

# **Good Parenting Start (GPS):** A Roadmap to Getting Ready to Go Home with Baby







## Having a baby changes your life.

We heard from families that they spend a lot of time preparing for labour & birth but don't often think about how much their life will change after birth.

This is a checklist to help you, your partner, family and friends better prepare for the arrival of your new baby.

We suggest that you start working your way through this checklist when you are about 24 weeks pregnant. The information you put in this checklist is for you and your support people. No one will be collecting this tool or reviewing it.

For more information on any of the topics listed in this resource, please contact your local Public Health Unit, Community Health Centre, Health Care Provider or other organization that supports families.

No matter your circumstances, help is available for you and your baby.

For resources available in your community, you can search the following databases:

[www.thehealthline.ca](http://www.thehealthline.ca)

[www.211ontario.ca](http://www.211ontario.ca)

Telehealth Ontario is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They can help you with health concerns you have about yourself or your baby.

Telehealth Ontario  
(1-866-797-0000)

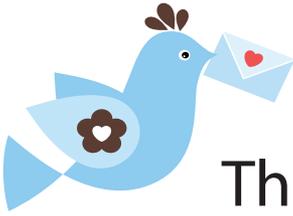
They can also help with breastfeeding questions you may have.

Your local health unit can assist you and your family in finding local supports.

[www.health.gov.on.ca](http://www.health.gov.on.ca)  
(search public health unit locations)

If you or your baby are in an emergency (or crisis) call 911

Name of Public Health Unit:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



# Things to Think About



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# Caring for Your Needs

## Physical

Yes    Not  
Yet

I know when and how to make an appointment with my health care provider after birth.

I know someone who can drive me to appointments if I cannot drive.

I have thought about the things I'll need after giving birth and have been able to get them.

I have a plan for and can access support if I take longer to heal and recover.

I know how my body may change after the birth.

I know how to care for myself after birth (e.g. eating, drinking, going to the bathroom, resting).

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Someone who can drive me to appointments if I cannot drive

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Yes Not  
Yet Yet

I know what normal vaginal bleeding after birth should look like.

I know ways to promote my comfort after birth.

I know what normal healing should look and feel like (if I have stitches, for example).

I know the signs and symptoms of an infection.

I know how to care for my incision if I have a caesarean birth.

I have learned about pelvic floor health (this is the layer of muscles supporting my bladder, bowel and uterus)

I know that the time required to heal varies from person to person and may be dependent on the type of birth I experience.

Notes...

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## Social Support, Emotional & Mental Health

Yes

Not  
Yet

I know who I can call or rely on if I need help or am feeling alone.

I have learned about the ways I can rest after I give birth.

I have thought about how to add rest to my day.

I have thought about who I want to see in the first few days following my baby's birth and who can wait until my baby is older.

I have learned about changes in relationships and family roles that may happen after birth.

I have learned about sexuality after birth.

I have discussed family planning options with my health care provider.

I know what emotions to expect in the days and weeks after birth.

I have learned about the ups and downs of the first few days and weeks after birth.

I have learned that it is possible to have mental health issues during pregnancy and after birth (e.g. anxiety, depression, postpartum mood disorders). I know the signs and symptoms and the help that's available.



I know who to call if I am concerned about my mental health.

I have thought about people who can help me in the days and weeks after I give birth (list type of support e.g. bring food, help with laundry, clean the house, watch my baby while I shower or sleep, help with other children, help with pets).

**Who to call if I am concerned about my mental health**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

**Who can help me in the days and weeks after I give birth**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of support: \_\_\_\_\_

**Who can help me in the days and weeks after I give birth**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of support: \_\_\_\_\_

Yes Not  
Yet

# Caring for Baby

I have learned about the importance of skin-to-skin care (how to do it, who can do it, when to do it, etc.).

I have learned about the care that my baby will receive in the first few hours after birth.

I have learned about the routine medications and tests that my baby will receive after birth.

I have learned how to comfort my baby when routine medications are being given or when routine testing is being done.

I have confirmed that my chosen care provider will be able to take care of my baby (Note: most babies will need an appointment within 1-2 days after birth).

I have two people who I can call when I need help.

I know how I will bring my baby home and who will be with me to help out.

I have a car seat for my baby which is properly installed in my car. I know how to use it safely.

I know how to keep my baby safe when he/she is sleeping and when awake.

I have learned about normal baby behaviours (e.g. crying, sleeping, activity).

I know how to wake a sleepy baby when needed.

I know how to soothe a crying baby.

I have learned about babies who are born early and their special needs.

Yes      Not  
            Yet

I have learned how to safely bathe my baby.

