

NAMBUCCA BIRTH PHOTOGRAPHER

FROM PREGNANCY TO TODDLERHOOD

This is what you need to know to overcome self doubt and be the confident parent you have always desired to be.



A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO EARLY PREGNANCY, THE PERINATAL PERIOD AND BEYOND. PLUS RELEVANT PROVIDERS IN THE NAMBUCCA VALLEY AND SURROUNDS.



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PREGNANCY

Pregnancy is one of life's journeys that you will either cherish or endure! The hormones and the constant changes your body goes through is a wild ride of trust and readjustment. Please know that however you feel, your emotions are valid! I see you, I hear you and I am here to hold space for you.

Whether your pregnancy was planned or not, you must start educating yourself about all things pregnancy, birth, newborn, feeding and the postnatal period. It's ALOT to take in, so it's best to surround yourself with a team of gorgeous souls and birth nerds who want to help you along, so that your road through parenthood is as smooth as possible.

It's time to gather your tribe. The following are some things to consider.

1: Knowledge.

Knowledge is power and if you haven't already, start reading and taking classes if you're up for it. Now is the time to immerse yourself in all of the information you can find about pregnancy, birth and the postpartum period. If you don't like reading start talking and asking ALL the questions you can think of!

During your pregnancy you will be asked to undergo lots of scans and tests to monitor your health and your baby's growth. It is your body and your baby and you are strongly encouraged to ask questions and to ask for clarification about why these tests are performed. You are in control at all times.

Ask your friends about their experiences, ask your Mum, Dad, or any close family member who might be able to tell you about your own birth, ask your doctor, EVERYONE! Education is a weapon and the best tool you will have in your kit to kick butt throughout this monumental change.

Antenatal Classes are a great option to get some hands on education and to meet some other women who are going through pregnancy at the same time you are. Making friends and sharing experiences is a great for your mental health. Your local hospital will have information on antenatal classes in your area.

A great place to start online is www.babycenter.com.au

2: Support.

They say it takes a village to raise a child, but it also takes a village to support a woman as she is birthed into motherhood. TAKE THIS SERIOUSLY. One of the biggest challenges new mothers face is the release of their own pride and asking for help.

You ARE a superwoman, but your support network is your costume!
If you don't want to ask your friends and family, or you have none close by, I would seriously consider hiring a Doula. In fact, in my opinion, even if you do have friends and family who can support you, every woman should hire a Doula. Doulas provide emotional, physical, and educational support to a mother who is expecting, experiencing labor, or has recently given birth. Their purpose is to help women have a safe, memorable, and empowering birthing experience. Their level of support, wisdom and their connections to other birth professionals are priceless.

Perinatal support workers and Doulas in our local area are:

Sarah Miles
www.nambuccabirthphotographer.com.au
0431 619 361

Jessica Nash, Doula
jessicanash.com.au
0404 856 297

Bel Palwezecki from Love & Light Doula, Doula.
0405 736 948

AMIHS is available to all Aboriginal women who are pregnant. Providing a Midwifery focused service throughout pregnancy and postnatally up to 6 weeks, no referral needed.

Aboriginal Maternal Infant Health Services (AMIHS), Macksville.
0439 882 036

If you suffer from anxiety and depression take a look at PANDA an organisation that supports women and families in pregnancy and during the first year of parenthood.
www.panda.org.au

3: Birth Preferences.

Your birth preferences can be as simple or as intricate as you like. What is highly recommended though, is that you list your preferences for every possible outcome. This means you will not only be prepared, but educated.

Focus on things that are important to you regardless of the type of birth you wish for such as skin to skin contact, delayed cord clamping and who you wish to be your main support people. (Please see attachment for full Birth Preferences Template.)

Trudi Hayes

"Nothing is constant,
everything is changing!"

4: Prepping for Bub.

This can be one of the most daunting tasks! What do you need? Where will baby sleep? You will be amazed at how many things are given to pregnant women by other mums who have baby items to pass on.

Honestly we don't often need all the 'products' aimed at new mums through advertising and everyone has advice to give.

When it comes to what you surround your baby with and where they sleep, simply trust your instincts and do whatever feels right for you and your family.

5: The Temple.

Your body IS your temple, your womb is the place of creation. Your babies first home. Look after yourself, both physically and mentally during your pregnancy (and always). Eat well, exercise to the best of your ability, nap as often as you like. Honour this journey and take full advantage of it.

Ishara Healing Centre in Macksville - 0408 030 164 The perfect place to start with some self care. From preconception acupuncture with Kylie, pregnancy massage by Greta, Australian Bush Flower Essence for toddlers with Siamone and Hypnotherapy for new parents with Georgia, the beautiful girls here have you covered.

Zen Health and Beauty in Nambucca Heads - (02) 6515 6889 also offer a full body pregnancy massage with pillow and other delicious pregnancy packages using delicious organic products that are made onsite! Every pregnancy package booked also receives an essential oil roller blend and a crystal. Matt Sincock is available for accupuncture, Holly for emotional kinesiology and Belen for Reiki.

Alchemy in Bellingen - (02) 6655 0429 offer a variety of services including Colon Hydrotherapy, Naturopathy, Massage (many types), Acupuncture, Traditional Chinese Medicine, Osteopathy, Homoeopathy, Nutritional Consultations, Herbal Medicine, Kinesiology, Flower Therapy, Lymphatic Drainage, Aromatherapy, Psychic & Clairvoyant Guidance, Angel Crystal Healing and much more. They also have a Spa and Far-infrared Sauna (Detox Box) for your total relaxation and detoxification experience.

6: Maternity Photos.

This may be something you have never considered and feel unsure about. But it's something that is so easy to regret if you don't get some special photos during your pregnancy, to celebrate yourself and your baby! Even if you're hating your pregnant body and feel really uncomfortable, the end result of a maternity photoshoot is to give you a feeling of empowerment and precious memories. Soon enough your baby will be an insanely energetic toddler and reminiscing over their very beginnings will be a perfect way to boost your oxytocin if you're feeling low.

Visit me at www.nambuccabirthphotographer.com.au for all the info you need on maternity photoshoots.

"There is no right or wrong with parenting, you just do what works for you and your child.."

Jessica Sheather

7: Honouring the transition.

Becoming a new parent is a life altering experience. Honour the transition by throwing a baby shower or a blessingway!

Baby showers are usually all about bub. Friends and family will bring all the tiny baby things and ensure that you have everything you need in your home to provide for your child. There are usually games involved for guessing the child's gender or gender reveals as well as other fun games with take home prizes etc. Baby showers are a fantastic way to collect baby clothes, blankets, nappies and other accessories.

