



# Bringing Baby Home



A special advertising supplement

# Welcome to Parenthood

by MICHELLE CARL

**C**ongratulations on your pregnancy! Your life is about to change in many wonderful ways!

This shouldn't surprise you, but your baby will not come with an instruction manual. Every baby is different, and you will need to learn how to be the best parent for your child. You'll have many important decisions to make, so you'll have lots of questions: Where do I get prenatal care? Should I breastfeed? Why does my child need shots? Learning as much as you can will empower you to make choices that are best for you and your baby.

Local First 5 Commissions are here to help you make those choices. Funded by Proposition 10, a tobacco tax that was approved by voters in 1998, First 5 programs support the healthy development of children ages 0 to 5 and their families. First 5 knows that giving your child the best possible start in life begins before he or she is even born. That's why First 5 Commissions work to educate new parents and help them get access to prenatal care and breastfeeding support. There is a First 5 in every county in California to connect you to local parenting resources.

In this publication, you'll meet moms and dads who have recently joined "The Parent Club." You'll also get plenty of information about important topics that will affect your baby's health. So get comfy, prop up your swelling feet and start the journey of Bringing Baby Home!

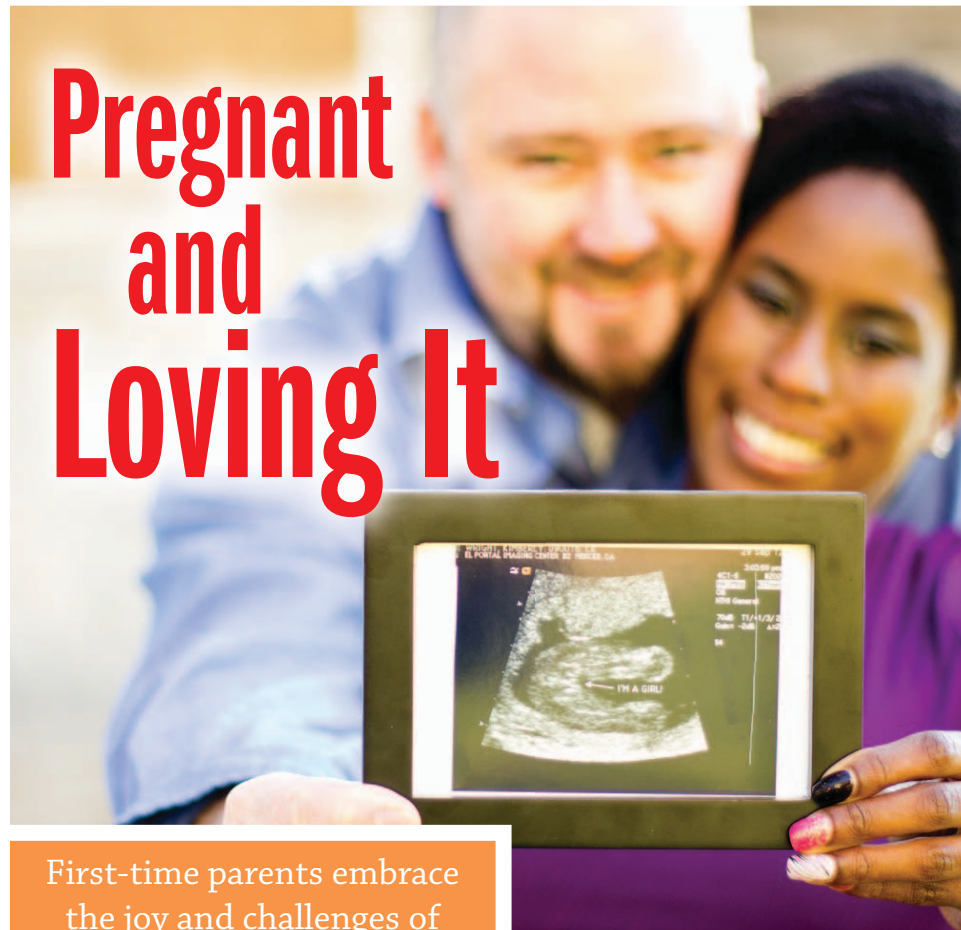
## First 5 Kit for New Parents

First 5's Kit for New Parents is a free resource covering the importance of the early years of a child's life. New and expecting parents can learn useful facts and helpful tips on a wide variety of topics, such as good health, loving relationships and learning opportunities. Kits are available in several languages, including English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Mandarin and Cantonese. If you are a new or expecting parent and did not receive a kit during your hospital stay, please contact your local First 5.



Kimberly Wright and Josh Janz prepare themselves for the arrival of baby Kaiya.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF KIMBERLY WRIGHT

## Pregnant and Loving It



First-time parents embrace the joy and challenges of preparing for baby

by MEREDITH J. GRAHAM

**K**imberly Wright remembers the look her best friend gave her one day while talking. She stopped and said, "You're pregnant." Kimberly laughed, but quickly went out and bought a pregnancy test.

Kimberly was five weeks along, and, even though she was in shock, she eagerly started planning for the baby's arrival. She went through two OB-GYNs before settling on the one she liked best and then sought out local parenting resources.

Wright and then-daddy-to-be Josh, who live in Atwater, attended the childbirth classes offered at Before & After Baby in Merced. They were surprised by how much there was to learn.

