

Welcome Home Baby



Welcome to Parenthood...

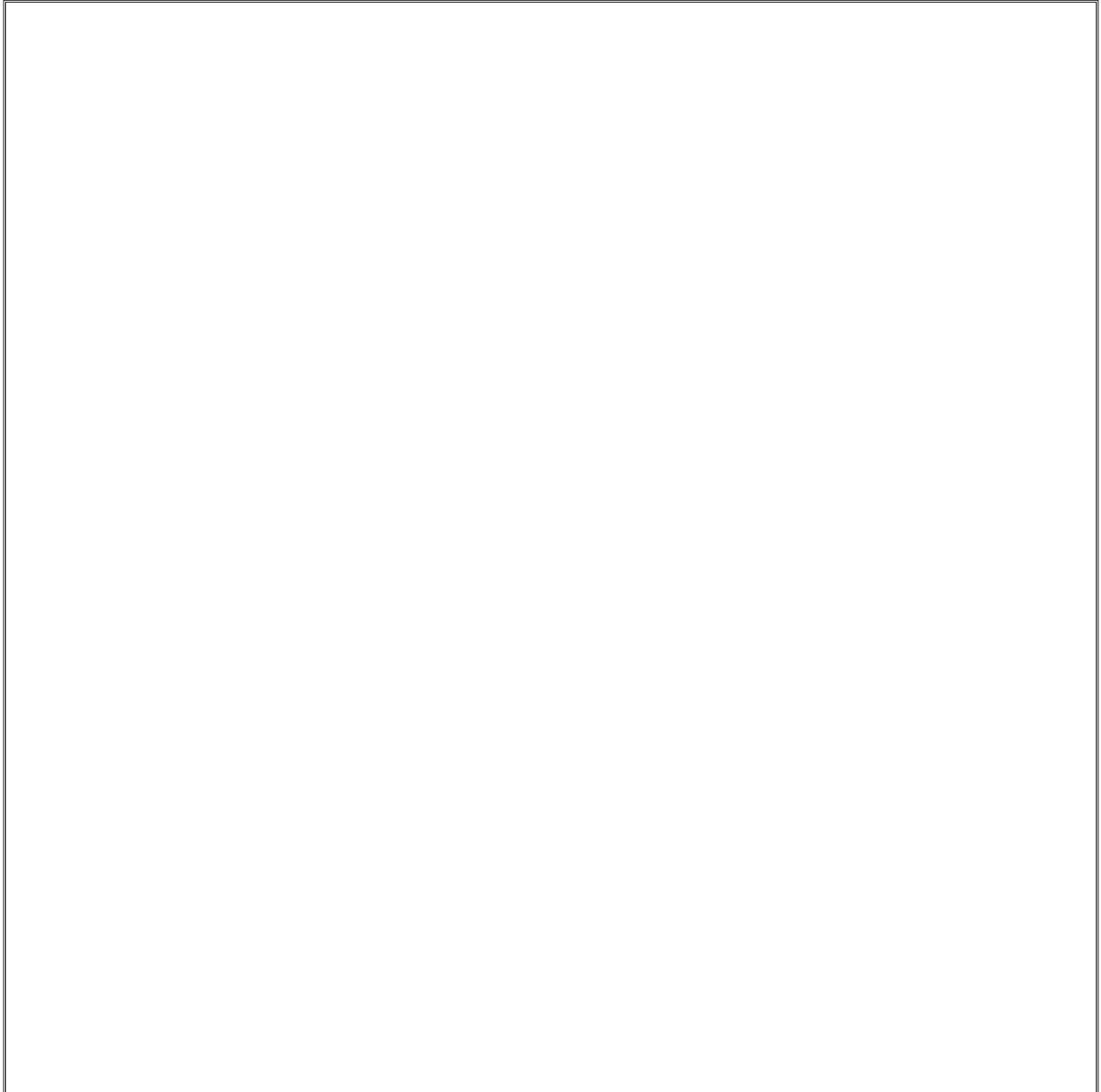
Congratulations on the birth of your baby. You are beginning an exciting and amazing journey.

Starting long before birth, your baby has been constantly growing and developing. The first few years of life are such an important time for your child. Research has shown that children's brains develop more rapidly before their third birthday than during any other time in their life.

This Welcome Home Baby book is a place for you to store precious memories of your young child. It also is a guide to help you know what to watch for as your child grows. There are lots of ideas of things that you can do to help your child get off to a great start in life.

There will be many teachers in your child's future, but none will be as important as you are! Have fun and enjoy these early years of your child's life.

My Baby



Baby's name _____

Birth date _____

Born at _____

_____ lb's _____ oz's _____ inches

Due date _____

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Community Resources
Newborn Health
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Your Baby is Born Ready to Learn

Your baby will grow, change, and learn continuously. The things that you do every day will help make sure your baby gets off to a great start. Lots of love and attention will help your baby learn.

What does your baby need?

- * To be cuddled, snuggled, and patted
- * To see smiling faces
- * To be dry and warm
- * To hear you speak softly
- * To hear you sing softly
- * To experience love, kindness, and sweetness
- * To feel your gentle touch

In the early years of your child's life, she will learn how to think, communicate, deal with stress, get along with others, and be creative.

As your baby grows, she needs you to:

- * Touch, hold and comfort her every day
- * Talk, read, and sing with her every day
- * Get down on the floor to play at her level every day



Please visit
www.welcomehomebabykent.org
to learn more about services for
you and your child in Kent County.

Your Child's Medical Home

Every child needs a medical home. A medical home is not just a building—it's a "home base" for your child's healthcare. It could be a clinic, a doctors' office, or a health center. It's a team of people working with your family to make sure your child stays healthy.

A medical home is the one place that you take him for:

- * Well-child checkups
- * Immunizations (shots)
- * Sick visits
- * Accidents

Your baby should get his first checkup by the time he is 4 or 5 days old. Call your baby's medical home to make an appointment. Ask about immunizations (shots) he might need in the next few weeks. Please see the Newborn Health insert for more information.

Your baby also should get well-child checkups at approximately 2 weeks, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 1 year, and 15 and/or 18 months. As he gets older, your child should get a well-child checkup every year around his birthday.

If you keep all of these appointments, your child should not miss any of his immunizations (shots). These shots can prevent dangerous diseases like polio, tetanus, whooping cough, mumps, measles, chicken pox, meningitis, hepatitis B, and more.

Remember, you can call your child's medical home 24 hours a day/7days a week. Call for help, advice, or an appointment.

Child's medical home _____

Phone _____

Address _____

Special notes _____

Keeping Your Baby Safe

Safe Sleep

- * Babies need their own bed. Do not sleep with your baby or lay her down to sleep on a waterbed, cushion, or sofa. Babies could fall off an adult bed or you could roll over on her.
- * The safest way for your baby to sleep is on her back.
- * Do not put pillows, quilts, toys, or bumper pads in her bed.
- * Do not overdress your baby or keep the room too warm.