Mother Blessings are less common, but they are incredibly amazing and uplifting! They are similar to a baby shower but instead they honour the Mother. They involve a gathering of the mother-to-be's most trusted friends and family, who sit in a women's circle and share stories. They help you prepare yourself for the birth. Emotionally, spiritually and mentally and most importantly for the role of a new mother. You will feel 'held' and supported by those you love and respect. It's a great way to help release any blockages you may be feeling and to allow you to embrace what's to come. Hearing other women's birth stories as you share around the circle can be surprising, exciting and heartwarming to hear. Historically, a Mother Blessing or 'Blessingway' is an old Navajo ceremony, which celebrates a woman's rite of passage into motherhood. Mother Blessing rituals vary, so you can choose what you would like to do.

A couple of examples are:

- Having your hair brushed and braided while flowers that guests have brought are placed in it.
- A bracelet can be made for baby out of beads that each guest bring and one for you to wear during labour.
- Each guest can bring a candle each that you light during labour. Alternatively give your guests a candle each that they can light in their own homes when they hear you have gone into labour.
- Have your feet bathed and massaged.
- Bind everyone's wrists with a single cord of red wool or some other yarn. Everyone then keeps the string around their wrists until they hear that birth is underway then they all cut the cord as a symbol of unity.
- Everyone shares in creating henna art on the belly.

One in seven new mothers will be diagnosed with post natal depression (excluding undiagnosed cases). So it's about time we give some back to ourselves and other Mothers and help make a difference.

BIRTH

Make sure you have a birth partner who you trust, who knows your birth preferences, who loves you, who is able to hold space for you, who is prepared to honour you, and walk next to you. Someone who brings good energy to the space. Someone who will be a true support and not just a spectator. You might choose your spouse, your mum, a doula or even all of the above. You can have as many or as few support people in your birth space as you like. The choice is yours.

There are so many different ways that you can give birth. In the hospital, at home, in the bed, in the bath, on the toilet! On your knees, on your back, standing up. It's your birth and your choice. Educate yourself, gather a kick ass birth team around you and do it your way.

visit www.mybirth.com.au for some great information and statistics on hospitals in the area.

1: Where will you birth?

Look deep into this choice. Where will you feel the safest?

Visit the birthing centres close to you. Coffs Harbour, Macksville and Kempsey Hospitals. Which one do you like the most and feel meets your needs?

Home Birth might also be an option you would like to explore. Talk to other mums who have birthed at home and meet the local midwives and doulas in your area, find a birth team that you trust to help make your birth plan come to life.

Macksville Hospital: (02) 6568 0656 or (02) 65680631

Coffs Harbour Hospital: (02) 6656 7214

Kempsey Hospital: (02) 6562 0300

www.homebirthaustralia.org

2: How will you birth:

What sort of environment do you want to create in your birthing space? It's your choice. What calms you and empowers you? Music, oils, fairy lights, colourful blankets, potted plants....a bit of screaming? How you set up your birth suite is up to you, make it as beautiful and peaceful as you like.

Its worth considering the following options when formulating your birth preferences;

Hypnobirthing - managing pain and anxiety during childbirth, using various therapeutic relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing and visualisation.

"What you focus on, expands."

Saimone Fergusson

Hypnobirthing practitioners in our area are:

Cindy from Heart Matters.
www.heartmatters.com.au
0417 892 011

Vicki Fraser from Calm Birth who is also a midwife available for support and advice during pregnancy, also runs POP (positions of power) classes at Macksville hospital
vickimay20@gmail.com
0436 200 162

Karen Moseley from Sapphire Waves Hypnobirthing.
sapphirewaveshypnobirthing.com.au
0438 406 371

Hydro birthing - Both Coffs Harbour and Kempsey hospitals have birthing units that allow for hydro birthing. Macksville hospital has two baths available as well. If you choose to have a home birth you can utilise your own bath or purchase/hire a birthing pool. **Check out www.birthpartner.com.au**

Positioning – squatting, standing, kneeling, on all fours, in bed, on your side, in the shower or bath! There are so many options on the position or positions you use during labour and birth. Sometimes it's not until you are in the actual moment until you know what position is best for you. But it's good to be prepared! Do you need to purchase a bath or ball, a special mat to take to hospital for birthing on the floor?

Look into things like Optimal Maternal Positioning or ask your care provider about local antenatal education or classes. Vicky Fletcher specialises in Optimal Maternal Positioning at Macksville Hospital.

Planned or emergency C-Section - it's important to plan ahead in this scenario. This is major surgery and you need time to recover, all while caring for a newborn. Support and preparation are key. If you don't have much family or social support it's a good idea to talk to midwives in pregnancy care or ask to speak to a social worker to ask about short term assistance at home.

VBAC - Vaginal birth after caesarean is possible! If this is something that you need to do, again it is very important to find the right support. Talk to your care providers and plan appropriately. Search for **[VBAC Australia Support Group](#)** on facebook to find support and ask questions of other mums who have been in the same situation.

3. Birth Partners and photographer:

Inviting the right birth partners into your birthing space is really important. You want people that will hold space for you and fully support your choices. Make sure your birth partners also educate themselves about the physiology of birth and how to best support you through each transition of labour. Discuss your birth plan and different scenarios with them at length, and make sure they respect your values and can be your voice if needed. A birth doula can really take the load off your family members and will help support not only you, but them too.

Having a photographer present during birth adds to your support and care team. Your birth photographer will know the type of birth you have envisioned and the sort of care you are comfortable with. Giving birth is a life changing and intense experience, being able to capture that is pretty magical and allows for a reflection and understanding of your birth experience that cannot be gained from memories alone. **Call Sarah at Nambucca Birth Photographer on 0431 619 361 or visit www.nambuccabirthphotographer.com.au for more information on birth photography.**

4. What to take to hospital:

It can be a bit stressful thinking about what to pack in your hospital bag. Remember you are not going away to a deserted island! Chances are a friend or family member can bring items to you if you forget or need more of something. Clean clothes for you and baby are a must as feeling fresh and comfortable after birth has lots of benefits. Pads and more pads! Nappies and wipes. Body wash and toothbrush, etc. Have a look at the comprehensive Hospital Bag Checklist attached to this document for more suggestions.

5. Parental leave:

You can register for paid parental leave via Centrelink. Its also a good idea to check with your workplace and see what you're entitled too there. Dads too!

"Some days will be rough. Before baby comes, make a list of all the people you can call for help. Look around your circle of family and friends... Who do you trust for advice? Who can you let your guard down with and rant or cry incoherently? Who is near enough and has free time to come cuddle the baby if you desperately need a shower or a nap? Who has offered to do a grocery run or make a meal? Write it all down, names, numbers, what they're good at. Then when baby comes... USE THE LIST."

