



# FAMILY NEWSLETTER

## Pregnancy Edition

Whether your pregnancy was planned or unexpected, our team is here for you every step of the way. Our support can help set the stage for healthier moms, babies, and families—it's about building resilience and support for your entire parenting journey. Thank you for allowing us to join your journey!

### Blood Sugar

Maintaining your blood sugar by following a balanced diet and participating in moderate exercises is important. Insulin is a hormone the body makes that keeps your blood glucose level within normal range. Insulin helps move glucose from your blood into the body's cells to make energy.

During the first trimester of pregnancy, your body requires a normal level of insulin. After the 12th week of pregnancy, your body's demand for insulin starts to increase and peaks at 36 weeks. After delivery, the insulin requirement starts to fall.

You'll receive a one-hour Glucose Tolerance Screen from your provider between 26-28 weeks to check for Gestational Diabetes.



Regular prenatal care help identify and manage conditions that impact the health of mom and baby.



## Every Parent Deserves Support Along Their Journey



**Nausea & vomiting** often occurs in the early months of pregnancy because of hormonal changes, emotional upset, slowed digestive system, and decreased blood sugar. It often improves as you enter into your second trimester, but some women experience it throughout their entire pregnancy.

### Helpful tips

- Eat small, more frequent meals throughout the day.
- Stay hydrated between meals.
- Avoid spicy, greasy, or fried foods.
- Avoid caffeine.
- Try eating crackers before getting out of bed in the morning.
- Sucking on ginger or peppermint flavored items can help.
- Avoid strong smells
- Avoid sudden movements

Call your healthcare provider if you are unable to keep down liquids and foods all day or are vomiting more than 2-3 times most days.

There are over-the-counter and/or prescription medications that can be safely taken during pregnancy.



### Finding a Child Care Provider

If you anticipate needing child care, families are encouraged to begin their search early. Spots can be very limited, especially for infant care. Child care options may include: licensed-in home provider, licensed care center, or trusted family, friend, or neighbor who can care for your child. You'll want to consider the best fit based on the hours you need care, cost, location, policies, interview/tour, and more.

To find free tools and resources for families and child care programs, visit:  
<https://www.parentaware.org/>



To search for information about in-home licensed providers by city, county, license number, name, program type, or zip code:  
<https://licensing.lookup.dhs.state.mn.us/>



### Maternal Mental Health

Pregnancy is a big change for your body and your mind. Many people focus on physical health, but mental health is just as important. Some parents feel sad, worried, or stressed during pregnancy or after the baby is born. This is common—about 1 in 5 parents have these feelings. Getting help early can make a big difference. Good mental health care helps parents feel better and helps babies grow strong and healthy. When parents take care of their mental health, the whole family benefits. Remember: asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

Pregnancy and Parenting Support International-MN chapter: <https://psichapters.com/mn/>



Learn about additional resources for Perinatal Mental Health at:  
<https://firststepscentralmn.org/resources>

*"10 in 2" A total of ten or more distinct movements in two hours suggest that your baby is doing well.*



### Monitoring Baby's Movement

During your third trimester, your provider will ask you to count baby's movements every day. This is done to check on baby's wellbeing and gives you special time each day to spend with your baby.

Try to count your baby's activity at the same time each day, this will show your baby's activity patterns.

If you haven't felt the ten movements in two hours, eat some food, drink some water, then lie down. If you continue to not feel the ten or more movements during that next hour, call your healthcare provider.

Also, call your healthcare provider if you notice a major change in your baby's activity level. If you smoke cigarettes, this can decrease the amount of oxygen your baby gets and can make baby less active. Avoid smoking at least one hour before you start counting.

*All parents have stress. Talk to your home visiting nurse about incorporating tools about stress reduction and mindfulness into your regular home visits.*



## What is Follow Along Program?



Follow Along Program (FAP) is a free service that supports families with babies and young children as they grow and learn.

### How it works

Families receive a questionnaire 2-3 times a year that asks various questions about their child's growth and development.

Once completed and returned, families receive fun activities to do with their child to help them explore and learn through play. Staff are also available to answer questions and connect families with resources and services, if needed.

### What happens if I have concerns?

If you have concerns about how your child is learning and growing, Help Me Grow is a great resource--you can either self-refer from their website, or staff or your child's healthcare provider can help you make a referral.

### How do I sign up for FAP?



Enroll for free online at <https://followalong.program.web.health.state.mn.us/>

## Activity of the Month



**Easy Paper Plate Snail Craft Painted with Cotton Balls**  
<https://tinyurl.com/msvw48xs>

## First Steps Fun Facts



### Getting the word out about our programming

We are so grateful for enrolled families sharing with others their positive experiences working with a First Steps nurse. Thank you for referring your friends and family to us!

Feel free to share our new promo video now on our website <https://firststeps.centralmn.org/fhv-materials>



A special thank you to the two featured First Steps families who were willing to be a part of the video!

