

Now you are a parent

Having a baby changes your life—especially when it's your first! You now have someone else to think of and to love. You will watch them grow and feel love, happiness and pride. If you have worries there are lots of places that can help.

In our culture aunties, uncles, grandparents and others in the family often help raise our babies. They pass on knowledge, and support new mums and dads.

Please note: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this website may contain images, voices or names of deceased persons in photographs, film, audio recordings or printed material.

ParentLink

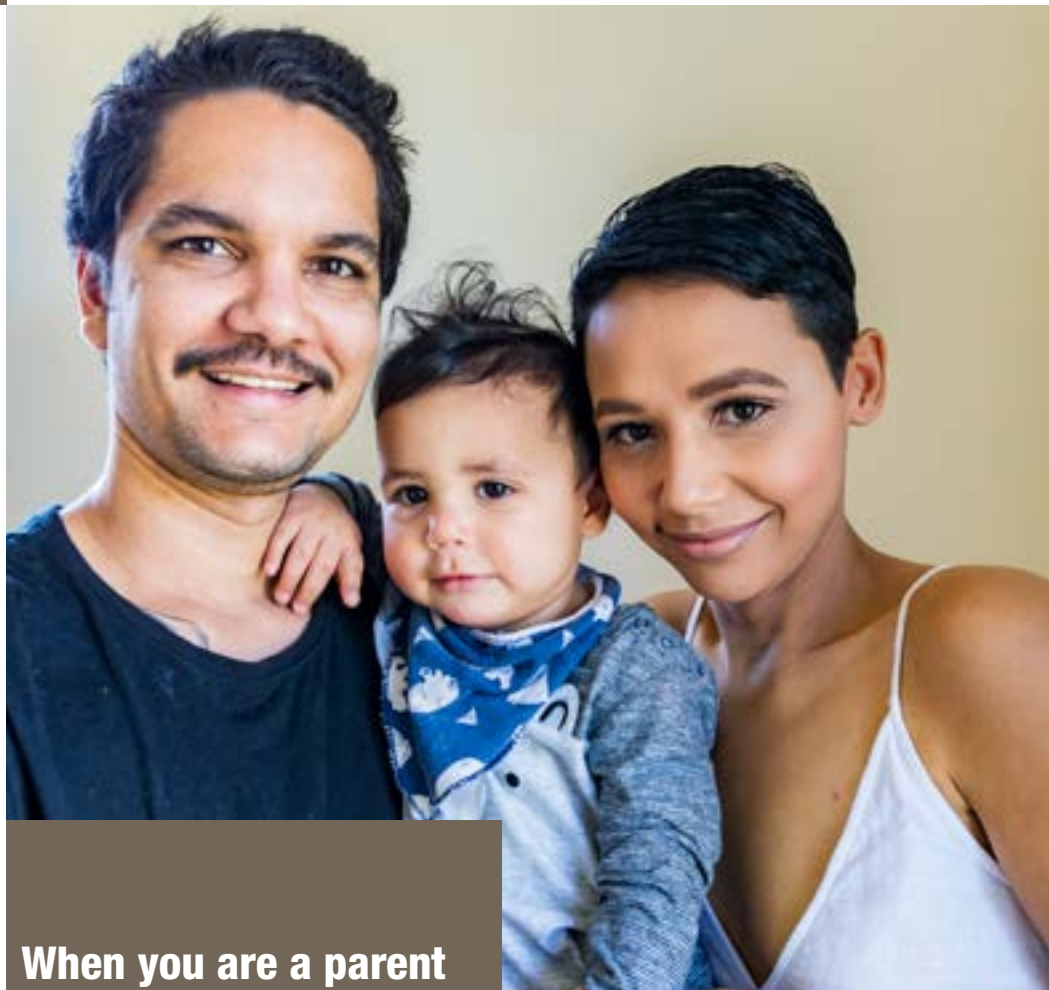
informing



supporting



connecting



When you are a parent

Looking after yourself makes it easier to look after baby:

- Have regular check-ups — deal with health problems straight away.
- Get as much rest as you can and eat healthily.
- If you feel worried or low, talk to someone you trust.

You can decide the kind of parent you want to be.

You can do things the same way your parents did, or do things differently.

It's up to you!



ACT
Government

AN ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PARENTLINK GUIDE

www.parentlink.act.gov.au

Things that can help new parents

- Know where to get help if baby is sick — doctors, hospitals
- Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service** — Nurses can check baby's growth and answer any questions you have. You can be linked with an Aboriginal staff member. Phone 6284 6222 for an appointment.
- Find out about babies and what they need.** Talk with nurses, doctors, family and friends. Work out what's best for baby and you. Some places to find good information are at the end of this guide.
- Find out about useful things in your area** — child care, playgrounds, libraries.
- Join a play group.** It's great to meet other parents and share ideas. Baby will love it too!
- Spend time with your partner or friends.** Make time to do things you enjoy, when you can.

Find a doctor or health service you feel comfortable with. Don't be afraid to ask questions.

This guide's content was produced by Parenting SA, Women's and Children's Health Network.

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Important: This information is not intended to replace advice from a qualified practitioner.

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Looking for more information?

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Dads are special to children

Dads can build a bond with baby right from the start.

- When it comes to caring for baby, just have a go. We all learn as we go along.
- Talk and play gently with baby often.
- Look after mum. Talk about how you can work together.

What babies need

New mums and dads might not know much about babies. That's OK. We all learn as we go along.

Babies:

- need cuddles — they love being close to you
- need to feel safe and secure. It helps them to grow their best. Try to keep things calm and peaceful around baby
- need you to smile at them and talk and play with them. They love it when you share a book, sing or tell stories.

Breastfeeding is best for baby and mum. It's all babies need for the first 6 months. Talk with your child health nurse if you have any questions.

It's OK to ask for help when you need it. It's part of being a good parent

Keeping baby safe

- Don't let people smoke around baby.
- Sleep baby in a safe cot in your room for the first 6 to 12 months. Don't sleep them with you as they could accidentally suffocate. Don't put pillows, doonas or toys in the cot as baby can get tangled or suffocate.
- The law says that babies must be in a rear-facing baby capsule in the car. It's also illegal to smoke in the car with children under 16 years.
- Cars can get very hot, very quickly. Don't leave babies or young children in cars, even if they are sleeping.

For more information on safe sleeping, cot and car safety

Kidsafe ACT: For information on keeping children safe from injury. Free car restraint checking in the ACT. Hire of car restraints, portacots and safety-proofing equipment also available.
t 6290 2244 www.kidsafeact.com.au

Red Nose — (formerly SIDS and Kids): Dedicated to providing accurate and current information about Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and other sudden infant and child deaths to the community, in order to heighten awareness, provide education and supports.
t 1300 308 307 rednose.com.au

Product Safety Australia: For safety information and product recalls by category www.productsafety.gov.au/products/babies-kids



ParentLink — for other parenting guides, online parenting information www.parentlink.act.gov.au

Child and Family Centres — for parenting information and support
www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocyfs/childandfamilycentres

Raising Children's Network — covering topics for parenting newborns to teens <http://raisingchildren.net.au>

Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation t 6296 8900 www.gugan-gulwan.com.au

Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service t 6284 6222 www.winnunga.org.au

Relationships Australia Dhunlun Yarra Service is dedicated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples t 6122 7100 www.racr.relationships.org.au