Car Seats

- * Children are required to be in a safety seat until they are 4 years old.
- * Always put your baby in a rear-facing car seat in the back seat of the car.
- * Never hold your baby in your arms while riding in a car.
- * Refer to the [Community Resources](#) insert to find out how to get your car seat checked for safety.

Calming Your Baby

- * All babies cry. Babies can be healthy and normal even if they cry five hours a day.
- * When your baby cries, carry, comfort, walk, and talk with him.
- * If the crying is too frustrating, it is OK to walk away, as long as your baby is in a safe place.
- * **NEVER** shake or hurt a baby.
- * The **Period of Purple Crying** DVD has more good tips on how to calm your baby. Find the DVD in your Welcome Home Baby bag.

Burns

- * Check if bath water is too hot before putting your baby in the water.
- * Do not smoke, drink hot drinks, or cook while holding your baby.
- * Do not heat your baby's bottle in a microwave oven. The bottle may not be hot, but the formula inside could burn her mouth. Always shake and test the temperature before feeding.

Poisoning

- * Cleaning supplies, medicines, and poisons should be kept in a high place or a locked cabinet.



Falls/Injuries/Drowning

- * Do not leave your baby alone on a changing table, couch, or chair. Even a newborn could roll off.
- * Never put anything around your baby's neck (small toy, pacifier, necklace). It could choke him.
- * Use the safety straps that come with a stroller or bouncy seat.
- * Get down on the floor to see what your baby could get into. Move small objects or hanging cords.
- * Put safety plugs in electrical outlets.
- * Never leave your baby alone in or near water. He could drown quickly in just a couple inches of water.

Choking

- * Do not prop the bottle for a feeding.
- * Do not give a child younger than three nuts, popcorn, chunks of meat, hot dogs, peanut butter, whole grapes, raw vegetables, or hard candy.
- * Be careful to keep your baby away from small objects. An object is too small if it can fall through the center of a toilet paper roll.

Equipment

- * Make sure there is a working smoke detector in your home. If you don't have one, contact your landlord or your local fire department.
- * You also should have a working carbon monoxide detector in your home. Carbon monoxide is an odorless poison that can cause death. To learn more, see page 44.

Secondhand Smoke

- * Secondhand smoke can be harmful to your baby. It increases her chances of getting colds, ear infections, asthma, and allergies. Also, exposure to secondhand smoke is a risk factor for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
- * To avoid secondhand smoke, have guests and family smoke outside.
- * If you would like help to stop smoking, talk with your medical home or check the [Community Resources](#) insert to find services that can help you quit.

CPR & First Aid

- * Consider taking an infant CPR and first aid class. Talk to your baby's medical home or your hospital to learn more about classes.

One Month

Who was there when your baby was born?

Who does your baby look like?

What's your favorite time of day with your baby?

Who are your baby's visitors this month?

What would you like to remember forever about your 1-month-old baby?

How will your baby learn & grow?

- * Takes notice when she hears a loud noise or sees a sudden movement
- * Watches your face when it is close to her

Help your baby learn & grow.

- * Hold your baby and rock her.
- * Talk and sing to her; imitate the sounds she makes so you two are having a conversation.

Remember:

- * The safest place for your baby to sleep is on her back in a crib with nothing else in the crib with her. If your baby uses a pacifier, be sure you do not attach it to a string. The string could strangle her or cause choking.
- * When in the car, always place your baby in the back seat fastened securely in a car seat facing backward. She should ride this way at least until her first birthday and until her weight is more than twenty pounds.

Two Months

What songs do you like to sing to your baby?

What did the doctor say at the medical home visit?

How big is your baby?

Length _____ Weight _____

How will your baby learn & grow?

- * Turns head to the side when lying on his tummy
- * Watches and follows you with his eyes
- * Smiles when talked to

Help your baby learn & grow.

- * Sing songs to your baby. Make up a song of your own to sing to him.
- * Show your baby picture books. While he is having tummy time, set the books up where he can see them.
- * Place an unbreakable mirror next to the changing table. Talk to your baby about seeing himself in the mirror during changing time.
- * Gently shake a rattle or bell by your baby's ear, then move it to the other ear and do it again. See if he moves his head to find the sound.
- * After his bath, gently massage your baby's body with baby lotion. Stroke, pat, and rub him while you talk in a soft voice.
- * Consider signing up for an infant massage class through a local hospital or community education.

Remember:

- * It's time for the two-month checkup at your baby's medical home.
- * Never leave your baby alone on the changing table or sofa. He can fall easily.
- * Take time for yourself: read your own book or magazine; talk to a friend on the phone; or take a bubble bath.

Three Months

Your baby likes it when _____

What makes your baby smile?

What is your baby's favorite toy?

How will your baby learn & grow?

- * Holds her head up
- * Lifts her head and chest when lying on her tummy.
- * Squeals, coos, chuckles

Help your baby learn & grow.

- * Play games with your baby like Peek-A-Boo and Pat-A-Cake. When your baby coos, do it back to her.
- * Place your baby on a blanket on her tummy when she is awake. Shake a rattle in front of her. Move the rattle up and down slowly as your baby watches so she can practice lifting her head and shoulders.
- * Read board books so that your baby can hold, taste, and touch them.
- * Hold your baby with her head on your shoulder and walk around the room, talking with her about what she sees. Try this outside, too.
- * Sit near your baby and slowly creep your fingers toward her. Then quickly and gently tickle her.
- * Do not put your baby to bed with a bottle or allow her to nurse continuously from the breast. Putting her to bed with a bottle can lead to ear infections. Mother's milk, cow's milk, and juice have natural sugars that can put your baby at risk for severe tooth decay.



Four Months

What kind of sounds is your baby making?

What new things can your baby do this month?

What did the doctor say at the medical home visit?

How big is your baby?

Length _____ Weight _____

How will your baby learn & grow?

- * Pushes up on arms while on tummy
- * Follows a toy or other item with his eyes
- * Grasps toys, plays with hands
- * Begins babbling and practicing sounds when looking at people and toys

Help your baby learn & grow.

- * When your baby makes different sounds, talk to him about what you think he is trying to say.
- * Read or say nursery rhymes to your baby.
- * Help him roll from tummy to back, tuck his arm under his chest, and support his head.
- * Count and kiss his fingers and toes.
- * Your baby's teeth may start coming in soon. It is common for a baby to drool, be cranky, and/or have diarrhea when he is teething. Many babies like to chew a chilled teething ring, cool spoon, or cold wet washcloth.