You'll also spot three of our home visitors in the video:

- Kieran & Mallory M (from the Sherburne team)
- Mallory V (from the Benton team)

Thank you home visitors!



## Drop-In Feeding Support

### Tuesdays

- 10a-12p, Monticello Community Center
- 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

## Mindfulness Moment

### Mindful Spring Journaling

After a walk, write down:

- 3 things you saw
- 2 things you heard
- 1 thing you felt

Encourage kids to draw their favorite spring moment.



### Spring Breathing with Nature



Sit outside and take slow breaths. Imagine inhaling the freshness of spring and exhaling any stress. Add visualization: "Picture yourself growing like a flower with each breath."



# Fun with First Steps SPRING FLING

**THURSDAY, MARCH 5TH**  
**10:00AM-1:00PM**

Celebrate spring with Fun with First Steps! Families are invited to join us for a Spring Fling filled with storytime, hands-on crafts, and tasty snacks. Come connect, play, and enjoy a relaxed morning together. Drop-ins are always welcome!

**CRAFTS • STORYTIME • SNACKS**

Elk River Library  
13020 Orono Parkway Elk River,  
MN 55330



## CRAFTS | ACTIVITIES | CONNECTIONS

Caregivers and little ones are invited to join First Steps for a fun morning of crafts designed to build connection, creativity, and community!

**March Theme: St. Patrick's Day**

**THESE EVENTS ARE FREE  
AND OPEN TO ALL!**



**FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 2026**  
10:00AM-12:00PM  
**1010 COMMUNITY OUTPOST**  
1114 - 9<sup>TH</sup> AVE SE  
ST. CLOUD, MN 56304



# Diaper Club

Join us once a month at the Family Resource Center for our **Diaper Club** — a supportive event where you can pick up **FREE** diapers for your family!

400 Jackson Ave NW  
Elk River, MN 55330



February 4, 2026 @ 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Join us once a month at the Family Resource Center for our Diaper Club — A supportive resource for families!

Location: Elk River Family Resource Center 400 Jackson Ave NW  
Elk River, MN 55330

\*Note: Big Lake families can also request pick up from Liberty Elementary by sending a request in advance. Please email [shari.ley@mainstreetfamilyservices.org](mailto:shari.ley@mainstreetfamilyservices.org) for more information.

**Foley** community connect **EXPO**

This event is sponsored by businesses invested in Foley

**Sat. March 14, 2026**

Foley High School gymnasium **9-12PM**

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**This is a FREE event to connect our community members with the resources our local businesses have to offer.**

FREE breakfast to anyone who attends  
FREE meal bags for families  
FREE hygiene products  
Over 30 booths of FREE resources  
...and much more!

GOLD SPONSORS	SILVER SPONSORS	BRONZE SPONSORS
Foley Lions Club	First National Bank of Milaca	Starry Electric
Foley Chamber of Commerce	Falcon National Bank	Kwik Trip
Blue Cross Blue Shield	Amrx Manufacturing	Health Partners
East Central Energy	Gumpy's Trucking and Garage LLC	
	True North Family Clinic	

*first steps*  
**BABY EXPO**  
LEIGHTON EVENTS  
*St. Cloud*

Connect with fellow parents, discover current trends, & meet trusted professionals all in one place.

**SATURDAY, MARCH 7<sup>TH</sup>**  
**8AM-12PM**

St. Cloud Area YMCA



**FFN Resources and Supports**

Anyone caring for a child who is not their own, 0-12 or up through age 14, if there are any special needs. No Income Restrictions.



**Family, Friend and Neighbor Minnesota**

**Free Training and Professional Development:**

- First Aid/CPR
- SUID/AHT
- Circle of Security
- Child Development
- Assistance setting up your Development membership
- Supervising for Safety Legally Nonlicensed
- Legal non-licensed (LNL) paperwork
- And more!



**Learning Communities** for adult caregivers to learn more about various topics in caring for others' children:

- **Literacy**
- **Art**
- **STEAM:** science, technology, engineering, art, and math
- **Loose Parts:** materials that can be moved, carried, combined, redesigned, lined up, and taken apart and put back together in multiple ways.

**Stay and Plays** for Kids with their Family, Friend, or Neighbor Care Providers



**SPARKS Kits:** 5-month-long monthly early learning education kits for 0-5-year-olds.



**\$200 mini-grants** for items such as:

- Age & Culturally Appropriate toys, books, & other materials
- Health and Safety Items



**Mental Health Consultations**

1:1 Consultations  
Support Groups



**Resource Connections** in the Community

- Early Childhood Developmental Milestones
- Book Clubs
- Need based resources
- Car Seats
- And more.



**Benton, Sherburne, Stearns, And Wright**

Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift and Yellow Medicine.



\*Funded in part by the Minnesota Department of Children, Youth and Families

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