Lisa Williamson

NEWBORN

Labour really isn't the hard part. Going home and getting to know a whole new human being, as well as manage a million feelings that wash over you unexpectedly whilst you discover that you're not the same person you used to be is the hard part. Parenthood is tough. Enchanting.

During the first few weeks and months you have to be gentle with yourself. Gentle, present, loving, forgiving. Embrace the journey, it's likely to be a wild ride that will take you anywhere and everywhere and transform you into a whole new being. You have to talk. Really talk to your partner or anyone who will listen. Accept the process and work through all of those feelings. Tell yourself that you are a warrior, and good enough for all of your blessings. Be genuinely kind and loving to that new person in the mirror. Your thoughts will shape the world.

So what is life about with a newborn?

Within the first few days after your babies birth they will undergo the Newborn Examination. This is a head-to-toe look at bub to check for any health problems. You will also have the choice to have your baby screened for a number of rare disorders. This screening is done via a heel prick test and the blood is sent for testing. Bub will also be offered a hearing test. the NSW statewide infant screening - Hearing program aims to make sure bubs with hearing problems are identified and treated early.

If you birthed at the hospital you should be able to go home anywhere from four to 48hrs after birth, if all is well. Home Maternity Services are a fantastic option to look at utilising once you are back home. Having a local Midwife visit you at home within the first two weeks is a great service and the perfect time to ask any questions you may have about yourself or baby. Each hospital offers this service differently so make sure you ask your midwife or doctor about this service.

Don't forget you made a new human... you need to register them! You will receive a Birth Registration Statement once bub is born and you'll need to fill this in and return it to NSW Births Deaths and Marriages within 60 days.

You will also want to register your baby with medicare. Once they are registered with medicare they will automatically be registered to the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register. You will then receive updates and notices when your child is due for their immunisations if you choose to vaccinate.

To register your child in medicare visit www.mygov.com.au

Feeding! Are you going to breastfeed, bottle feed or both? Again it is really important to remember that this is your choice. There is no right or wrong when it comes to feeding your baby, as long as they are fed and you are supported!

If you have chosen to breastfeed, know that it can take time for both you and bub to learn how it all works! You might want to enlist the help of a lactation consultant. You can find a lactation consultant at your local family health clinic. Your clinic nurses can also help with sleeping and crying problems, Immunisations, Safety, and baby's growth and development.

Bowraville Clinic
0407 906 795

Macksville Clinic
Phone 0407 443 878

Nambucca Clinic
Phone 02 6598 6100

**"Find your people.
Mamas who bring
you up and hold
you."**

Alynda
Hundt

www.mnclhd.health.nsw.gov.au is the website you can go to for more health information in your local area.

Australian Breastfeeding Association 24 hour free helpline.
1800 686 2 686
www.breastfeeding.asn.au

A local Mum has shared this lactation recipe, give it a go!

Lactation Cookies

130g softened butter

50g raw sugar

1 egg

1 tbsp vanilla essence

Add all of the above to a bowl and and mix until well combined. Then add,

100g oats

180g plain flour

5g brewers yeast

1/2 tsp bicarb

1/2 tsp baking powder

pinch of salt

(optional extras at this point would be weat germ, fennel seeds, wattle seeds, cinnamon, nuts, choc chips, dried fruit, etc)

Mix to combine. Place spoonfuls of mixture onto baking paper and cook in 180 degree oven for 10-12min or until golden.

If you have chosen to bottle feed, make sure you have a good collection of bottles, teats and a steriliser ready to go. You will also want to take your chosen formula to the hospital with you. There are many different formulas out there to choose from, including organic, goats milk and soy, so what you decide to go with will be a personal choice. You might even find that you will have to try a couple of different formulas to find one that your baby likes.

Bottle feeding can be just as tricky as breastfeeding to get used too. Its very important to follow the instructions on the formula tin. There are some great tips and advice on the Tommee Tippee website if you would like some more information.

www.tommeetippee.com.au/parent-room/bottle-feeding-hints-and-tips

Feeding your bub is the perfect oppourtunity to stop, cradle them in your arms and stare into their eyes while they feed. It is a beautiful way to bond in those first few months.

Remember that however you have chosen to feed, it is the right choice for you and your baby. As long as you are both happy, healthy and supported, that is all that matters.

"Motherhood evolves one beyond what one ever thought possible. The abundance of unconditional love experienced flows freely from your heart, this spark once lit never fades, this fire burns for eternity. As your womb was their first home, your connection through umbilical cord is too amazing to even comprehend. You're their everything and they become your everything, priorities change, energy shifts. You never knew you could be so tired and keep on going, to still have the time to smile and laugh with joy in the present, for now you live to see their smile and hear their laughter. All you have together is the here and now, coming back into your heart space, the best place to be and real-eyes what life is about, I feel so lucky to be a mum today."

Crystal Rose



Something else you'll be doing a lot of in the newborn stage is nappy changes! It's a good idea to stock up before baby arrives. If you are looking for eco friendly nappies there are lots of different cloth and compostable, disposable options. Some great brands are Eco by Naty (you can order a free trial box from their website www.naty.com), Thankyou, Pea Pods and Luvme.

Coping with sleep deprivation is tough. You might like to try co-sleeping as a strategy to help everyone get a little extra rest. If you do decide to co-sleep, make sure you follow the sleep safe guidelines which you can find on the Red Nose website. www.rednose.org.au.

If bub is having trouble settling and sleeping you can utilise the resources at Tresillian. Tresillian help parents gain confidence in their new roles as mums and dads and teach new parents about routines in breastfeeding, sleep, settling and nutrition. You will need a referral from your GP.

www.tresillian.org.au

Hotline - 1300 272 736

Tresillian 2U - Mid North Coast Mobile Service - (02) 6691 1912

Coffs Harbour office - (02) 6691 1912

Learning to trust your intuition and getting to know your baby so important to gaining peace of mind. It really is incredible how strong our instincts are. If it feels right/wrong it is!

The newborn stage goes incredibly fast, but can feel like it will never end. The advice that all mothers give at this point though is to stop, slow down and cherish every second. Sitting on the couch all day with a cluster feeding newborn can have you feeling as though you're trapped, or wasting time when you should be cleaning or working, but believe this, being with your newborn, nourishing them and tending to their needs, contact napping with them, staring into their eyes, loving them, is exactly where you need to be and exactly what you need to be doing. Sitting on the couch for the majority of the day with a sleeping baby on your chest is EVERYTHING. Do not let the mum guilt, or anyone else, tell you any differently.