Remember:

- * Your baby should have another well-child checkup at his medical home.
- * Now that your baby is getting more active and is able to hold things, you need to "childproof" your home. Get on your hands and knees and look for anything small enough for your baby to pick up and put in his mouth.
- * Your home should have a smoke detector on each level (basement, main floor, upstairs).
- * Consider buying a radon detector and a carbon monoxide detector. For more information, see page 44.
- * Keep all household cleaners in a high cabinet and remember to never leave standing water in a bucket when you are cleaning.

Five Months

What makes your baby laugh or chuckle?

What are your baby's favorite books?

Describe your baby's bedtime routine.

How will your baby learn & grow?

- * Stretches out arms to be picked up
- * Brings her feet to her mouth
- * Reaches for toys or other items
- * Makes sounds to get attention

Help your baby learn & grow.

- * Read with your baby every day. There's a list of good books to choose from on page 41.
- * Talk to your baby when she makes sounds. Take turns "talking."
- * When you take your baby out, talk about everything she is seeing.
- * Before you pick up your baby, hold out your arms and say, "Come to Mommy or Daddy!"
- * Lay your baby on her back. Gently hold onto her feet and move her legs up and down, like pedaling a bicycle.
- * Lay your baby on a blanket on her belly while she is awake. Place a few colorful toys within her reach. Notice which toys she reaches for and whether she can get them.
- * Start your child now on a lifetime of good dental habits by cleaning her mouth with a soft cloth or infant toothbrush. Children with healthy teeth chew food easily, learn to speak clearly, and smile with confidence.

Remember:

- * Babies grow and develop at different paces. If you have any concerns about your child, call **Early On**. This is a free service regardless of income. The phone number and website may be found in the *Community Resources* insert.

Six Months

What new things did your baby do this month?

What did the doctor say at the medical home visit?

How big is your baby?

Length _____ Weight _____

How will your baby learn & grow?

- * Raises body up on hands
- * Sits with support
- * Rolls over
- * Lifts arms to be picked up
- * Looks and responds to own name
- * Supports weight in a standing position and bounces actively

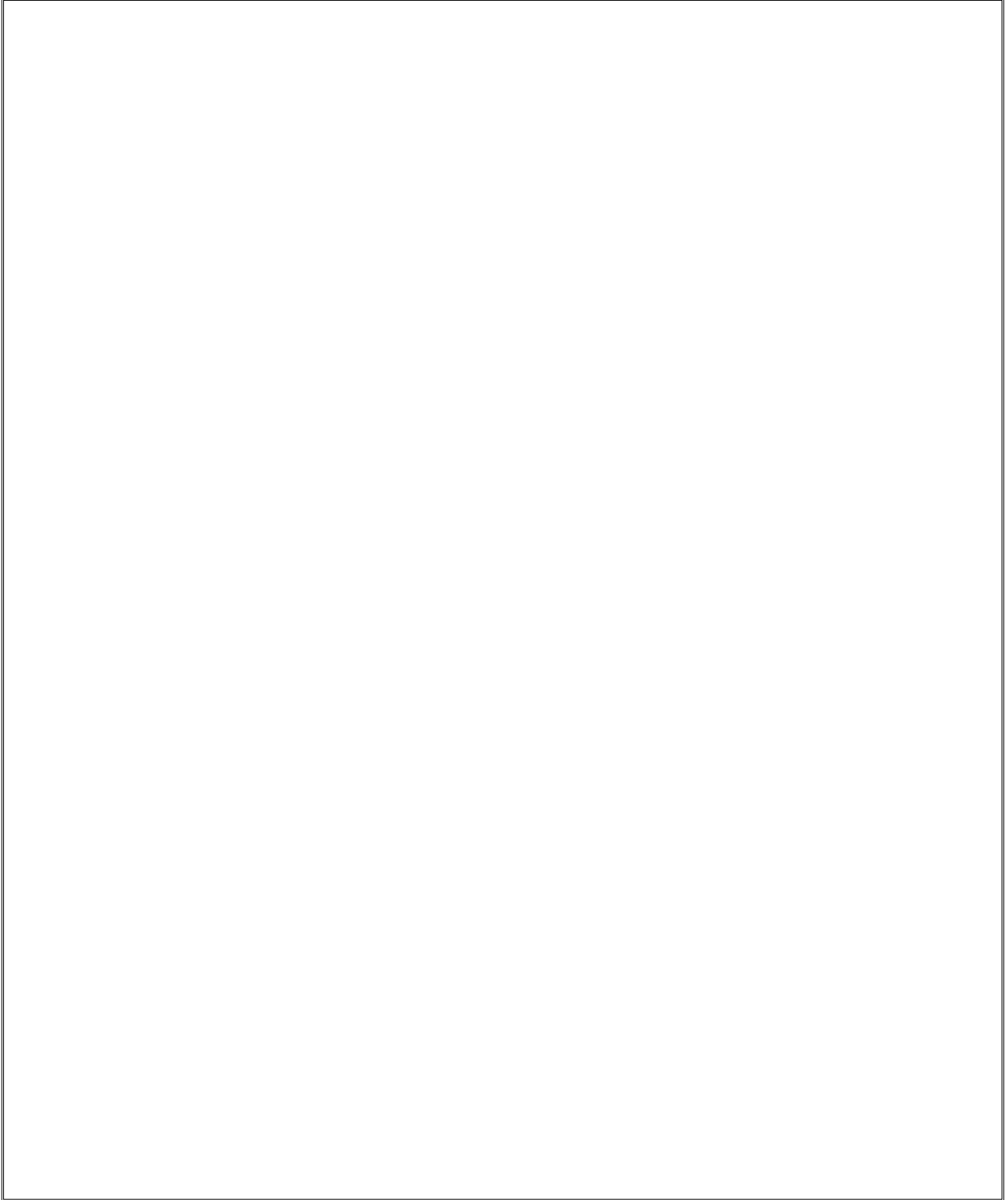
Help your baby learn & grow.

- * Read with your baby every day. As you read, point to the pictures. Give your baby plenty of time to look and respond to the pictures. Talk about the pictures: "Oh, look at that red ball. Is that like your soft red ball?"
- * Help your baby sit on a soft rug with a pillow behind him. Place a few toys in front of him so he has to bend and reach to pick them up.
- * Do nursery rhymes and finger plays with him.

Remember:

- * It's time for your baby to have the 6-month checkup at his medical home.
- * Your baby will be crawling soon. To prevent injuries, make sure you have safety covers in all outlets. These can be purchased in many dollar stores.
- * Block access to stairways.
- * Use exersaucers only for short periods of time. Babies need time on the floor to roll and sit and crawl to help them develop the muscles that will allow them to walk.
- * Remember to get on the floor yourself at baby's eye level to look for things that could cause him to choke.

