

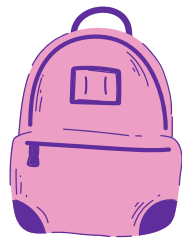


FAMILY NEWSLETTER

Pregnancy & Parenting

Packing your hospital bag

Your baby may arrive earlier than expected, so it's nice to think about what to pack in your hospital bag as you enter your third trimester.



Consider packing:

- Chapstick
- Glasses, contacts, contact solution (if you wear them)
- Phone charger (with long cord)
- Slippers or sandals
- Hairbrush, clips, ponytail holder & other bathroom toiletries
- Comfortable clothes (that fit during pregnancy)
- Nursing bra and pads (if planning to breastfeed)
- Robe
- Car seat
- Any special clothing or blankets for baby's first photos & going home
- Any special comforts from home (your own pillow or blanket)
- Snacks
- Sound machine

Sibling relationships

Navigating sibling relationships can be tricky. Big Life Journal shared these 6 phrases to help you help your children approach their relationships with one another:

- "You don't have to agree, but you do have to respect each other."
- "Sometimes you need a break from each other, and that's okay."
- "Friends will come and go, but siblings are for life."
- "Fair doesn't mean equal. Everyone gets what they need."
- "Be the sibling you'd want to have."
- "Family is your safe place-- make it feel that way."



Child Growth & Development

Newborn cares

The following are some newborn cares that will be offered in the hospital and talked about as you discharge home with your baby:

- **Vitamin K Shot:** Vitamin K helps blood to clot. Babies are born with very little of it in their bodies, which could lead to dangerous bleeding. Newborns are given this shot shortly after birth.
- **Eye Ointment:** Newborns are given this to protect their eyes from bacterial eye infections they could catch during childbirth.
- **Umbilical Cord Care:** After your baby's cord is clamped and cut, a small piece remains. This usually dries and falls off within the first 2 weeks. Until then, keep this area dry and fold diapers below it. A few drops of blood can be normal after the cord drops off. This is not painful to your baby.

Vroom's 5 Brain Building Basics

Your child's brain develops most rapidly in the first five years of life. The interactions you share with your child during this time can help build their brain. Vroom encourages these simple steps to include in your day to day interactions:

1. **Look:** use eye contact and notice what catches your child's eyes
2. **Follow:** let your child lead the way and respond to their words, actions, and ideas
3. **Chat:** your child communicates by sounds and gestures. Talk out loud together, even before they can talk, to help engage in the world around them.
4. **Take turns:** when talking, playing, and exploring to help their brain develop.
5. **Stretch:** build upon what your child says or ask follow up questions to stretch the conversation

Learn more at: <https://www.vroom.org/science>





Activities of the Month

Fine Motor Skill Development



Pom Pom Whisk Activity

<https://myboredtoddler.com/>

[pom-pom-whisk-activity-for-toddlers/](https://myboredtoddler.com/pom-pom-whisk-activity-for-toddlers/)

- talk about colors, textures, sizes, taking turns

Gross Motor Skill Development



Stick Ladder Outdoor Activity

<https://happytoddlerplaytime.com/stick-ladder-outdoor-gross-motor-activity/>

- also try using stuffed animals, towels, or pool noodles instead of sticks
- invite them to walk, run, or crawl over the items

Safety & Resources

Water & Beach Safety

August weather calls for beach days. Here are some tips to keep you and your family safe at the beach!

- Avoid blue-colored swimsuits as this color decreases visibility under water. Neon yellow, orange, and green swimsuits are detectable under 18 inches of open water.
- Pack lots of water! Fruits high in water content such as watermelon and strawberries are also good to bring. A water break should be taken every 20 minutes.
- Life jackets are important! For children under 5, a lifejacket that has a strap in between the legs and has head support should be utilized. These life jackets are labeled as "Type II life jackets."
- Have beach shoes. Sand can heat up to 120 degrees F when outdoor temperatures are in the 90s.
- Avoid wet sand as this can be a breeding ground for parasites and pinworms.
- Wear sunscreen as the sun reflects off sand and water, making a person more likely to burn. Remember to reapply.

Mindfulness Moment

Mindful breathing is a key element of mindfulness that focuses on reducing stress, increasing focus, and promoting a sense of well-being. It can be added to your daily routine.

- Begin by finding a comfortable position
- Sit with a relaxed yet straight posture, and allowing your shoulders to drop
- Focus on the natural flow of your breath at the nostrils, chest, or abdomen.
- You can count breaths to maintain focus.
- Redirect your attention gently when the mind wanders



World Breastfeeding Week

August 1-7



Breastfeeding for a Healthier, More Sustainable Future

Each year in August, we celebrate World Breastfeeding Week. This year's theme is "Breastfeeding: The Foundation of a Sustainable Future." We're thinking about how breastfeeding helps not just babies and families, but also our communities and the planet.

What Makes Breastfeeding Sustainable?

Breastfeeding doesn't require packaging, shipping, or waste. It's ready whenever your baby needs it, and it comes at no extra cost. But even more important, **breastmilk gives babies all the nutrients they need in the early months of life.** It helps protect them from illness, and it supports brain and body development.

Families who breastfeed often find that it strengthens the bond between parent and baby.

And it's not just good for babies—breastfeeding can also benefit the person doing the feeding. It can lower the risk of certain cancers and health conditions, and it helps the body recover after childbirth.

Real Stories, Real Strength

Breastfeeding isn't always easy. It takes time, support, and patience. Every parent's journey is different—and every baby is different, too. Here's a story from one longtime WIC parent that shows the powerful impact breastfeeding can have:

You're
Not
Alone

No matter where you are in your journey, know that you're not alone. Breastfeeding is a skill that grows with time. Whether you breastfeed for a few days, a few months, or a few years, every drop makes a difference.

Let's celebrate the strength and care behind every feeding. This World Breastfeeding Week, we honor parents, babies, and the bodies that nurture them—and the deep connection that helps build a healthier, more sustainable future for all.

Drop-In Feeding Support

Mondays

- 10a-12p, Monticello Community Center

Tuesdays

- 9:30a-11:30a, St. Cloud YMCA 

Wednesdays

- 9:30a-11:30a, Wright County Historical Society, Buffalo 
- 1:30p-3p, Maple Grove Hospital

Thursdays

- 10a-12p, Mainstreet Family Resource Center, Elk River 
- 11a-12:30p, Cambridge-Isanti Adult Enrichment Center

Fridays

- 10a-12p, Options for Women -Cornerstone, St. Michael



=First Steps staff present

"When I became a mom, I fell in love with my body and for what it could do, not just in creating life, but in sustaining it. My first baby refused solids for much of his early life. He nursed for 27 months. Some days, breastmilk was all he would accept. Despite this, he grew and thrived. It was a reminder to me that my body was powerful and capable. It wasn't always easy for us during our breastfeeding journey, but it was worth it."

Article submitted by Sherburne County Peer Breastfeeding Counselor, Faydra

Summertime Activities

Recommendations from local kids ages 2-6 years old

Play at the park

Blow bubbles

Go fishing

Go to the zoo

Ride a bike

Go swimming

Play baseball

Play soccer

Go on an adventures in the woods

Go camping

Play with my friends outside

Play in the dirt

Picnic meal

Go to the playground

Look for unicorns

Go to the beach

Smell flowers

Read books

Cook or bake together

Run through the sprinkler

Go on a hike

Go to a local splash pad

Play with chalk