What better way to remember the tiny hands, the little nose, the rolls and wrinkles, than a newborn photography session! The sessions with Nambucca Birth Photographer take place either on location or in your own home. visit www.nambuccabirthphotographer.com.au for more information.

To compliment your photo session you could also have your babies hands and feet cast in bronze! Call **Jamie Durbidge from Impressionable Kids Coffs Harbour on 0413 656 728 or visit www.impressionablekids.com.au**

POSTPARTUM

Your body has just performed a miracle! Regardless of the type of birth you had (they are ALL a variation of normal), you grew a little person and created life. You are going to be sore and tired. It's a good idea to stock up on pads prior to birth as post birth bleeding can be quite heavy and last a while. Now is the time to recover and it's the perfect time to rest with your newborn baby who needs to rest too. It can take time to mentally adapt to your body again and the obvious changes it has gone through. Find a new appreciation for yourself and be kind to your body in the process of recovery.

There are many things you can and should consider for your postpartum period. This time is so important for you, your baby and your family.

Immediately after birth you might want to consider skin to skin, delayed cord clamping, who will cut the cord, gender announcement, photography, placenta!

Your placenta is an amazing organ. Your body worked hard to create it and support your baby with it. Did you know that you get to decide what to do with it? So what do you want to do with yours? Throw it away, plant a tree on it, placenta art, or encapsulate it? [Sal from Placenta Life in Coffs Harbour can help you with encapsulation. Call her on 0438 022 311 or visit her website; \[www.placentalife.com.au\]\(http://www.placentalife.com.au\)](#)

If you decided that birth photography wasn't for you, you might like to consider a fresh 48 session. Fresh 48's occur within the first 48hrs of birth and aim to capture all of the 'firsts'. They are real and raw and so sweet. Perfect for reflecting on these new moments, and bringing back all the 'feels' once bub is grown.

If for any reason you were transferred to a hospital that wasn't your preference during labor, you can now ask to be transferred back to the hospital you would like to be at, if that is what you want.

Bonding with your baby is not the same for everyone. Some parents feel instant love but for others this can take longer. You can be happy that you have your bub, but not feel the 'connection' that so many talk about. This is very common and normal. Do not let the guilt of feeling this way overwhelm you. Give yourself space and time to fall in love, it will happen eventually.

"Try to trust yourself and your own intuition, its your body, your baby and your life."

Here are some practical tips for surviving the early weeks:

- Try to rest and sleep when bub does.
- As frustrating as it might be, do as little as possible and leave your housework. Rest and spending time with your baby is more important.
- Share the load with your partner. Get them to bath, change, bottle feed bub, put them down for naps. Not only will sharing the load give you time to rest, but it will help bub get to know and feel comforted by both of you.
- Keep food simple. Some new parents will have already pre-packed the freezer with meals or organised a food delivery roster with friends and family who will cook for them for the first few weeks. Eating fresh meals is so important for your health at this stage.
- Allow your friends and family to help you! Let them (ask them!) to clean the house, do your laundry, duck to the shops, care for bub while you nap, anything that comes to mind that will make life easier for you.
- Get outside as often as you can. Fresh air and sunlight are fantastic antidepressants.

As well as bonding with your baby you may find that your relationship with your partner has changed. Again emotional ups and downs are normal and you will both be tired and even overwhelmed at the whole new parenting thing. Be open about your feelings with each other and as hard as it may be, try to find some couple time regularly after baby is born. Seek support together, you can do this!

Consider writing down your own unique postpartum preferences (it's ok to ask friends and family members to give you space after birth!) and even hire a postpartum doula for added support. See the list of Doulas on page four who all offer postpartum care and see Sarah from Nambucca Birth Photographer who also offers a postpartum package. A great book to read for extra information on this topic is called ***The Fourth Trimester, by Kimberly Ann Johnson.***

Things to consider at this stage would be;

1: Accepting helpers. Let your friends help around the house so you can take a nap or a shower. The more clear you are about your needs, the easier it is for your team to support you!

2: Parental leave. Who's staying home and for how long? When you and/or your partner return to work, is it possible to ease in with a few days a week at the beginning to make the transition a little easier? Remember you can register for parental leave with Centrelink and through your workplace. Dads too.

3: Meals. In addition to stocking up on meals to freeze in advance, ask your mates to set up a meal delivery calendar for you. Prepping or purchasing meals for a postpartum family is a great task for friends and family who want to help. but don't have a lot of time to spare. Try out www.gathermycrew.org.au to get it all set up!

4: Older siblings. Plan some time for you to connect with your older child(ren) for a special cuddle, a book or the familiar bedtime routine.

5: Housekeeping. If your budget allows, it's worth considering hiring someone once a week to help with this. You might also need to accept that for a while your home might not be as clean and organized as it usually is, a price worth paying for a little bit of extra sleep!

6: Sleep plan. Where is baby sleeping? Parents should be on the same page about sleep philosophy. Research co-sleeping safety so you're not making unsafe decisions in the middle of the night!

7: Babywearing. Getting a baby carrier that's comfortable to wear and that you know how to use safely makes parenting so much easier! There's also some great baby wearing fitness classes in the area called Kangatraining! [Visit www.kangatraining.com.au](http://www.kangatraining.com.au) or [find Kangatraining Coffs Coast on Facebook](#) to find a class near you.

8: Community. Connecting with other new parents provides comfort, support and camaraderie. Meet other parents via mothers groups, playgroups, fitness classes, at the park, at the pool, in kmart! One thing to remember is that making friends can be hard! Don't give up, work through the awkward stage and remember that we're all in the same boat at this point. Making new friends when you're a new parent is tough, but totally worth it! Contact Sarah from Nambucca Birth Photographer Doula or Lifetime connect for more information on groups in your local area.

9: Motherhood photo session. Honour this new chapter by documenting all the real, raw, new, precious moments. Contact Sarah at www.nambuccabirthphotographer.com.au for more information on these incredible sessions.

**"You are the rainbow after the storm,
The most gentle and the warm, our eternal love and our light,
The most radiant star shining ever so bright!
You are the morning and brightest star at night.
Sweet little apple of our eye,
You already make mum and dad cry.
We send you wishes and lots and lots of kisses!
We hope and pray every day,
For the day of your arrival.
Because you are our lucky twin who already shows
Strength, Beauty and Survival.
We love you always and forever bubba,
Love mum and dad xoxo."**

DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY

The struggle is real and you are not alone. It's pretty normal to experience some anxiety and 'ups and downs' during pregnancy and within the first couple of years of parenthood. However, some people develop a more pronounced anxiety or depression which affects their daily life and functioning.