Picture Memories



List of Firsts

This page is to record your child's firsts. Some will come before her first birthday, others will come later. Be sure to come back to this page when your child has another big first!

Who were your baby's first visitors? _____

When did your baby smile for the first time? _____

When did he get his first tooth? _____

How old was your baby when she first slept through the night? _____

When was the first time your baby rolled over by himself? _____

When did your baby crawl for the first time? _____

What was your baby's first word? _____

When was her first haircut? _____

What was his first solid food? _____

When did your child take her first step? _____

When was the first time your child fed himself? _____

What did he eat? _____

When did you first take your child on a trip to see family? _____

Who did you visit? _____

Who was your child's first playmate? _____

How did they meet? _____

When did your child first speak her own name? _____

When was your child's first day of preschool? _____

What was the name of the preschool? _____

When was your child's first day of kindergarten? _____

What was the name of the school? _____

Seven Months

Is there a noise that startles or frightens your baby?

What kinds of sounds is your baby making? (grunting, growling, deep sounds)

What is your baby's favorite bath toy?

What are your baby's favorite games?

How will your baby learn & grow?

- * Moves objects from one hand to another
- * Crawls on her stomach and tries to creep
- * Says sounds like "ga, ka, da, ba, and m-m-m"

Help your baby learn & grow.

- * When your baby babbles, talk back to her. Say things like, "Oh really"; "then what"; and "tell me more." Wait for your baby to respond.
- * Give your baby a small toy to hold in one hand. After she has played with it for a minute or so, hold another toy up to the same hand. Try to get her to move the first toy to her other hand instead of dropping it.
- * Help your baby get in a hands and knees crawling position. Support her if needed, and rock her slowly back and forth, singing a nursery song or rhyme.

Remember:

- * Put away breakables within your child's reach.
- * Limit access to cords or objects that your baby can pull onto herself.
- * Keep bathroom doors shut when not in use.
- * Always put the cover down on the toilet.



Eight Months

What words does your baby seem to know the meaning of?

What are your baby's favorite books?

What are your favorite places to walk in the stroller?

How many teeth does your baby have?

How will your baby learn & grow?

- * Can sit upright without being held
- * Picks up a small toy or bite-size food with his thumb and fingers
- * Stands for a short period of time while holding on to something for support

Help your baby learn & grow.

- * After you have been naming the pictures in your baby's favorite books for a few weeks, begin to ask, "Where's the ball?" Soon your baby will touch the picture of the ball.
- * Help him practice pulling himself up using something safe for support (sofa, stable chair, etc.)
- * Sit with your baby on a blanket or rug. Show him a favorite toy. After you have his attention, lay the toy beside or behind him. Encourage him to turn to find the toy.
- * With permission from your medical home, let your baby try finger foods like dry cereal or pieces of banana.

Remember:

- * Children under the age of three should not have any toys with small pieces that they might put in their mouths and choke on. If a toy can fit through an empty paper towel roll, it is too small.

Nine Months

How does your baby move around? (crawling, creeping, rolling)

What other adults care for your baby?

What did the doctor say at the medical home visit?

How big is your baby?

Length _____ Weight _____

How will your baby learn & grow?

- * Crawls or creeps
- * Makes two same sounds together like "ba-ba"
- * Plays simple games like Peek-A-Boo

Help your baby learn & grow.

- * Talk, talk, talk with your baby! Speak in a slow, clear manner and describe what she is doing: "You're eating a big yellow banana!" Give her time to respond.
- * Get down on your hands and knees beside your baby. Creep a little ahead of her, then turn and call for her to follow. Let her catch you often.
- * Practice giving your child simple directions: "Give mommy the ball."
- * Repeat sounds and words that baby makes, like "ooh, ahh, ga, dadada."
- * Keep your child's gums and teeth healthy by brushing at least twice a day. Primary teeth, also called "baby" teeth, are very important. Each primary tooth reserves space for the permanent tooth that will replace it.

Remember:

- * Time for another well-child checkup at your child's medical home. Ask about screening your baby for lead. For more on lead poisoning, go to page 44.
- * Young children can get strangled in cords on blinds or curtains. Use safety devices or cut the loops and shorten the cords.

Ten Months

What are your baby's favorite foods?

Is there a food your baby definitely doesn't like?

What are your baby's favorite songs?

How will your baby learn & grow?

- * Uses "da-da" and "ma-ma" as names
- * Looks for hidden things
- * Copies actions, remembers them, and repeats them

Help your baby learn & grow.

- * Talk to your baby about the foods he is eating. Tell him what colors they are and about their texture.
- * Let your baby see you cover a toy with a blanket. Then ask, "Where's the toy?" Ask him to uncover the toy.
- * Respond to your baby's talking. See how long you can talk back and forth. For example, he makes a sound, you repeat it; he makes another sound, and so on.
- * Visit your local library. Most have scheduled story times and activities for babies. See page 41 for a list of recommended books for your baby.

Suggested Toys:

- * Balls
- * Stacking toys
- * Sturdy cardboard books
- * Blocks
- * Busy boxes
- * Toys that roll and can be pushed or pulled



Eleven Months

What are your baby's favorite ways to play?

What are your baby's favorite toys?

What does your baby do when playing alone?

What sounds and noises does your baby make?

How will your baby learn & grow?

- * Stands alone briefly
- * Walks holding onto the side of the crib, along furniture, or while holding your hands
- * Holds a cup with both hands and brings a spoon to her mouth
- * Explores containers by lifting their lids, putting objects in, and taking them out
- * Tries to repeat words you say

Help your baby learn & grow.

- * Provide her with stacking toys, blocks in a container, or kitchen objects like plastic bowls with lids.
- * Reread your baby's favorite books over and over again.
- * Allow your baby to practice drinking from a cup and using a spoon.
- * Help your baby learn body parts by naming and pointing to parts on a doll then on her.
- * As your baby gets close to her first birthday, you can wean her from a bottle or nursing. Encourage her to drink from a cup. If using a training (sippy) cup, avoid those with no-spill valves. Cups with no-spill valves do not allow your child to learn how to sip.



Twelve Months / One Year Old

What did the doctor say at the medical home visit?

How big is your child?

Length _____ Weight _____



How will your child learn & grow?

- * Stands alone well, walks with support
- * Says one word besides “ma-ma” and “da-da”
- * Helps turn the pages of a book
- * Points to something he wants

Help your child learn & grow.

- * Read and say nursery rhymes and poems together with your child. Pause before a rhyming word to give him a chance to say the missing word.
- * Provide push-type toys that your child can push as he walks behind them (bubble mowers, sturdy doll strollers).
- * Praise your child when he uses words to talk to you.
- * Milk and other fluids should now be given in a cup and not a bottle.
- * Your child should visit a dentist within six months of his first tooth coming in and no later than his first birthday. Primary teeth, also called “baby teeth” are just as important as adult teeth. They help your child chew and speak and hold space in the jaws for adult teeth.

