

Planning Pays Off

Making Connections

Who are the people in your circles and in your community who can help you after your baby is born?

Do some research now, so when you need help, you know just where to turn.



It can be hard to find a professional who fits with your wants and needs. It can take time to find a hair stylist you like, or a car mechanic you trust, or a bank that fits your work schedule. These relationships often build over time, and eventually you can't imagine taking your business elsewhere.

When your baby arrives, you may find yourself in need of a new business relationship - be that with a postpartum doula, lactation consultant, sleep consultant, chiropractor, acupuncturist, etc. These will be important relationships; you'll want to have a sense of trust and support with these people.

But you may be feeling overwhelmed and exhausted after your baby is born. Trying to spend time then to connect with local resources is going to sound daunting.

So do it now.

Use the following worksheet to identify potential resources. You don't have to connect with them right now, but browse their website & social media accounts. Get a sense of that person's style. Read reviews. You'll be able to decide if it feels like a potential good fit. If you want to take the next step, go ahead and send them a message. There's no harm in introducing yourself ahead of time. In fact, many providers appreciate the early connection.

And then if and when you need help, you'll have already done the time consuming work.

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Resource Sheet

Keep in mind you may have friends or family members who can help out with some of these categories. Maybe you have friends who enjoy making meals, walking the dog, or who have experience breastfeeding. List them here in addition to professional resources in your area.

Pediatrician - You will want to have a pediatrician lined up before your baby is born. Call well ahead for time to make sure your selected provider is taking newborns and accepts your insurance. Some parents choose to interview pediatricians before their baby is born, but it is definitely not required.

Lactation support - Look for an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC), a Certified Lactation Educator (CLE), or a well-established support group (LaLeche League, Nursing Mothers' Council).

Postpartum support - Newborn Care Specialists (NCS) provide direct baby care, while Postpartum Doulas provide support for the entire family. www.doulamatch.net

New Parent Groups - While you may want to take it easy for the first few weeks, you may find that eventually you'd like to meet other new parents. Check out your community's family network, gyms, religious centers, community outreach groups, and library. Often these groups will have an active social media page so you can see what and when these groups meet up.

Chiropractors, acupuncturists and massage therapists - many work with prenatal and postpartum clients. Look for someone who has experience with and training in maternal care.

Sibling care - You may consider looking for a babysitter or mother's helper to assist with older siblings during this transition time. www.care.com

Mental health - Look for a provider who is well-versed in postpartum mood disorders and maternal mental health. Online support systems also exist. Check out www.postpartum.net

Pet care - Your dog may have been your "baby" before you had a baby, and will still want your attention and require your care. You may want to scope out local dog walking services for the short term. Your dog will thank you, and you will have one less to-do item on your list.

House cleaners - Similar to pet care, consider looking a short term house cleaning service, if your finances allow for it.

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Pediatrician name - _____

Phone number - _____

After Hours Urgent Care Line - _____

OB/Midwife - _____

Phone number - _____

After Hours Urgent Care Line - _____

Lactation support person - _____

Contact information - _____

Local support groups/friends - _____

Postpartum support person - _____

Contact information - _____

Local support groups/friends - _____

Sibling care - _____

Pet care - _____

House cleaning - _____

Alternative health and wellness contacts - _____

Mental health therapist, groups, & support - _____