



PRESS RELEASE
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New Year, New Baby *Tips on Caring for a Newborn*

Bringing home a newborn is an exciting time for families. But along with joy, parents also experience a lot of hard work and little sleep.

“Knowing what to expect and how to care for a newborn can help mom and dad deal with changes and gain confidence as they bond with their baby,” said Julie Gallelo, executive director of First 5 Yolo.

First 5 Yolo offers the following basic advice on some of the most common questions and concerns that may come up during the first months of a child’s life.

Calming a Newborn: Crying is a useful way for babies to tell you when they are hungry or uncomfortable. If your baby’s diaper is dry, she’s warm and well fed, but she’s still crying, try these soothing tips:

- Gently stroke her head or pat her back, and try burping her to relieve any gas bubbles.
- Rock your baby, go for a car ride or walk her in a stroller around the neighborhood.
- Turn on a fan or quietly say “shush” into your baby’s ear repeatedly. Babies hear many noises in the womb so soothing “white noise” may be calming.

Promote Healthy Habits from the Start: Babies develop very quickly during the first year, and they need sleep and proper nutrition to grow up healthy.

- Give breastfeeding a chance! According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, breast milk provides the best source of nutrition for babies to help strengthen their immune system. Breastfeeding also provides special bonding time for mother and child.
- Newborns need a lot of sleep – learn your baby’s signs that he’s tired and try to put him down to sleep right away. Notice when he rubs his eyes, pulls his ear or gets faint, dark circles under his eyes.
- Keep your child healthy by visiting the doctor for check-ups and when your baby may be sick or running a fever. Also, ask your doctor about immunizations and when to schedule them. The California Department of Public Health offers a helpful guide at www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize.

Take Care of Yourself: The early weeks of parenting are very rewarding, but also exhausting. In the midst of all the excitement of bringing home a new baby, it’s important for parents to take care of themselves, too!

- Get as much rest as possible even though it can be difficult. Exercise and eat healthy to keep your energy up.
- Do what you can and leave the rest for later or for others to do. Reach out to family, friends, parent groups or a counselor for help. Check with your local First 5, YMCAs, community centers and places of worship to learn about support in your area.

For additional resources, First 5 Yolo offers the *Kit for New Parents*, which is packed with information and resources to guide new parents through the first 5 years of a child's life. Free kits in English, Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean and Vietnamese are available by calling 530-669-2475.

For more parenting tips and information on First 5 Yolo programs, services and resources, please visit www.first5yolo.org.

About First 5 Yolo

Research shows a child's brain develops most dramatically in the first five years and what parents and caregivers do during these years to support their child's growth will have a meaningful impact throughout life. In November 1998, California voters passed a statewide ballot initiative to add a 50-cent-per-pack tax on cigarettes. The funds collected are utilized to fund education, health and childcare programs that promote early childhood development from prenatal through age 5. For more information about First 5 Yolo, please visit www.First5Yolo.org.

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