"All my friends laughed at me — they said, 'You aren't going to use any of the stuff they teach you.' But I actually used a lot of it.

"I thought I knew what to expect, because my brother and sister have kids, but there is so much stuff," Kimberly recalls. "I knew I wanted a natural birth

before I went into the class. The teacher was so helpful. She said, 'I know this is what you want, but prepare yourself for other options just in case.'"

Kimberly made sure she visited her doctor regularly to check on the baby. She started taking vitamins and choosing foods for more than just her own health.

After her water broke and she arrived at the hospital, Kimberly's contractions were not progressing as hoped and she agreed to induce labor. But, as she stated in her birth-plan, she did not get an epidural, and there was no C-section. Baby Kaiya came out healthy, a joyful bundle for mommy and daddy.

"As a first-time mother, you're going to be scared.

You can hear everyone's different stories, but nobody will know how they will deal with it. Everyone is different," she says. "Just embrace everything. You'll never get this moment back."

**Kimberly made sure she visited her doctor regularly to check on the baby.**

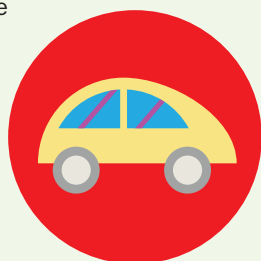
## Car Seat Safety

When transporting your child in an automobile, you'll want to make sure he is as safe as possible. In California, the law requires that children younger than 8 years old remain in a car seat or booster seat until they have grown to 4 feet 9 inches tall. Follow these guidelines before hitting the road with your new baby.

**Shop for a seat.** Make sure you have a car seat available by the time your baby is born. Select a car seat that works best for the age, height and weight of your child. Never buy or borrow a used car seat. Register the seat to know about recalls.

**Install it right.** Each car seat and car is different, so check the manufacturer's website or user manual for proper car seat installation. Follow the age, height and weight requirements for the car seat. Don't add items to your car seat (for example: head rests, seat toys). It's the law to have your child properly restrained in a car seat. It's also the law to have your child rear-facing in the backseat for the first year and up to 20 pounds. It's recommended that your child continue in that position until age 2. After that, use a front-facing car seat in the backseat.

**Get an inspection!** Following the installation manual seems simple enough, but more than 75 percent of car seats are installed wrong. Better safe than sorry, so have a certified technician inspect your car seat. Check [www.safercar.gov/parents/carseats.htm](http://www.safercar.gov/parents/carseats.htm) to find an inspector in your area, or call the California Highway Patrol or your public health department to get the seat inspected.