Perinatal depression and anxiety (PNDA) affects 1 in 5 new mothers and 1 in 10 new fathers. If you suspect that you or someone close to you is experiencing symptoms, seek help early. The signs and symptoms can vary and may include:

- Panic attacks
- Persistent, generalised worry, often focused on fears for the health or wellbeing of the baby
- The development of obsessive or compulsive behaviours
- Abrupt mood swings
- Feeling constantly sad, low, or crying for no obvious reason
- Being nervous, 'on edge', or panicky

There are treatments, supports and services available to help you through this experience. If symptoms last for more than two weeks or you are in anyway concerned at all, it's time to seek support.

Perinatal Anxiety & Depression Australia

www.panda.org.au

1300 726 306

Gidget House, Coffs Harbour.

www.gidgetfoundation.org.au

1300 851 758

Trudi Hayes from Bloom Wellness and Creation, Perinatal support.

bloomwellnessandcreation.com.au

0473 061 743

Womb Temple, Woolgoolga.

www.wombtempleyoga.com

0413 811 359

"You are the expert when it comes to your babe. Trust your mama instincts."

Jessica Nash

"It is possible to love your child and not love your experience of motherhood. Every minute is precious but it is not realistic to appreciate every second of it. What this means is, lose the guilt. It serves no purpose but to further exhaust you."

Penny Coulter

TODDLERHOOD

Toddlers are incredibly sensitive and resilient at the same time, which can be a good explanation as to why they can fill you up and test your patience all at once! It is so important to remember that big feelings can sometimes translate into big tantrums! Take a deep breath and share your calm, don't add to the chaos. Step away for a moment to compose yourself if need be, but always be there to offer a warm embrace when your toddlers needs it. All that love and those cuddles are still essential to their development.

So, what do you DO with a toddler? Firstly, allow time for boredom as this will spark their imagination and encourage them to play and make new discoveries by themselves. Then you will want to consider playgroups, daycare centres and preschools! Eeeek! Babe is growing up! Some playgroups in the Nambucca Valley are:

Bowraville Community Preschool, Organised by Lifetime Connect.

Preschool: (02) 65647 7657

Lifetime connect: (02) 65648 4471

Tallowood Steiner School, independantly run.

(02) 6564 7224

Valla Community Preschool, organised by Playgroup NSW.

email: vallabeachplaygroup@hotmail.com or find them on Facebook.

Also visit www.playgroupnsw.org.au for more info on other supported playgroups in the Coffs Coast such as Urunga, Bellingen and Mylestom.

Uniting Playgroups, held in Coffs, Toormina, Macksville and Nambucca.

Call Nadine Hill on 0400 411 816

Socialising your child is so good for them, learning communication skills and making lifeling friends will set them up for a fantastic childhood. Hopefully the independance and socialisation you give them at this stage will set them up for an easy transition into school and so on.

To find a Family Day care in your area visit www.familydaycare.com.au.

A list of our local preschools can be found on page 24. Be aware that you may need to enrol your child well in advance to get into your preferred preschool.

Playing with your toddler can be a lot of fun. They really inspire you to see the world with new eyes. Here's a small list of some great activities you can do together:

- Swimming lessons! both Macksville and Nambucca aquatic centres offer Mums and Bubs swim classes from six months of age.
- Draw with chalk on the footpath (love chalk! comes off anything easily!)
- Collect rocks. Join NSW Rocks on Facebook for inspiration!
- Story time at your local library.
- Have a pots and pans symphony.
- Visit a pet shop.
- Play balloon catch.
- Visit the Butterfly House in Bonville.
- Find all the fairy doors hidden around the Bellingen township by Smallhavens ([find Smallhavens on Facebook](#))!
- Visit Playhouse in Coffs Harbour or LaLa Land in Moonee Beach.
- Visit the Big Banana and Reptile world.
- Make a macaroni necklace.
- Trace with flour.
- Play with flashlights.
- Make bread rolls.
- Check out the Coffs For Kids website for more things to do, plus an array of other fantastic service providers in our local area.

www.coffsforkids.com.au

Here's a quick, simple, delicious bread recipe to test out your toddlers bread making abilities!

EASY BREAD RECIPE

Combine the following ingredients into a large bowl;

**2 tbsp yeast
1 & 1/2 tbsp sugar
1 tbsp salt
1 tbsp oil (your choice of oil)
500ml tepid water**

At this point you can also add any extras, for example; 1 tsp cinnamon, 1 tsp caraway seeds, 1/2 cup cheese, 1 tsp wattle seeds... etc. Mix to combine all ingredients.

Next add 4 cups of flour (any flour of your choice) and mix to combine, either by hand or in the mixer. keep adding flour if necessary until mixture does not stick to your finger.

Beat and knead until your arms are sore or 5 to 10 minutes has passed. Cover the bowl and dough and let rise. It should double in size and you will know it's ready when you poke it and it doesn't rise back up.

Beat the mixture back down (SO much fun for the kids) using a sprinkle of flour to stop it sticking to you. Once you have beaten the air out of it, separate into 8 or 12 rolls then let the kids make their own shapes! Just flour the kitchen table and they're good to go.

Pre heat oven to 220. Place rolls on a greased tray and let rise slightly.

Spray with water to get a golden finish and top with a sprinkle of sesame seeds, poppy seeds or any topping you would like. Cook in oven for 10 to 20 minutes or until golden. Remove from oven and spray with cooking oil for a glossy finish. EAT WARM WITH BUTTER! YUUUUUM!

Once your child hits toddlerhood, you will probably start to find more time for yourself! If you haven't already you might like to go back to work, find a hobby or just take some frequent 'Me' time. It's a strange transition from having a baby who is totally co-dependant to having a toddler who demands to be independant as often as possible. It's also a great feeling, to get back into doing the things you used to do before bub, and finding that you are in fact, just one person again!

You have inherently changed. At the core you are still you, but perhaps now you are more inclined to speak up and speak your truth, to stand up for what you believe in for your children. Maybe you are still coming to terms with a traumatic birth or are still finding the changes to your body hard to wrap your head around.

Perhaps you are still trying to find the new definition of you. Take your time, there is no rush, but be sure to honour and celebrate yourself as part of that journey.

Nambucca Birth Photographer also offers body positive workshops and Goddess photo sessions which explore and capture the new you on a journey through nature and self. Visit www.nambuccabirthphotographer.com.au for more information.

Whatever path having a child has taken you on, and wherever you are in that journey as you read this, know that everyone listed here, is here to support you. We are your villiage, lean on us, we've got you.