Remember:

- * It's time for the one-year-old well-child checkup at your child's medical home.
- * Never let your child play with a balloon unattended. Be sure to collect and throw away pieces of broken balloons right away. If swallowed, even small pieces can cause a child to suffocate.
- * Lower the mattress in the crib
- * Be sure cleaning supplies and medicines are kept out of reach, in a locked cabinet if possible.
- * Lock your screen door so your child cannot push it open if he leans against it.

Happy Birthday

Who did you invite to your child's first birthday?

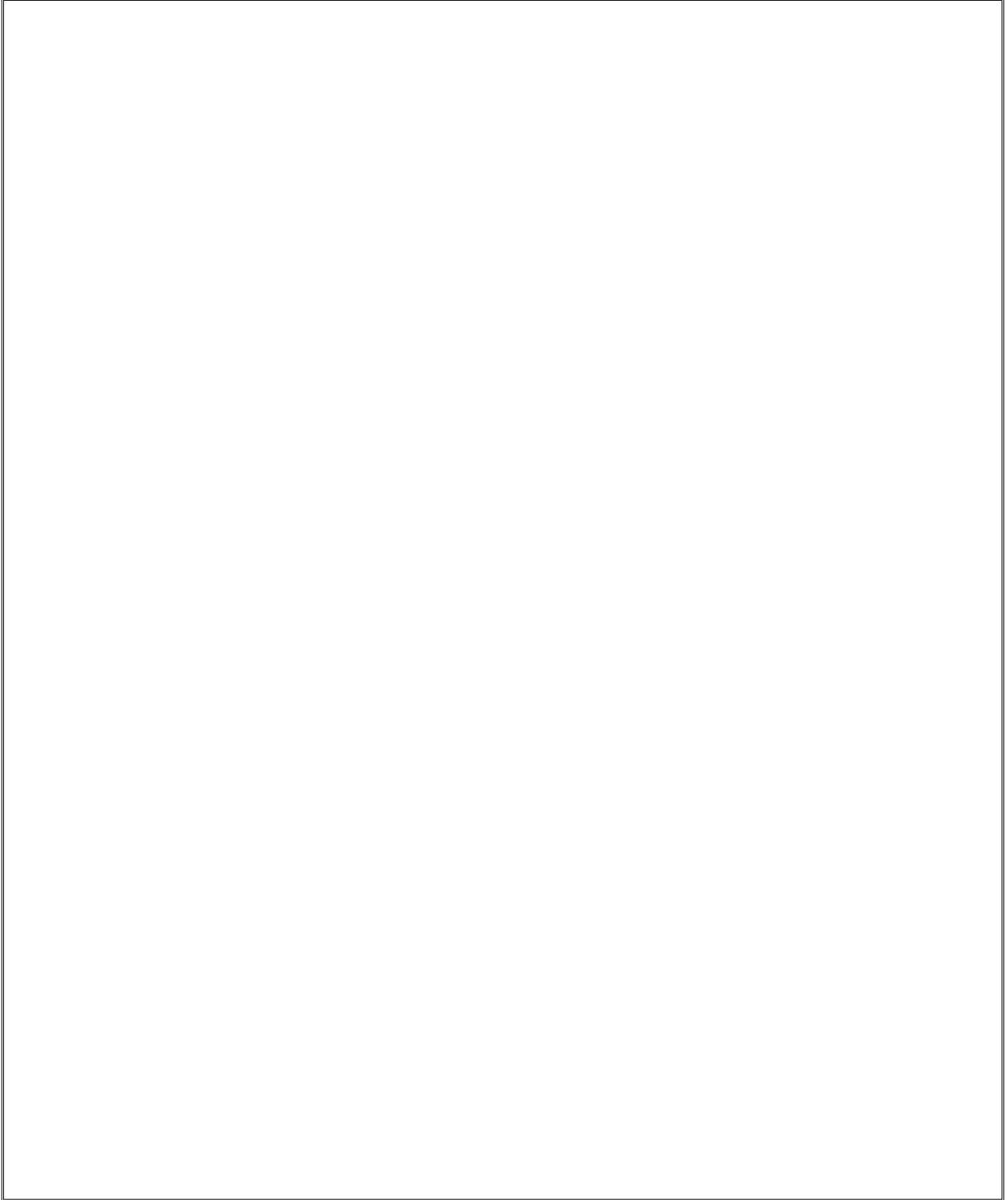
What activities did you do?

What was your child's favorite gift?

What kind of food did you have?

How did your child eat his or her first birthday cake?

Picture Memories



Fifteen Months

How does your child tell you when she or he wants something?

What did your child do this month that made you laugh?

What did the doctor say at the medical home visit?

How big is your child?

Length _____ Weight _____

How will your child learn & grow?

- * Helps with getting undressed
- * Gives and takes toys
- * Says 4 or more words, plus “ma-ma” and “da-da”
- * Drinks from a cup held in both hands
- * Listens to stories; points to pictures
- * Stacks 4 blocks; scribbles with crayons
- * Stands in the middle of the floor by herself and takes steps forward

Help your child learn & grow.

- * Visit the local library with your child. It will help her get excited about books, and it is a great way to meet other families.
- * Encourage your child to use words when she wants something.
- * Help your child “read” simple picture books with bright pictures.
- * Allow a few extra minutes in the morning or evening for your child to help undress herself.
- * Make a game of stacking blocks. Each time you add a block to your tower, ask your toddler to add a block to hers. Celebrate with her when the tower tumbles over.

Remember:

- * Time for a well-child checkup. Contact your child's medical home.
- * Call **Early On** if you have any concerns about your child's development. This is a free service regardless of income. The phone number and website may be found in the *Community Resources* insert.

Eighteen Months

What things does your child like to do on his or her own?

What kind of pretend games do you and your child play together?

What does your child love to say?

How will your child learn & grow?

- * Turns pages of a book by himself
- * Walks up stairs when his hand is held
- * Eats with spoon and fork
- * Plays pretend games
- * Says eight or more words, plus "ma-ma" and "da-da"
- * Kicks a ball
- * Knows and can point to a few body parts

Help your child learn & grow.

- * Allow extra time for your child to walk up the steps by himself, with you behind him, instead of carrying him.
- * Offer different types of food so your child can practice with a spoon and fork.
- * Pretend together with your child that you are both airplanes, or animals, or feeding a doll.
- * Bring books and crayons with you while you're at your medical home, restaurants or anywhere you may wait.
- * If your child doesn't have children his age to play with at home or in child care, look around your neighborhood, local park, or place of worship. Chances are you will find someone about her age.
- * Thumb and pacifier sucking is perfectly normal for babies; most stop by age two. If your child has not yet given up the pacifier, try to wean him away from it. Consider letting him use a pacifier only in bed. Prolonged thumb or pacifier sucking can create crowded, crooked teeth, or bite problems.