## Rock-a-Bye Baby

Newborn babies sleep a lot — about 16 hours a day on average. Here are some helpful tips on how you should put your baby to sleep, and how you can reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

**Put baby on her back.** Put a new baby to sleep on her back. A baby sleeping on her side may not be safe since she can roll onto her abdomen, increasing the risk of SIDS.

**Check the bars.** Cribs should have sides that cannot be lowered, with bars no more than 2 3/8 inches apart. Most new cribs will meet this standard, but check if your crib was manufactured before 2011, and make sure to register the crib and check for recalls at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov).

**Keep it clear.** Make sure the crib does not have bumper pads or loose objects, such as pillows, stuffed animals or blankets inside it. Also, make sure the mattress is firm.

**Stay safe when co-sleeping.** Co-sleeping is when parents sleep in the same bed with their baby. Sharing a bed with a baby can result in the parent rolling onto the infant, causing injury or death by suffocation. If parents wish to sleep with their baby, make sure the baby has her own place to sleep (following the guidelines above), and not in the bed with the parents.



# The 'Breast' Decision

One mom's desire to breastfeed her daughter helps her overcome difficulties

by MEREDITH J. GRAHAM

**V**anessa Mendoza knew before she even became pregnant that she wanted to breastfeed her baby. She'd read research about the benefits of breast milk through working for First 5, where she made home visits to pregnant mothers.

"Working for First 5 was when I decided I wanted to breastfeed," says Vanessa, who gave birth to Kamila in December 2012. "I want her to get the best."

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), breastfeeding helps prevent infectious diseases in infants such as ear infections, diarrhea, urinary tract problems and even asthma. Breastfeeding promotes the best possible health for your baby. The AAP recommends breastfeeding exclusively for the first six months.

Right after Kamila's birth, Vanessa was ready to try breastfeeding. But Kamila couldn't latch on to her breast because Vanessa's nipples were inverted. A nurse in the hospital had noticed the problem and gave her a nipple shield, which attaches to the breast so Kamila could latch on.

But a difficult pregnancy took a toll on Vanessa's health and soon it became tough

to breastfeed because she had intense abdominal pain due to gallstones. But she continued to pump and fed Kamila breast milk using bottles.

From the beginning, Vanessa was conscious of what she was putting into her body, because, "Whatever I eat, she eats," she says. When she was on pain medication for the gallstones, she "pumped and dumped" the milk to not pass the drugs on to Kamila.

Vanessa also sought help from a lactation consultant at the Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) in Colusa.

"Next, I'm going to be talking with the lactation counselor at WIC about how long Kamila can drink my milk," she says.

Vanessa notes that choices about breastfeeding are highly personal and that she's careful not to judge other mothers.

"It's different for every woman," Vanessa says about when to stop and how important nursing is overall. "For me and my baby, it's our bonding time."

**Breastfeeding promotes the best possible health for your baby.**



Vanessa Mendoza says it was important to her that daughter Kamila be breastfed.  
PHOTO BY MEREDITH J. GRAHAM

# Ask a Pediatrician

Answers to six common questions new parents have

by **MICHELLE CARL**

**Y**our baby is finally here! As you start learning how to care for your little bundle of joy, you'll likely have lots of questions. Retired Dr. Jim Makol says new parents don't always remember to ask these questions during the first well-baby checkup, which usually happens within 48 hours of leaving the hospital.

Using his 32 years of experience in pediatrics, Dr. Makol has picked the most common concerns new parents have and gives his advice on each topic.



Dr. Jim Makol, retired pediatrician and First 5 Placer commissioner.  
PHOTO BY SERENE LUSANO

## 1. How do I know if my baby is getting enough milk?

Most babies will take 2-3 ounces of formula every 3-4 hours, thus feeding eight times per 24 hours. Breastfeeding babies may feed every 1-2 hours initially, or up to 12 times per day. You will gradually get used to your baby's signs of being hungry, such as rooting (turning toward the side when the mouth or cheek is stroked), sucking on his or her hands, or, of course, crying as a call for help.