I have learned how to change my baby's diaper and to avoid or deal with diaper rash.

I have learned about normal pees and poops for my baby for his/her age.

I have learned about jaundice (yellowing of skin).

I have read about the risks and benefits of circumcision for baby boys.

I know how to take care of my baby's genitalia (private parts).

Notes...

My baby's care provider

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Someone I can call when I need help with the baby

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_



# Feeding Baby

Yes Not  
Yet

- I have read about infant feeding.
- I have a plan for how to feed my baby.
- I know that how I feed my baby may change depending on circumstances.
- I have learned about breast milk production.
- I have learned about the importance of colostrum (first breast milk).
- I have learned how to “hand-express” colostrum/breast milk.
- I have learned how to prevent sore nipples.
- I have learned how to manage full breasts that may hurt (engorgement).
- I have learned the signs and symptoms of blocked ducts.
- I have learned the signs and symptoms of mastitis and know where to get help.
- I know where to go to get information about medications that are safe to take when breastfeeding.
- I have learned how to safely clean feeding equipment for my baby.
- I have learned how to safely prepare formula if I have chosen to bottle feed my baby or if it is medically needed.

A vertical purple bar on the right side of the page, containing two columns of white circles. The top two circles in each column are aligned with the 'Yes' and 'Not Yet' headers. There are 12 rows of circles in total, corresponding to the 12 statements on the left. The bar tapers slightly towards the bottom.



My lactation consultant / breastfeeding expert

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

My breastfeeding drop-in & support group

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_



Yes	Not Yet
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- I have learned the signs that my baby is hungry (feeding cues).
- I have learned that cluster feedings are normal (some feedings closer together).
- I know how to tell that my baby has a good latch and is getting milk.
- I know the number of pees and poops that will tell me my baby is drinking enough.
- I know that my baby should feed 8 or more times in 24 hours.
- I have found a breastfeeding drop-in and support group in my community.
- I have found a lactation consultant or breastfeeding expert in my community.



## General Topics

Yes    Not  
      Yet

I know when to call a health care provider.

I know where the closest after-hours clinics and emergency room(s) are, and can get there if needed.

I know where to find information on training for infant emergency care (e.g. first aid, CPR course.)

I have the latest information about drinking alcohol when parenting.

I know about the importance of a smoke-free and drug-free environment and where to find help to decrease or quit.

I have learned about the hospital where I plan to give birth.

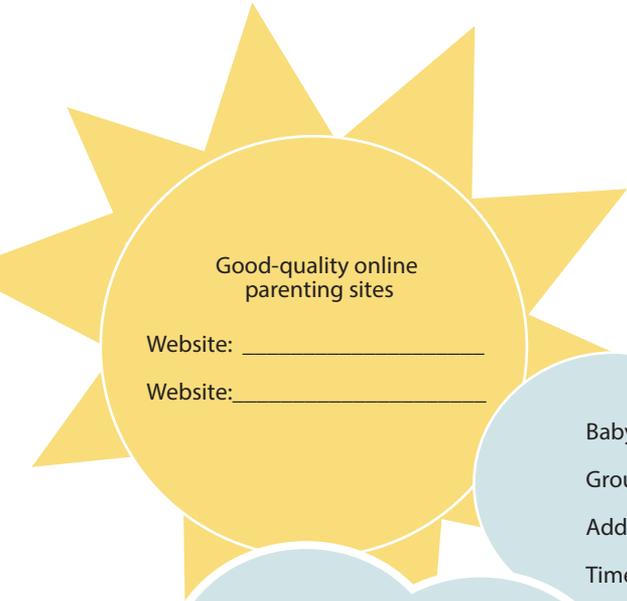
I have learned about baby groups and parenting groups in my area.

I have found good-quality online parenting sites.

I have learned about the programs and services that Public Health (e.g. Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program) and the Early Years Centres (in Ontario) or the Centres locaux de services communautaires (CLSC in Quebec) offer new families.



Good-quality online  
parenting sites

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_



Baby / parenting groups in my area:

Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_



Baby / parenting groups in my area:

Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_





CHAMPLAIN MATERNAL NEWBORN REGIONAL PROGRAM  
PROGRAMME RÉGIONAL DES SOINS À LA MÈRE  
ET AU NOUVEAU-NÉ DE CHAMPLAIN

This resource was created by the Postnatal Plan Workgroup of  
the Champlain Maternal Newborn Regional Program.

[www.cmnrp.ca](http://www.cmnrp.ca)



WOMEN'S COLLEGE HOSPITAL  
**women's xchange**

We would like to thank the many new parents and health care providers who worked to develop the checklist as well as the Women's Xchange of the Women's College Hospital for their generous financial support of the project.