GROWING GREAT COMMUNITIES

Start Strong Project

The normal, everyday moments and the lessons you share with your children will help them grow into beautiful, well adjusted adults. It's so simple to help your child learn about the world around them, don't over think it!

Talk to your babe, ask them how their day was, ask them what they can see while you're on a walk, ask them about their favorite animals, just talk. The more words your child hears the better they will understand the world around them and develop their own language skills.

Praise your babies! Tell them how clever they are and how proud you are of all of their achievements, no matter how small. This will boost their confidence and ensure they grow up with good self worth.

Play, play, play and play some more. Play can feel so silly at times, especially when you're busy or you're over pretending that you're a kangaroo for the fifteenth time that day, however it is so important for our childrens social, physical, emotional, communication and thinking skills.

Read books with your kids, share all kinds of stories with them. Not only will you get to snuggle up together in bed or on the couch, but you'll be strengthening your bond and developing language, communication, reading and writing skills as well.

Even if you're tone deaf, let loose and sing with your babe! They adore your voice, it's home for them. It's not so much the sound of your voice that is important with singing, it's the rhythm and rhymes which will help them grasp language concepts. Singing songs also helps to improve your memory and your listening skills. Plus when you're breaking out "Incy Wincy Spider" over the microphone (hairbrush) on the stage (couch) you're guaranteed to created some magical laughter which is always music to the ears.

Count with your kids. Count everything. Teddy bears, the dishes, the clothes as you hang them on the line, fingers and toes, birds that fly past. Hunt for numbers around your house! It's fun and creates sound knowledge and a foundation for mathematics and other life skills.

It takes a community to raise a child, but as a parent, your are your babies first teacher. To find out more contact **Lifetime Connect on 0447 895 844**



"Start Strong is a Lifetime Connect project raising awareness of how important playing, telling stories, and counting with young children is for success in life.."

DIRECTORY

PERINATAL SUPPORT

Trudi Hayes, Bloom Wellness and Creation: 0473 061 743

Gidget House: 1300 851 758

Aboriginal Maternal Infant Health Services (AMIHS), Macksville: 0439 882 036

Australian Breastfeeding Association Helpline: 1800 68 6268

Australian Multiple Birth Association: 1300 85 3437

Miracle Babies National Support Line (24hr): 1300 62 2243

Mothersafe (Medications during pregnancy and lactation advice): 1800 64 7848

Pregnancy, birth and Baby Helpline: 1800 88 2436

Pregnancy Care Coffs Harbour: 1300 79 2798

Pregnancy Councilling Australia (24hr): 1300 73 7732

DOULAS

Sarah Miles, Doula:

www.nambuccabirthphotographer.com.au

0431 619 361

Jessica Nash, Doula: 0404 856 297

Linda Masaoka, Doula: www.linmasaoka.wixsite.com

Love & Light Doula, Moonee Beach: 0405 736 948

Sammy Cambray, Bellingen: 0418 950 793

Carla Muhling: 0423 106 654

Freya Knight: 0432 111 852

Emma Delaney: 0466 346 820

PUBLIC HOSPITALS

Macksville: (02) 6568 0656 or (02) 6568 6031

Coffs Harbour: (02) 6656 7214

Kempsey: (02) 6562 6155 or (02) 6562 0300

CHILD AND FAMILY HEALTH CLINICS

Bowraville: 0407 906 795

Macksville: 0407 443 878

Nambucca: (02) 6598 6100

Coffs Harbour: (02) 6652 3503

Bellingen: 0428 101 663

Dorrigo: 0428 101 659

Urunga: 0428 101 663

Visit www.mnclhd.health.nsw.gov.au for more information.

Just type "family health clinic in the search bar on the home page

Nambucca Health One: (02) 6598 6100

Tresillian: 1300 272 736

PLACENTA SERVICES

Placenta Life, Coffs Harbour: 0438 022 311

The Oxytocin Collective, Port Macquarie: 0407 713 272

PAEDIATRICIANS

Dr L E Budd: (02) 6652 4499
Dr Anand Naidoo: (02) 6652 7244
Dr Ketan Dhabuwala: (02) 6652 7244
Dr Stephanie White: (02) 6652 7244
Dr Kerr, Port Macquarie: (02) 6581 5300
Dr Mark Johnson, Port Macquarie: (02) 6584 9466

SUPPORT SERVICES

Lifetime Connect

23 Wallace St, Macksville, NSW, 2447
(02) 6568 1474
www.lifetimeconnect.org.au

Wesely Mission - Parents Next: 1300911486
Mimmi Aboriginal Corporation: (02) 6564 8855
Ngambaga Bindarry Girrwa Community Services: (02) 6564 7559
Aboriginal Maternal Infant Health Services (AMIHS): 0439 882 036

HYPNOBIRTHING PRACTITIONERS

Cindy, Heart Matters: 0417 892 011
Vicki Fraser, Calm Birth: 0436 200 162
Karen Moseley, Sapphire Waves Hypnobirthing: 0438 406 371

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Ishara Healing Centre: 0408 030 164
Zen Health and Beauty: (02) 6515 6889
Solitude Health, Macksville: (02) 6568 2185
Macksville Aquatic Centre: (02) 6568 1445
Alchemy in Bellingen: (02) 6655 0429
Crystal Rose Yoga: 0481 268 453
Nambucca Heads Occupational Therapy: (02) 6568 8257
Kangatraining: 0407 417 497
Life Chiropractic and Wellness, Coffs Harbour: (02) 6652 7207
Womb Temple, Woolgoolga: 0413 811 359

"Sarah from Nambucca Birth Photographer was awesome. She took the best pictures in the world! And she went way beyond what I expected of her. She stayed for the entire birth for 12+ hours. She helped my partner get dressed after birth when all the midwives were busy and she was an extra voice of support and comfort. I only realised she was there when I wanted to talk to someone. Super professional and kept my partners dignity at all times! A beautiful soul in the room!"

