

# TOP TIPS FOR NEW PARENTS

Nanny and maternity nurse Sarah Wheeler is an Army spouse and mum of four who offers support and advice to new parents. Here, she shares her top ten tips for caring for your most treasured possession...

## 1 SAFE SLEEP

FOLLOW the Lullaby Trust's guidelines. It gives clear, simple advice on positioning in the cot, room temperature and the benefits of using a soother.

## 2 FIRST AID

IT'S reassuring to go on a paediatric first aid course. The British Red Cross runs courses specifically for parents to help you cope with emergencies.

## 3 CARE AND SUPPORT

A RELAXED and rested parent is better for baby than a tidy house! Rest when you can, remembering to turn off your phone. If relatives come to stay, make sure they are looking after you rather than the other way round! If you have time before you have your baby, stock up your freezer to save you having to cook when your new arrival comes along.

## 4 SLEEP WELL

ENCOURAGE your baby to settle themselves to sleep by being put into their crib awake. Try not react to every tiny noise, they may settle back to sleep after a few minutes. Differentiate between night and day feeds by keeping night time feeds calm, in dim light and with little interaction. If your baby falls asleep half way through the last feed of the evening, try changing their nappy to wake them up and encourage them to take some more.

## 5 INFO & ADVICE

USE parenting books as a reference rather than a set of rules that must not be broken. Trust your instincts; if what you're doing feels right and you and your baby are healthy and happy, stick with it!

## 6 KIT AND EQUIPMENT

SPEAK to friends about what's essential and what they could have done without. Try out all new equipment before your baby is born – you don't want to be working out how the steriliser works with a very hungry baby crying. Practise putting in the car seat and folding the pram.



## 7 FEEDING

REMAIN open minded about breastfeeding – it takes time and determination. As well as receiving help from your midwife and health visitor, lots of organisations offer support. Have formula, bottles and a steriliser at home so you won't need to do a midnight dash to the supermarket if you are struggling with breastfeeding!



## 8 SAVE TIME

HAVING an upstairs and downstairs changing kit saves you continually running up and down. Place a doubled up muslin, well tucked in, at the head area of where your baby sleeps. If they're a little sick, you only need to change the muslin rather than all the bedding.

## 9 FRESH AIR

TRY and get out for a walk with your baby every day – even better if you can tie this in with a coffee, a slice of cake and a natter with a friend!



## 10 KEEP LIFE SIMPLE

Love them a lot! Keep one end clean and the other end fed. Everything else is optional!