Two Years

What is one question that your child has asked you?

What is something your child says over and over?

What do you and your child like to do together?

What did the doctor say at the medical home annual visit?

How big is your child?

Length _____ Weight _____



How will your child learn & grow?

- * Runs; jumps; throws a ball
- * Puts on clothes; washes hands with help
- * Uses 2- or 3-word sentences
- * Calls herself by name; asks for "more"
- * Opens a door
- * Remembers where toys are hidden

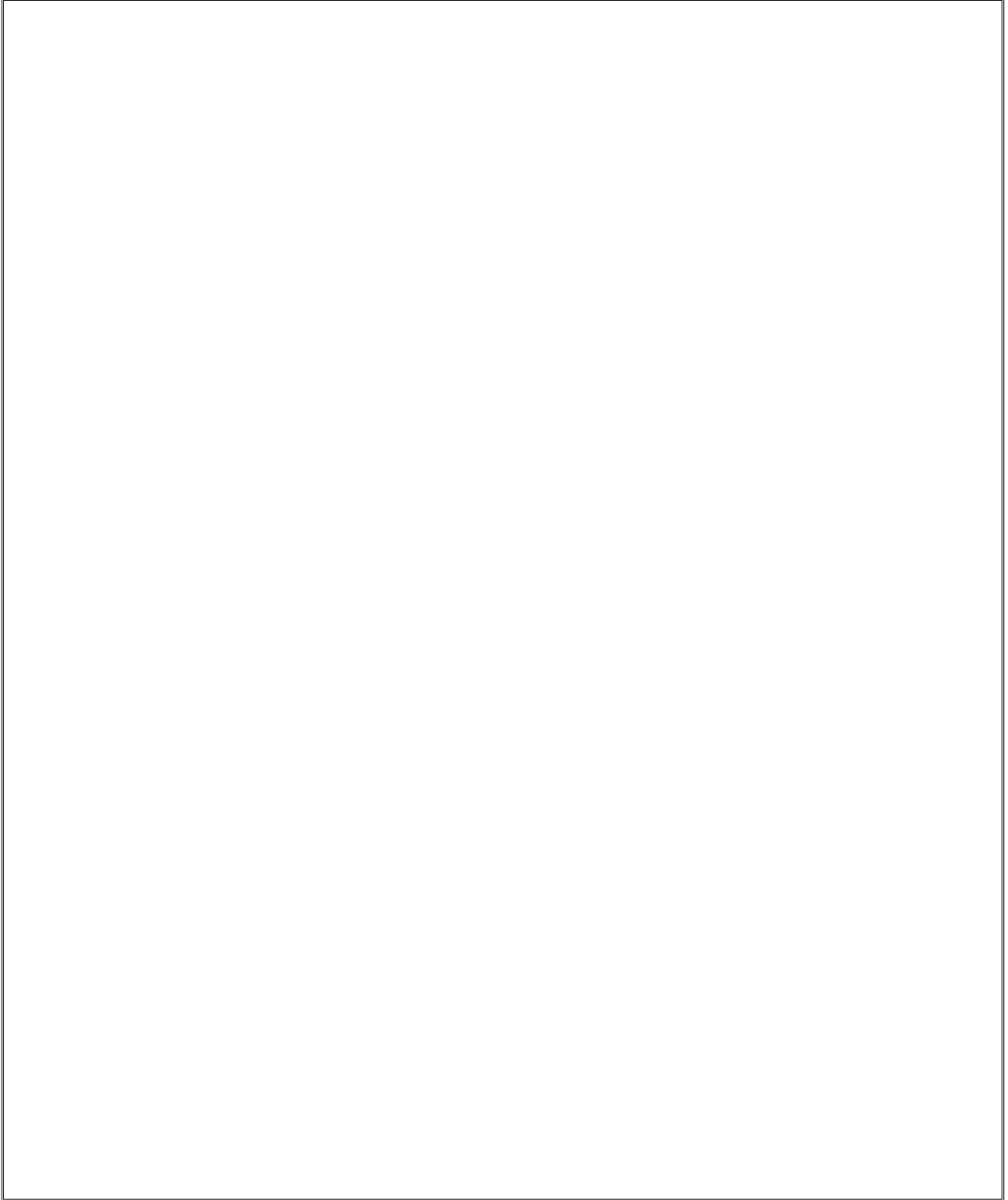
Help your child learn & grow.

- * Help your child by responding to her in full sentences. If she says "Me cookie," you could say, "Would you like a cookie?"
- * Read signs with your child. Help her find letters that are in her name.
- * Let her draw and scribble on paper with pencils, crayons, or markers. Supervise her as she does so.
- * Allow your child plenty of outside time to practice new skills. Exercise is important for a healthy body.
- * Play hide and seek with a few toys. Let your child watch you hide a few toys, and then ask her to find them. Gradually increase the number of toys you hide.
- * Brush your child's teeth after meals and before bedtime. Use only a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. Watch her so she does not swallow toothpaste.

