

How Can The New Parent Support Home Visitation Program Help You

Nurturing Parenting

Prenatal Services

What is SIDS

Sleepless in Parentville

Postpartum Blues

Resources and Links

How can the New Parent Support Home Visitation Program help you

- Cope with stress.
- Manage the additional physical and emotional demands of parenting due to separation and deployment of the Service Member
- Nurture children to promote growth and development
- Answer questions about the everyday challenges of parenthood
- Locate local services and resources that can help parents with young children

Nurturing Parenting

Becoming a new parent is a time of excitement and possible anxiety. Whether you are expecting your first child or have children approaching three years of age, we can help you develop or improve your parenting skills in the privacy of your own home.

We do not have to remind you that raising a family in the military is not always easy due to the stress of moves, deployments and separation.

Being a single parent has its own set of challenges when taking on the roles of Sailor and parent and trying to find time to take care of yourself. That's why we say that if you're feeling a little anxiety, it really is normal! You are not alone. We can help you become a better parent by learning:

- How to bond with your baby
- How to child-proof your home and prepare it for baby's arrival
- The stages of child development
- Skills, strategies and techniques to promote the growth and development of your child
- How to balance the demands of caring for your child while caring for yourself

Prenatal Services

The New Parent Support Home Visitation Program offers prenatal information about pregnancy, birth, and infant care.

Both Mom and Dad learn through The Nurturing Pre-Natal Family Program how to:

- Bond with baby
- Nurture themselves and their partners
- Prevent drug-related birth defects
- Handle stress and anger
- Explore their thoughts on discipline
- Use infant massage
- Celebrate the birth
- Deal with physical and emotional changes
- Strengthen the bond with their partner

We also have additional information about:

- Siblings preparing for a new family member
- Resources in your own community
- Current hot topics concerning parenting
- Information on breast feeding

What is SIDS?

SIDS stands for sudden infant death syndrome. This term describes the sudden, unexplained death of an infant younger than 1 year of age. Some people call SIDS "crib death" because many babies who die of SIDS are found in their cribs. But, cribs don't cause SIDS.

What should I know about SIDS?

Health care providers don't know exactly what causes SIDS, but they do know:

- Babies sleep safer on their backs. Babies who sleep on their stomachs are much more likely to die of SIDS than babies who sleep on their backs.
- Sleep surfaces matter. Babies who sleep on or under soft bedding are more likely to die of SIDS.
- Every sleep time counts. Babies who usually sleep on their backs but who are then placed on their stomachs, like for a nap, are at very high risk for SIDS.

Fast Facts About SIDS

- SIDS is the leading cause of death in infants between 1 month and 1 year of age.
- Most SIDS deaths happen when babies are between 2 months and 4 months of age.

Sleepless in Parentville

Sleep deprivation. It's something I'm sure you've experienced more than once since your baby came home. Losing sleep is part of your job description as a parent. And it doesn't matter if you have a toddler or a teen.

According to most sleep specialists, if you try to take a catnap here and there to make up for sleepless nights, you won't get the real rest you need. As a result, you may start experiencing memory loss, diminished alertness or illness.

So what is a busy parent to do? Here are a few strategies to help you get that much-needed sleep:

- If you have a spouse, take turns being the on-call parent at night. While one gets a night of uninterrupted sleep, the other has a bonding experience with baby.
- If Mom is breast-feeding the baby, she can use a breast pump to prepare extra bottles. Having extra bottles ready means Dad can handle overnight feedings a few times a week.
- If you're a single parent, ask a grandparent, sibling or close friend for some relief. Their help, even one or two nights a week, can give you some rest. If possible, you might consider restructuring your job. Maybe you can work from home part of the week or take advantage of flex time.

Your life has changed, and your schedule will have to revolve around your new priority – your child. That doesn't mean you have to be sleep-deprived the rest of your life.

Postpartum Blues

Emotional changes following the birth of a baby affect many mothers. Baby blues are most common 3 to 10 days following delivery (but can occur anytime in the first year) and usually last anywhere from 48 hours to 2 weeks. In some women, the depression is more pronounced, and, in rare cases, there is extreme depression.

Frequent Signs and Symptoms

- The symptoms vary in intensity, but can include:
- Feelings of sadness, hopelessness or gloom.
- Appetite and weight loss (sometimes a weight gain).
- Sleep disturbances or frightening dreams.
- Loss of energy; fatigue.
- Irritability, anxiety.
- Frequent headaches and other physical discomfort.

Causes

Pregnancy and birth are accompanied by sudden hormonal changes that affect emotions. Additionally, the 24-hour responsibility for a newborn infant can represent a major psychological and lifestyle adjustment for most mothers, even if it is not the first child. These physical and emotional stresses are usually accompanied by inadequate rest until the baby's routine stabilizes.

Risk increases with:

- Stress and lack of sleep.
- Poor nutrition.
- Postpartum blues following a previous pregnancy.
- Lack of support from one's partner, family or friends.
- Pre-existing mental health problems.

Expected Outcome

This depression is usually very short-lived. With support from friends and family, mild postpartum depression can disappear quickly.

Possible Complications

- Lack of bonding between mother and infant.
- If depression becomes more severe, a mother may not be able to care for herself and the baby.
- Serious depression that may be accompanied by aggressive feelings toward the baby, a loss of pride in appearance and home, loss of appetite or compulsive eating, withdrawal from others or suicidal tendencies.

Treatment/Post Procedure Care

Medication, counseling and support from others usually cure even severe depression in three (3) to six (6) months.

General Care:

- Diagnosis is usually based on a history of the symptoms. There are no specific diagnostic tests.
- Don't feel guilty if you have mixed feelings about motherhood. Adjustment and bonding take time.
- Schedule frequent outings, such as walks and short visits with friends or family. These help prevent feelings of isolation.
- Have your baby sleep in a separate room. You will sleep more restfully.
- Ask for daytime help from family or friends who will shop for you or care for the baby while you rest.
- If you feel depressed, share your feelings with your partner or a friend who is a good listener. Talking with other mothers can help you keep problems in perspective.
- Severe postpartum depression requires professional help.

Notify Your Healthcare Provider If

- Postpartum depression does not improve after two (2) weeks or the symptom level increases.
- You have postpartum depression and additional life changes occur, such as divorce, career change or moving.
- You have suicidal urges or aggressive feelings towards the baby. Seek help immediately.

Resources and Links

Childcare.gov
[Military Child.org](http://MilitaryChild.org)
[Military Family.org](http://MilitaryFamily.org)
Militaryhomefront

[National Institute of Child Health and Development](#)
[Recalls and Product Safety News](#)
[Reach Out and Read](#)
[Zero to Three](#)