BIRTH AND MOTHERHOOD PHOTOGRAPHER

Nambucca Birth Photographer, Port Macquarie to Coffs Harbour.

www.nambuccabirthphotographer.com.au

0431 619 361



KEEPSAKES

Impressionable Kids: 0413 656 728

Julie Clyde Creative: www.julieclyde.com

ACTIVITIES

Macksville Library: (02) 65681422

Nambucca Library: (02) 65686906

Coffs Harbour Library: (02) 6648 4900

Bellingen Library: (02) 6655 1744

Macksville Aquatic Centre: (02) 6568 1445

Nambucca Aquatic Centre: (02) 6568 7596

Pets & Critters Petting Zoo: 0497 261 410

Coffs Harbour Butterfly House: (02) 6653 4766

Playhouse: (02) 5616 0060

LalaLand Moonee Beach: (02) 6653 6511

Reptile World: 0411 648 562

Big Banana: (02) 6652 4355

Billabong Zoo: (02) 6585 1060

Solitary Island Aquarium: (02) 6659 8131

Coffs For Kids: www.coffsforkids.com

PLAYGROUPS

Ready Set Go playgroups: (02) 65684471

Family Services Playgroups: (02) 65684471

Tallowood Steiner School: (02) 6564 7224

Uniting Playgroups: 0400 411 816

Playgroup NSW: 1800 171 882

Bishop DrUITT Collage, Coffs Harbour: (02) 6651 5644

DAYCARE

Mid Coast Family Day Care: 0429 825 851

Nambucca Valley Family Day Care: (02) 6569 4222

Macksville Preschool and Long Daycare: (02) 6568 1548

Alfabet Long Daycare: (02) 6568 3742

Bellingen Burrow Long Day Care: (02) 6655 9040

Open Arms Care Inc. Family Day Care: (02) 6655 2650

Stepping Stones Preschool and Childcare: (02) 6655 6955

Mid North Coast Babysitting Service: 0417 406 822

"Toddler Hack! When your babe runs riot with the permanent marker, spray it with personal insect repellent then wipe clean!"

Sarah Jae Milles

PRESCHOOLS

- Bowraville Preschool:** (02) 6564 7657
Eungai Preschool: (02) 6569 9347
Giiguy Gamambi Preschool: (02) 6569 4077
Nambucca Preschool: (02) 6568 6845
Valla Preschool: (02) 6569 5274
Teddy Bears Kindy, Nambucca Heads: (02) 6568 7511
Nambucca Heads Preschool: (02) 6568 6845
Urunga Preschool: (02) 6655 6752
Kalang Preschool: (02) 6655 0386
Bellingen Preschool: (02) 6655 1804
Treehouse Early Years Learning Centre, Boambee: (02) 6653 3261
Brayside Community Preschool: (02) 6652 8846
Footprints Early Learning Centre, Boambee: (02) 6658 3966
Stuarts Point Preschool: (02) 6569 0844

RETAILERS

- Baby Bella, Coffs Harbour:** www.babybella.com.au
The Kids Shop, Macksville: (02) 6568 1231
Weave Bellingen: www.weavebellingen.com.au
Elves in the Wardrobe, Bellingen: www.elves-in-the-wardrobe.com.au
The Creative Toy Shop: 0423 388 978
Marching Ants - Handmade: www.marchingants.com.au
Sew Contented Handmade: www.sewcontented.com
CharliMooz: www.charlimooz.com

ARTISTS

Emma Edwards: emmaedwards50@hotmail.com

Hey! I am Emma Edwards, a proud Traditional Owner of this land through my Gumbaynggirr descendants. I am also Dunghutti, Bundjalung and Yui. My art inspiration comes from anything I love, my Partner, my baby, my friends, my family, our beautiful land, everything living and especially the Ocean. I am a small local business, providing face painting, workshops and many other arts and craft activities.

Tamikar Buchanan: tamikar.b1611@gmail.com

My name is Tamikar Buchanan. I am 32 years old. I have 2 son's ,my gifts in life. I am a Gumbaynggirr woman from Nambucca Heads. I first found my passion for painting when I was 15 years old. My family come from the first custodians of the land & hold the traditional stories passed down by our ancestors. Painting is a way to pass down our traditional customs & beliefs.My business name is Dreaming Art & Designs which I officially started in 2016.

**The artwork on pages 21 to 23 were contributed by Tamikar.
The artwork on page 24 was contributed by Emma.**

BIRTH PREFERENCES

The most important thing to remember about a birth plan is that births do not always go to plan! Unexpected complications may arise or you might change your mind once you are in the delivery room. Some women are adamant about refusing all labour pain-relieving drugs but change their mind once they experience the pain. It is okay to change your mind.

You might have your heart set on a home birth but your medical history might mean it is simply too dangerous. Medical issues that arise during your labour might mean you need to have a caesarean section or that your vaginal birth needs some assistance. Be open to last-minute changes. Your health and the health of your baby are the most important things.

Use this easy fill-in-the-blank birth plan (circle all that apply) to prepare yourself for delivery and communicate your wants and needs to your medical team. Remember its your birth, add anything else you desire to this list.

Full name:

Partner's name:

Today's date:

Due date/Induction date:

Doctor's name:

Birth location:

Please note that I:

Have group B strep

Am Rh incompatibility with baby

Have gestational diabetes

My delivery is planned as:

Vaginal

C-section

Water birth

VBAC

I'd like the following people present.

Partner:

Parents:

Other children:

Doula:

Photographer:

Other:



BIRTH PREFERENCES

During labor I'd like:

Music played (I will provide)

The lights dimmed

The room as quiet as possible

As few interruptions as possible

As few vaginal exams as possible

Hospital staff limited to my own doctor and nurses (no students, residents or interns present)

To wear my own clothes

To wear my contact lens the entire time

My photographer present at all stages

My partner to be present the entire time

To stay hydrated with clear liquids & ice chips

To eat and drink when needed

I'd like to spend the first stage of labor:

Standing up

Lying down

Walking around

In the shower

In the bathtub

For pain relief I'd like to use:

Water

Active birth positioning

Acupressure

Aromatherapy

Breathing techniques

Cold and heat

Hypnosis

birth ball or peanut bal

Massage

Meditation

Reflexology

Saline injections

Epidural

Gas

Opiates

NOTES



BIRTH PREFERENCES

I'd like fetal monitoring to be:

- Continuous
- Intermittent
- Not performed at all while low risk
- Performed only by Doppler
- Performed only if the baby is in distress

I'd like labor augmentation:

- Performed only if baby is in distress
- First attempted by natural methods such as nipple stimulation
- Performed by membrane stripping
- Performed with gel
- Performed with Pitocin
- Performed by rupture of the membrane
- Performed by stripping of the membrane

During delivery I would like to:

- Squat
- Semi-recline
- Lie on my side
- Be on my hands and knees
- Stand
- Lean on my partner
- Use people for leg support
- Use foot pedals for support
- Use birth bar for support
- Use a birthing stool
- Be in a birthing tub
- Be in the shower

"Birth trauma is real and rampant. Education and ensuring you have support in advocacy is key to ensuring you have an intervention free, peaceful and joyous birth experience."

