



### PREGNANCY

Kegel exercises or "kegels", also called pelvic floor exercises, help strengthen the muscles, tissues, and ligaments that support the uterus, bladder, intestines, and bowels. Toning these muscles can help reduce urinary incontinence and risk of hemorrhoids during your pregnancy and promote perinatal healing postpartum.

To find your pelvic muscles, urinate and squeeze your muscles to stop mid-stream. Kegels are exercises where you repeatedly squeeze those muscles (when not urinating) to strengthen them. Practice squeezing these muscles for 5-10 seconds, then relax, repeating 10-20 times throughout the day.



### POSTPARTUM & PARENTING

There are several ways to look for childcare. For a step by step guide for finding childcare, see:

<https://www.parentaware.org/learn/finding-child-care-a-guide-for-families/>



When you are ready to start your search, check out the following sites:



- In-home licensed daycares:

<https://licensinglookup.dhs.state.mn.us/>

- If looking for daycares that are Parent Aware rated, use:

<https://www.parentaware.org/>



For more information about Milestones Early Learning Scholarships, visit: <https://www.milestonesmn.org/early-learning-scholarships>



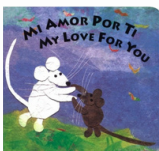
### CHILD GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

When children have positive interactions with books, they are developing good feelings about reading, which will motivate them to continue seeking out books as they grow. <https://tinyurl.com/2p8p8m57>

Libraries are a free way to expose your child to many books. Find your local library at: <https://griver.org/>

Imagination Library is another way for your child to receive one free book per month to age 5. See if this program is available where you live at: <https://tinyurl.com/bddtc5z3>

Check out children's book recommendations from some of the First Steps nurses on page 3.



### INFANT FEEDING

Ways to express breastmilk



- Hand Expression—use of your hand to gently massage and compress your breast to remove milk. Often takes practice and coordination. Can be especially helpful in the early weeks after delivery.
- Haakaa—a milk collection device that can also be used as a manual pump. It uses the power of suction to gently draw milk out.
- Manual Pump—to use your hand to operate a hand-held device to pump milk. Takes practice and coordination. Less expensive pump option than an electric pump. Often covered by insurance.
- Electric Breast Pump—to use an electronic device that either plugs into an outlet or runs on battery to pump milk. Can be a more convenient option and you're able to pump both breasts at the same time. Is a more expensive option but often partially or fully covered by insurance.

If you have additional questions, ask your First Steps nurse or visit a local infant feeding support group. Groups are listed on page 2 under Upcoming Events. More information about the groups, as well as infant feeding resources can be found on our website's [Resources](#) page.





## SAFETY & RESOURCES

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. Here are some safety resources:

- **Anna Marie's Alliance:** provides safety, shelter, support and referral services to survivors of domestic violence and their children. 24/7 phone line: 320-253-6900
- **Central MN Sexual Assault Center:** 24/7 crisis intervention services to people affected by any form of sexual violence, 320-251-4357
- **National Domestic Violence Hotline:** call 1-800-799-SAFE, text "START" to 88788, or chat online <https://www.thehotline.org/>
- **Rivers of Hope:** advocacy services for youth and adults impacted by domestic violence, serves Wright & Sherburne Counties, 763-295-3433
- **Terebinth Refuge:** shelter & safe home for sexually exploited and trafficked women, 320-428-4704



## ACTIVITIES OF THE MONTH

April 22 is Earth Day

### Cotton Ball Painted Snail

<https://kidsactivitiesblog.com/783376/cotton-ball-painted-snail-paper-plate-craft/>



### DIY Shakers

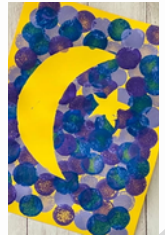
<https://www.littlehandslearning.co.uk/sensory-activities/diy-shakers>

April 6 is National Love Our Children Day

April 9 is Eid al-Fitr, a Muslim holiday marking the end of Ramadan

### Crescent & Star Stamp Painting

<https://shopee.com.my/blog/hari-arya-art-and-craft-ideas/>



## MINDFULNESS

### 7 Daily Reminders for Parents

Read or listen more from Janet Lansbury about this topic at: <https://tinyurl.com/ycu5ezys>

- Let the feelings be. It's okay to feel whatever you are feeling.
- Acknowledge. Let your child know that you hear them and that you want to know.
- Wait. Let children experience all of their experiences.
- Set limits early. Understand that with children, much of their behavior is impulsive. Stay calm.
- Concerning behavior is a request for help. Help your child when they can't help themselves. They're doing the best they can in any given moment.
- I won't let you. Meaning, I'm here to help and I'm going to stop the behavior and set limits early. Create a "Yes Space."
- Confident momentum in transitions. Our comfort and our confidence eases our child's mind.

Lastly, remember to be good and patient to yourself. Parenting is a journey. We just keep going, showing up, and learning along with our children.



## AFFIRMATION OF THE MONTH

*"My child is not giving me a hard time, they are having a hard time, and I can help."*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Weekly Baby Cafes in Central MN

- Mondays 10a-12p, Monticello Community Center
- Tuesdays 9:30a-11:30a, St. Cloud YMCA
- Tuesdays 10:30a-12:30p, Princeton ECFE Family Center
- Wednesdays 10a-12p, Buffalo Wright County Historical Society

### Refer a Friend!

Do you know someone who is pregnant or recently had a baby? We would love to connect with them to share how our nurses can support them on their parenting journey and build their support network! They can call or text 763-276-0441 or self-refer from our website at <https://tinyurl.com/uv75eerp>

One of our nurses will follow up to share more about nurse home visiting, other public health programs, and local resources that may be helpful to them. Our programs are voluntary and parents can change their mind at any time if they are no longer interested.





## CHILDREN BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OUR NURSES