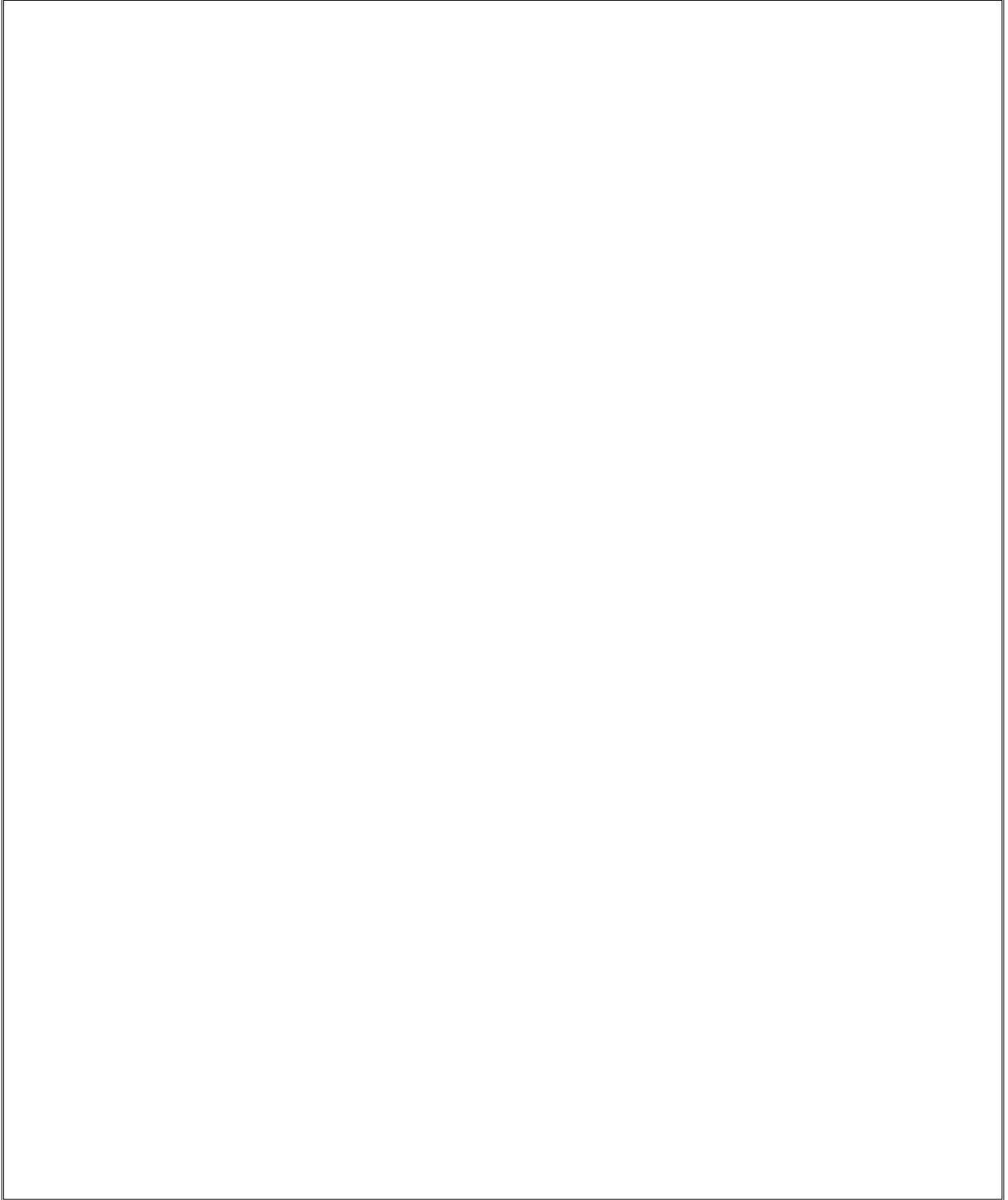
Remember:

- * It is time for another well-child checkup at your child's medical home. Check to make sure all immunizations are up to date.

Picture Memories



Picture Memories



Three Years

What does your child like to do at the park or playground?

What is your child's favorite animal?

What is your child's favorite silly thing to do?

What does your child love to say?

What did the doctor say at the medical home annual visit?

How big is your child?

Length _____ Weight _____

How will your child learn & grow?

- * Uses 3- or 4-word sentences
- * Knows full name and gender
- * Dresses self except for buttons
- * Plays in small groups and knows how to take turns

Help your child learn & grow.

- * Take your child to a local park. It's free, and there's lots of room to run, climb, and play.
- * When playing with your child, practice taking turns. Say to him "You do it; now I do it."
- * As you read with your child, run your finger under each word. Make your child's name with magnetic letters and say the names of the letters that spell his name.
- * Have your child talk through a book that he knows by looking at the pictures.
- * Ask your child questions to give him an opportunity to answer you.
- * Teach your child to zip and button.
- * Praise and encourage your child when he goes to the potty.
- * If your child isn't in child care, consider signing him up for preschool. The experience with other children will be valuable. See page 43 for more on preschools.

Remember:

- * It is time for another well-child checkup at your child's medical home.

Four Years

What does your child do to act like you?

Does your child have an imaginary friend? If yes, share a story about the friend.

Does your child go to preschool? If yes, where?

What did the doctor say at the medical home annual visit?

How big is your child?

Length _____ Weight _____

How will your child learn & grow?

- * Hops and stands on one foot; catches a large ball
- * Asks questions
- * Washes hands and brushes teeth
- * Completes a 5–7 piece puzzle
- * Shares; waits her turn

Help your child learn & grow.

- * Ask your child questions about her make-believe friends. Talk about them as if they were real. You will learn a lot about your child by listening to what her imaginary friends “say.”
- * Read with your child. Let her see you follow the words from left to right with your finger.
- * Play store or office with your child and have her pretend to fill out old forms.
- * Take your child to the library regularly and keep books and other reading materials within reach at home.
- * Even though she can wash her hands and brush her teeth, she will still need you to watch to make sure she does it correctly.

Remember:

- * Time for a well-child checkup! Contact your medical home.
- * Kindergarten registration! Call your local school district to ask when you need to register, what you need to bring, and what school your child should attend.

Five Years

What are funny things your child says?

What are your child's favorite books?

Where does your child go to kindergarten? _____

What is the name of your child's teacher? _____

What did the doctor say at the medical home annual visit?

How big is your child?

Length _____ Weight _____

How will your child learn & grow?

- * Skips; stands on one foot for 5 seconds
- * Listens; follows simple directions
- * Copies a square; prints some letters and numbers
- * Uses 4- and 5-word sentences



