

Strong babies

We all want our babies to grow up strong and healthy. Knowing what babies need can help you give them the best start in life.

The first weeks and months of life are really important for babies. Happy, healthy babies get off to a good start in life.

ParentLink

informing



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Babies' needs

Babies need:

- love
- gentle care
- a peaceful home
- happy times with you
- regular health checks.

When babies feel loved, they learn to love you too!

What you can do

You can:

- look into their eyes — tell them you love them
- talk with them — tell them what you are doing
- play with them gently
- read books, sing, tell stories every day
- comfort them when they cry.

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ACT
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AN ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PARENTLINK GUIDE

www.parentlink.act.gov.au

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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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Keeping babies safe

- Make sure immunisations are up to date — your doctor or nurse will tell you what they need.
- Put babies in a rear-facing capsule in the car.
- Don't smoke in the car with children under 16 years — it is against the law.
- Stay with babies when they have a bath, or are near any water.
- Never leave babies alone with pets.
- Keep small objects and poisons away from babies — they love to put things in their mouth.

Babies need clean, fresh air. Don't let people smoke around them.

Safe sleeping

- Always sleep babies on their back — never on their tummy or side.
- Use a safe cot — no pillows, doonas, soft toys.
- Sleep baby in a cot in your room for the first 6 to 12 months.
- Don't sleep baby in bed with you — they could suffocate.

A relaxing bedtime routine is good for babies and the whole family. Babies love a bath, feed, cuddle, song or story.

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.

Looking after yourself

When you are healthy and happy, it's easier to look after baby:

- eat well, exercise and do things you enjoy when you can
- see your doctor for a check-up
- if you feel upset, talk with someone you trust
- join a play group — share ideas with other mums and dads
- find out about services in your area that can help you.

Looking after a baby can be hard work. If you feel angry or upset, take a break and calm down. Remember — never shake a baby.

Joining a playgroup is good for parents and baby too.



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