## 2. What is jaundice and why is it a concern?

Jaundice is a common problem that results from an infant's liver not being fully developed, but it's not caused by anything the mother did. The concern is that if the jaundice reaches a very high level, it can cause damage to the brain. Jaundice is the buildup of a yellow chemical in the skin and other organs of the body. The color is first noticeable in the face and eyes of a jaundiced baby. Since jaundice tends to increase over the first few days, you may notice it appearing after your baby leaves the hospital. You should report your observation of possible jaundice to the pediatrician.

## 3. Should I circumcise my baby boy?

Parents often have opinions about the importance of circumcision, generated either from their past family experiences, cultural or religious beliefs, comments from friends, or sometimes just due to the lack of reliable information. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and other professional organizations now state that the benefits of circumcision outweigh the potential disadvantages, including complications from the procedure. However, parents should feel comfortable that it is a reasonable decision to choose either to circumcise or not circumcise their newborn.

## 4. What should I do if my baby is crying too much?

Crying is your baby's way of calling for attention. Assume that there is a reason for your baby to cry and that it is a cry for help. Don't worry that you will spoil your newborn baby by responding. Examine the diaper, clothing, or any sources of possible discomfort in the surroundings as the first step. Then try to soothe your baby by holding, rocking, patting, stroking, or softly speaking or singing to your baby. Swaddling the baby in a receiving blanket, playing soft background music, or even taking the baby for a ride in the car may be helpful steps.

## 5. How do I bathe and clean my baby?

The best location to bathe your baby is in a plastic tub made for that purpose. Use comfortably warm water with an unscented soap. Always hold your baby with one hand and never let go while the baby is in the water. Diaper rash is generally caused by moisture from stool or urine irritating the skin and it looks like red bumps along the lower abdomen, genitalia, buttocks and upper thighs. To help avoid diaper rash, change your baby's diaper frequently and use an ointment after patting the skin dry.

**"Become comfortable with your pediatrician. Don't be afraid to ask questions."**

Dr. Jim Makol,  
retired pediatrician

## 6. How do I know if my baby is sick?

A temperature over 100.4 F is a fever and is best taken with a rectal thermometer. If you are suspicious that your baby is not acting well, call your pediatrician.



## What You Need to Know About Shots

The most important thing you can do to keep your baby healthy and safe is to get him vaccinated. Vaccinations (shots) are studied by experts, are safe and have prevented many deaths and serious non-fatal illnesses in infants. The first vaccine for Hepatitis B will be given to

your baby while he is still in the hospital. A schedule of other shots that are recommended for your baby is available at your pediatrician's office or online from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website at [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules).

**NOTE:** Modifying the schedule by spreading the doses out, giving smaller doses than recommended or delaying vaccinations can dramatically reduce the effectiveness of the immunization and increase the possibility of serious illness.

# No Shame in Having the Blues



As a nurse, Jamie Bowman shares stories of her own struggle with postpartum depression when working with new mothers.  
PHOTO BY KIM PALAFERRI

Nurse hopes her story helps other moms with postpartum depression get help

by MEREDITH J. GRAHAM

**J**amie Bowman did not have an easy pregnancy. In fact, after going through the lengthy process of in vitro fertilization to become pregnant, she spent 4 1/2 months on bed rest. Then baby Kallie decided to be born a month early and spent a week in the hospital with jaundice.

"When I went home, I was extremely sleep-deprived and restless. I really struggled with pretty much everything," Jamie recalls. "I was so anxious that I wouldn't leave my bedroom out of fear. And I cried all day, every day."

Jamie had postpartum depression, which caused her crying. She also had a perinatal mood disorder, which was responsible for the anxiety and obsessive-compulsive behaviors, including not being able to sleep because she was always watching the baby.

"I'm a nurse, so I was embarrassed to tell anyone I was suffering," says Jamie, who works at Marshall Medical Center in Placerville. "I had done everything in my power to create this baby. I was feeling horrible about the fact that I was not enjoying her."