Sarah Miles

NOTES

BIRTH PREFERENCES

I will bring a:

Birthing stool
Birthing chair
Birthing ball
Peanut ball

As the baby is delivered, I would like to:

Push spontaneously
Push as directed
Push without time limits, as long as the baby and I are not at risk
Use a mirror to see the baby crown
Touch the head as it crowns
Let the epidural wear off while pushing
Have a full dose of epidural
Help catch the baby
Let my partner catch the baby

I would like an episiotomy:

Used only after perineal massage, warm compresses and positioning rather than risk a tear
Not performed, even if it means risking a tear
Performed only as a last resort
Avoid forceps usage
Avoid vacuum extraction
Use whatever methods my doctor deems necessary

Immediately after delivery, I would like:

My partner to cut the umbilical cord
The umbilical cord to be cut only after it stops pulsating
To bank the cord blood
To donate the cord blood
To deliver the placenta spontaneously and without assistance
To deliver the placenta with syntocinon injection
To have a lotus birth (Non-severence of cord)
To see the placenta
To keep the placenta for encapsulation
To keep the placenta for placenta art
To discard the placenta
Not to be given Pitocin/Syntocinon

"soak up all those beautiful heart warming moments in between the craziness that parenthood brings. Stop, breathe and be present in the moment."

Antje Firla



BIRTH PREFERENCES

If a C-section is necessary, I would like:

- A second opinion
- To make sure all other options have been exhausted
- To stay conscious
- My partner to remain with me the entire time
- My photographer be allowed in theatre
- The screen lowered so I can watch baby come out
- My hands left free so I can touch the baby
- The surgery explained as it happens
- An epidural for anesthesia
- My partner to hold the baby as soon as possible
- To breastfeed in the recovery room

For Golden Hour (first hour after birth I would like:

- Immediate uninterrupted skin-to-skin for a minimum of one hour
- Baby's head left "un-hatted"
- Skin-to-skin with other family member while showering
- vernix left on baby, no excessive wipe down.

I would like baby's medical exam & procedures:

- Given in my presence
- Given only after the first hour minimum
- Given in my partner's presence
- Given while baby is skin-to-skin
- I would like Hepatitis B
- I would like Vitamin K
- I decline Hepatitis B
- I decline Vitamin K

I would like my family members: (names:)

- To join me and baby immediately after delivery
- To join me and baby in the room later



"Breathing and water. Best pain relief. Hot and cold water. Doing some kind of rhythmic, meditative breath work that you can easily remember when you need it most. You are an almighty powerful goddess and you have created life! Such a magical miracle. Have a plan, be ready to make new plans as you go..."

Crystal Rose

"Inhale light and love. Exhale shadows and negativity."

BIRTH PREFERENCES

I would like to breastfeed:

As soon as possible after delivery
Only parents to handle baby
Baby to self-attach
I choose not to breastfeed

I'd like baby's first bath given:

In my presence
In my partner's presence
By me
By my partner

I'd like to feed baby:

Only with breastmilk
Only with formula
On demand
On schedule

If baby is not well, I'd like:

My partner and I to accompany it to the NICU or another facility
To breastfeed or provide pumped breastmilk
To hold him or her whenever possible

NOTES



"Definitely trust yourself, but still feel ok about relying on your team. It's ok to not be ok! Speak up for what you need. I had 2 births I was absolutely fine, just followed my intuition, moved as I felt led, and *pop*... healthy baby. One where we were really bloody lucky that I said 'This isn't working' and the midwife believed me and acted immediately. Trusting yourself also means trusting a feeling that something isn't right."

HOSPITAL LIST

Labour Bag

For Mum.

- Big loose t-shirt, or sarong
- Thongs or slip on shoes that can get wet
- Hair tie, bobby pins
- Lip balm
- Sports drink and/or high energy snacks
- Music and music player
- Phones & chargers
- Birth Plan - several copies plus any other documentation you have been asked to bring.
- Maternity pads, socks,
- Shoes and comfy outfit to wear afterwards.
- Laundry bag to take soiled clothes home in.
- Paperwork required by hospital (check with your hospital)- medicare card, health care card, maternal health records, pre-admissions forms



For the Support Team.

- Board shorts or swimmers to help in the shower or bath.
- Change of clothes for afterwards
- Snacks and drinks.
- Pain killers in case of headache.

Optional Extras.

- Positive birthing affirmations printed out that you can read if you want inspiration.
- Hair brush
- Aromatherapy oils or room spray
- A breastfeeding friendly wrap or jumper to wear afterwards
- Non-fragranced body wash for afterwards
- Something sweet to give to the midwives who supported you (e.g. box of chocolates) a thank you card (or a couple) to fill in before you leave the hospital

HOSPITAL LIST

Hospital Stay Bag

For Mum.

- Comfortable, dark coloured undies or soft cotton boxers.
- Lots of maternity pads (at least 2 packets - these are larger than regular pads. You may continue bleeding for up to 6 weeks after giving birth, however the bleeding should subside after the first few days)
- Nipple cream to help heal your nipples while breastfeeding.
- Breast pads / nursing pads.
- Your chosen formula and bottles (the hospital does have bottles you can use) if you want to formula feed.
- Scent free toiletries. It is best to avoid fragrances in the early days so that your baby can just smell you and be comforted.
- Relaxed fit breastfeeding singlets/tops and sleepwear with easy nursing access to get you through at least a 4 day stay, plus nursing bras.
- Warm socks and robes (hospitals are cold!)
- Phone charger
- Change for vending machine (just in case!)

Optional Extras.

- A good book to read.
- Eye pillow if you're sensitive to light.
- A list of potential baby names and a new baby book to start filling in.

"If 'Plan A' didn't work the alphabet has 25 more letters. Stay cool."

Tracey Gosney


Nambucca Birth Doula
PHOTOGRAPHER
DOULA

HOSPITAL LIST

Hospital Stay Bag

For Baby.

Many hospitals include nappies, onesies, and blankets so check with your hospital before packing your bag.

- Newborn Nappies, wipes.
- Blankets (if not supplied by the hospital)
- 4 x warm onesies. With clothing ensure you take a variety of sizes from 5 zero to 3 zero.
- Singlets,
- Socks (if not supplied by the hospital)
- Baby hats and mittens, although it is recommend to only use the hat/beanie while your bub is sleeping, and not when bub is attached to you or partner, especially straight after birth. Your body temperature will keep your baby warm, and smelling your baby's head is important for bonding. It can stimulate the flow of oxytocins which is also good for breastfeeding.
- Baby Moisturiser. Other baby toiletries are not usually necessary – just water is enough in the early days, and is better for sensitive skin.
- Going home outfit.
- REMEMBER to have your approved car seat fitted well before your due date!



*This resource was created for you by Sarah Jae Miles
from Nambucca Birth Photographer Doula.*