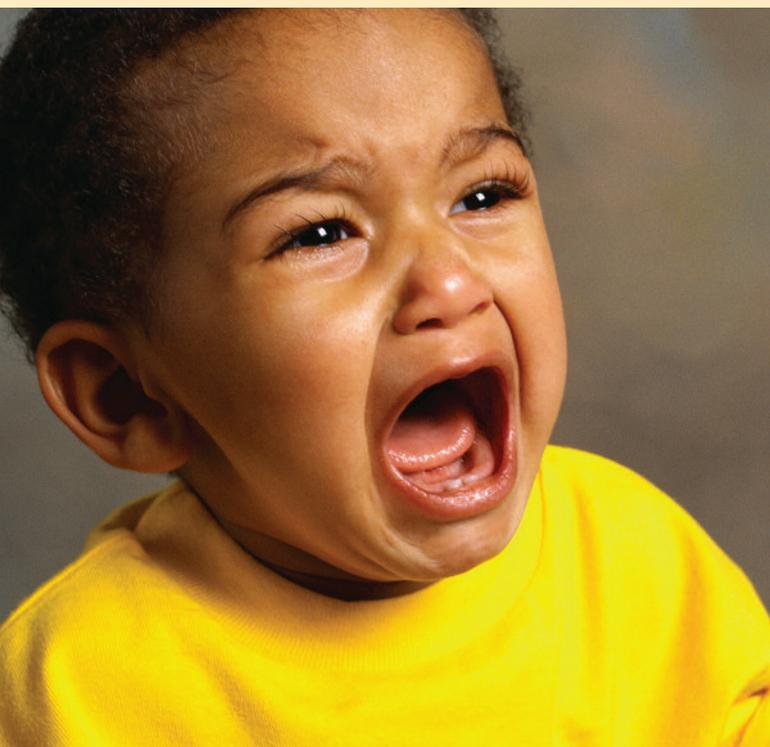
**Babies can't be spoiled with love and attention.**

Babies cry only when they NEED something – a clean diaper or a feeding or a burp.

Or maybe they have colic. Or need to let off steam.

Ignoring a crying baby doesn't make him independent. It makes him scared and sad. But when you give your baby your attention, he knows he is loved by his mother, the most important person in his life.

Love and protection make him TRULY strong. A happy baby...a secure and confident child.



## 3

# MAKE ORDINARY THINGS COUNT

You don't have to wait for *just the right moment* to give your baby what she needs. What she needs the most is YOU and all the ordinary things you do.

Babies LOVE everyday things. The sound of your voice. Peek-a-boo. Noticing everything they see and talking about it – Look! a pigeon, a cloud, a street cleaner! What's up today at the corner store, at the park, at the supermarket.

### **Show her things, let her touch them:**

Flowers, fabrics, baby books, pictures in magazines.

The first snow, mommy's hair, toys in the tub.

*How do babies learn?* By exploring what's around them, starting with YOU and how YOU see the world.

Take advantage of all the ordinary things. That's LIFE.

It's what your baby needs.





# 4

## HEALTHY MOTHER, HEALTHY BABY

To take care of your baby, you *have* to take care of yourself. That's not selfish, it's common sense. You can't take care of your baby if you can't take care of yourself.

### **Be as healthy as you can.**

Have a regular doctor who knows you, so you get the health care you need. Eat a healthy diet with lots of fruits and vegetables. Get enough sleep and physical activity. *Just walking* every day will make you healthier and improve your mood.

### **Find healthy ways to relax.**

Take a nap when the baby sleeps. Get out of your apartment today – take the baby to the park. Put your feet up after work.

**Ask for help when you need it.** Spend as much time as possible with people who love and support you – *and as little time as possible with people who don't!*



Want a healthy baby? Be a healthy mother!

## 5

# NOBODY CAN DO THIS ALONE!

Let other people love and care for your baby, too.  
It's good for your baby and it's *good for you*.

### **Let people help in all the ways they can.**

Maybe your baby's father is not your partner anymore. Or maybe your relationship is complicated. *Your baby might still be able to benefit from what his father can give him.*

Grandparents have something to give, too – to both you and your baby.

So do other trusted relatives and friends, and caretakers and helpers you know and will meet.

It DOES “take a village” to raise a child!

But no one can take the place of you.

You will always be your baby's FIRST and MOST IMPORTANT love.



## 6

# WHEN YOU'RE AFRAID YOU CAN'T COPE

It happens to every parent sooner or later. The baby won't stop crying. You've tried everything – feeding, cuddling, a new diaper, a pacifier. And now you're just too tired, or sick, or ANGRY to take it anymore.

**When all else fails, PUT YOUR BABY IN THE CRIB, CLOSE THE DOOR, AND WALK INTO ANOTHER ROOM.** Check every few minutes to make sure your baby is safe. Call somebody who can talk you down. If nobody's available, **call the Parent Helpline any time, day or night at 311.**

### **Make your home safe.**

Nobody has the right to hurt you or your children. Domestic violence is a *crime* that nobody should have to live with. For information and help, call the Domestic Violence Hotline at 311. **You can get help even if you are poor or undocumented.**  
**IN AN EMERGENCY CALL 911.**

### **NEVER SHAKE OR HANDLE YOUR BABY ROUGHLY.**

Shaking can cause bleeding in the brain that can seriously injure or even kill a child.