Jamie's husband was naturally worried and began taking her and the baby to work with him. He urged Jamie to see a doctor, but even when she did, she refused to admit anything was wrong. Months dragged on like this, while Jamie suffered.

"Eventually, the fog lifted, and I was able to come around," she says. "Now I look back and I

think, 'I wish I would have gotten counseling and taken medication.'"

Kallie is now a happy 5-year-old with a healthy mom. But those first few months could have been a lot less painful for Jamie had she realized that she was not alone — that what she was feeling was treatable and not something to be ashamed of.

"There are a lot of moms out there who suffer at home alone. The more aware we are of this, the more people will come out and say, 'Hey, I need help,'" she says. "You can't control when the postpartum depression grips onto you. There is absolutely nothing wrong with seeking help."

Jamie now shares her own experience with new mothers. She also makes home visits during the first few weeks after birth and screens for signs of postpartum depression, such as weight loss, excessive crying and anxiety.

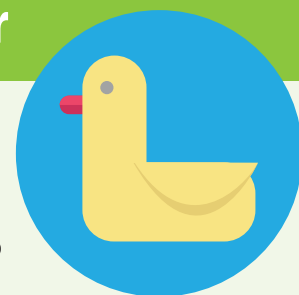
When she encounters a mother she thinks is struggling, she refers her to counseling or other resources for help.

"The joy is that now I've been through it and I can recognize it. Hopefully through telling my story, they will talk to me and I can help them get through it," she says. "My purpose in life is to help women get through postpartum depression and the perinatal mood disorders that can go along with it."

**An estimated 15-20 percent of pregnant women will experience depression/anxiety. An estimated 15 percent of women experience major or minor depression following childbirth.**

Source: Postpartum Support International

## Daddy's Corner



Mom carried the load for nine months — now it's daddy's turn to take a bigger role in caring for baby. It's important for daddy to start bonding with baby and keep mom happy, too. Father of four Billy Wilson from Sutter County says it will take time to adjust to life with a baby, but it's worth it. "It's always exciting," he says. "Just the fact that it's yours makes it easier to deal with some of the things that come with parenting."

**Trust your instincts:** You'll become an expert on your baby, but it'll take some time. For example, when holding your new baby for the first time, you may feel stiff. But it will begin to feel natural the more you do it.

**Be patient and positive:** You will get frustrated from time to time. But remember, it will pass. "One big change you will have to get used to is getting much less sleep," Billy says. "That's a good time to concentrate on staying positive and think about all the exciting things that come along with being a father. You're going to love it."

**Learn as a family:** There will be plenty of questions that both you and your partner will have as new parents. But don't just rely on your relatives for answers. Together as a family, you can seek answers through your doctor, online or through books on parenting. Learning as a family will strengthen your family bond. Speaking of bonds ...

**Bond with your baby:** Don't let anyone get in the way of some quality daddy time with your new baby. Make sure to set aside enough quality time with your new son or daughter. This is also a good time to give your partner a break. "I can tell when my wife is getting stressed out, and I'll just take the kids out for a while to give her a quiet house," Billy says.

**Help out whenever you can:** Doing chores around the house, waking up in the middle of the night to feed the baby or making dinner for the family are just a few of the ways Billy suggests dads help out. "There's no amount of help that a father can do to equal what a mother does, so do everything you can," he says.

# Bringing up Baby Healthy and Strong

**B**abies don't come with instruction manuals, and there is a wealth of information out there for new parents. But taking all of it in can be overwhelming. When it comes to what's important, First 5 can help you make the best choices for your child throughout the early years of life. For more information on how to get involved with First 5 in your area, call or go online:

## First 5 Colusa

530-458-5555

[www.First5Colusa.org](http://www.First5Colusa.org)



## First 5 El Dorado

530-622-5787

[www.First5ElDorado.com](http://www.First5ElDorado.com)



## First 5 Merced

209-385-7337

[www.First5MercedCounty.org](http://www.First5MercedCounty.org)



## First 5 Placer

530-745-1413

[www.First5Placer.org](http://www.First5Placer.org)



## First 5 Sacramento

916-876-5865

[www.First5Sacramento.net](http://www.First5Sacramento.net)



## First 5 San Joaquin

209-953-5437

[www.SJCKids.org](http://www.SJCKids.org)



## Stanislaus County Children & Families Commission

209-558-6218

[www.StanProp10.org](http://www.StanProp10.org)



## Sutter County Children & Families Commission

530-822-7505

[www.SutterCounty.org/CFC](http://www.SutterCounty.org/CFC)



## First 5 Yolo

530-669-2475

[www.First5Yolo.org](http://www.First5Yolo.org)



## First 5 Yuba

530-749-4877

[www.First5Yuba.org](http://www.First5Yuba.org)



# To-Do Checklist

From the moment you find out you're pregnant to the moment when you finally give birth — here is a checklist of what to do before and after your baby is born.



## PRENATAL CARE



### Check into your health insurance coverage.

Call your insurance provider and ask them what is covered and what your costs will be. If you don't have coverage, contact your local First 5.



**Make a prenatal appointment.** Call your doctor and get on his or her calendar to check on both your and your baby's health. Make sure to ask plenty of questions.



### Try to eat well and drink lots of water.

This one may seem like common sense, but during your first trimester, you may feel a lot of nausea. As best as you can manage, eat healthy food and drink lots of water.



**Think about how you will announce your pregnancy.** Every woman is different. Some may choose to tell everyone right away, while

others may wait until after the first trimester, when the risk of miscarriage is much lower.



**Make a baby budget.** There will be a lot of new expenses with a baby. Make a plan to cover the costs of a crib, car seat, clothes, food and diapers.



### Talk to your partner about parenting.

Discuss some goals that each of you will have as parents, and things you're willing to compromise on.



**Start a baby name list.** You'll have plenty of time to settle on a name, but it's fun to get a list going and start thinking about the possibilities for either a boy or girl.



**Notify your employer.** Learn about your options for maternity and paternity leave.

## LABOR & DELIVERY



**Create a birth plan.** Will you have a natural childbirth or be using pain medicine? Who do you want in the room with you during labor? Talk to your doctor and family ahead of time to make these decisions. Create a birth plan at [www.marchofdimes.com](http://www.marchofdimes.com).



**Pack your bags.** When you get close to your due date, have your hospital bag packed and ready to go. It's also helpful to keep track of how long it takes to get to the hospital and know where to park once you get there.



**Get help for breastfeeding.** If you have any questions while initiating breastfeeding in the hospital, ask your doctor. You may need to consult a lactation specialist for some issues.

## TAKING CARE OF MOM & BABY



### Make sure mom gets plenty of rest.

Having a new baby is an exciting time, and everyone will want to see both mom and the new baby. But there will be plenty of time for that in the coming weeks. For now, make sure mom relaxes and sleeps when the baby is sleeping.



### Help out mom whenever and however.

She'll have enough on her plate with the new baby and recovering from childbirth. Take care of her by cooking meals, doing laundry, getting her whatever she needs and helping out with the baby.



**Pay attention to mom's mood.** After childbirth, a new mom may feel sad or depressed. Changing hormones and anxiety may cause these feelings. Mom can take

a short quiz to see where she is on the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale at [www.postpartum.net](http://www.postpartum.net). Daddy, friends and family should also look for signs of postpartum depression, such as not having any interest in the baby or being withdrawn from the family. If you notice any of these symptoms, consult her doctor immediately.



**Check on baby's development.** Your pediatrician can help make sure baby is reaching developmental milestones, such as being able to hold up her head. Mom and dad can track baby's development with a free screening tool at the website [www.agesandstages.com](http://www.agesandstages.com) by clicking on Easter Seals' Make the First Five Count Campaign.