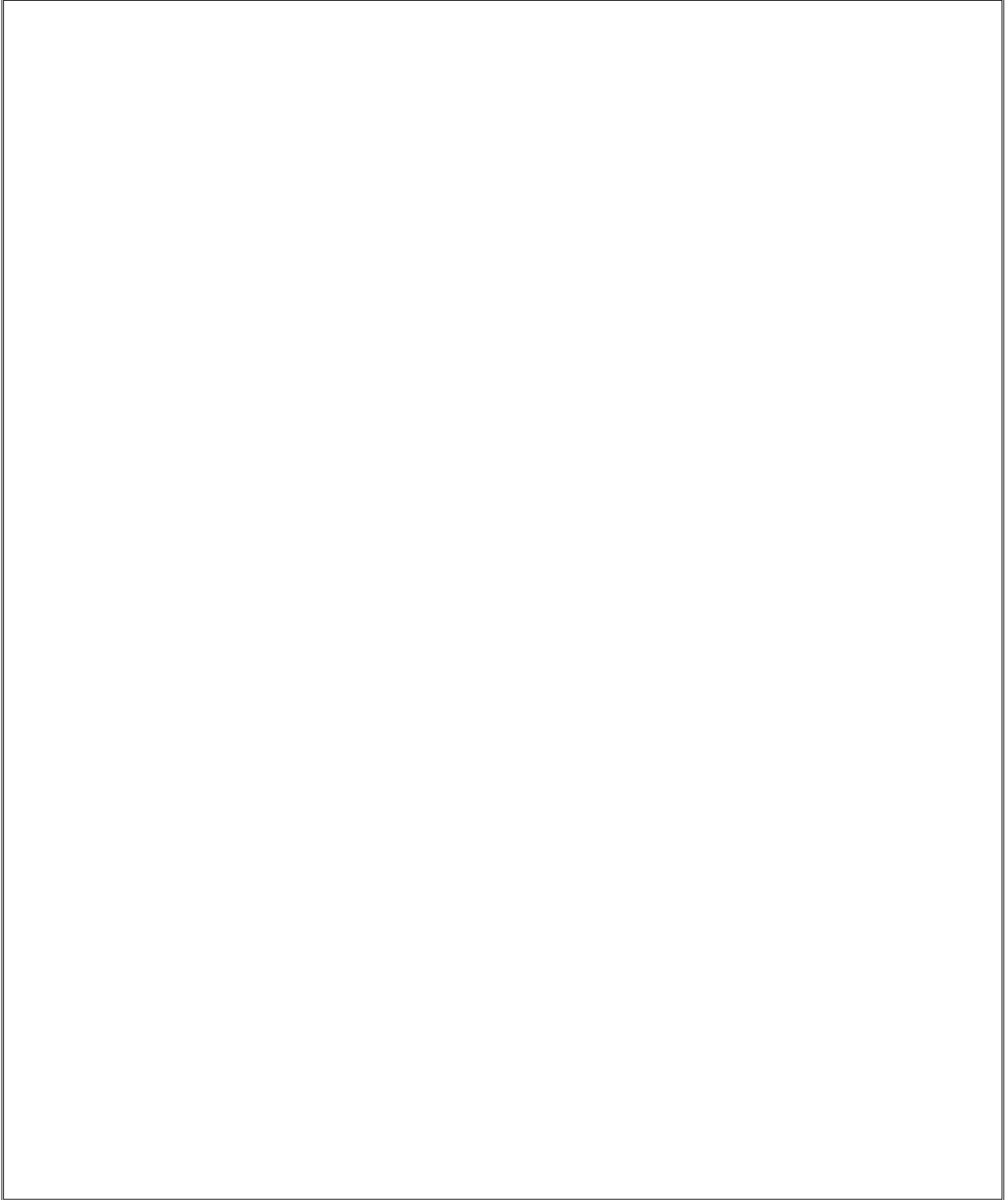
Help your child learn & grow.

- * As you read with your child, ask questions such as: "What's happening now? What do you think will happen next?"
- * Play hopscotch with your child.
- * Encourage your child to use writing in pretend play. Make sure crayons, pencils, child-safe scissors, and paper are available.
- * Encourage your child to explore with art materials, musical instruments, and building blocks. Ask questions like, "How did you make that?"
- * Let your child make a grocery or "to do" list that you both follow.
- * Count with your child during daily tasks (plates on the table, socks in the dryer, crayons in the box). Count and sort jelly beans, marbles, or balls by color.

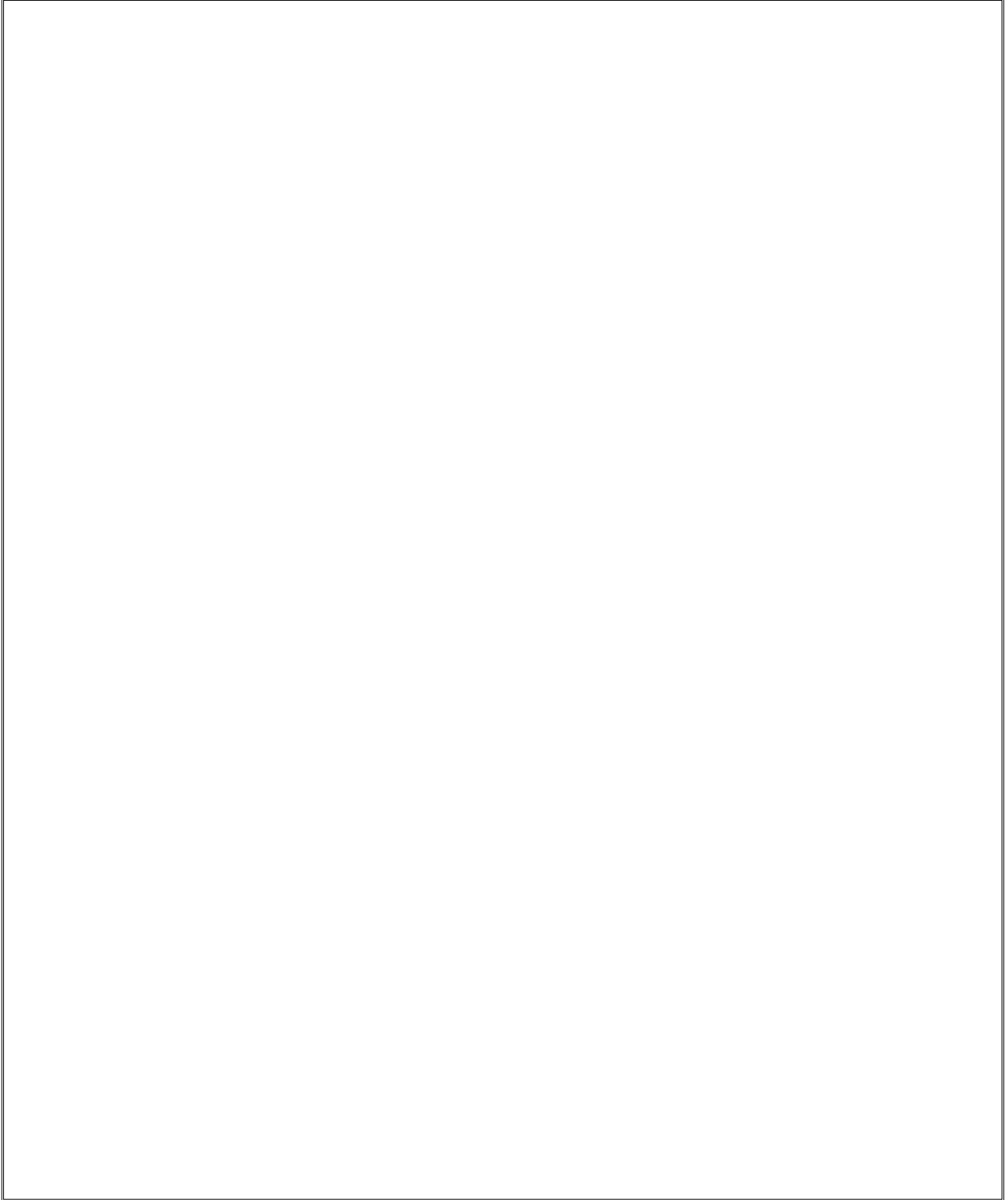
Remember:

- * Time for another well-child checkup at your child's medical home.
- * Your child's immunizations (shots) need to be up to date to start kindergarten.

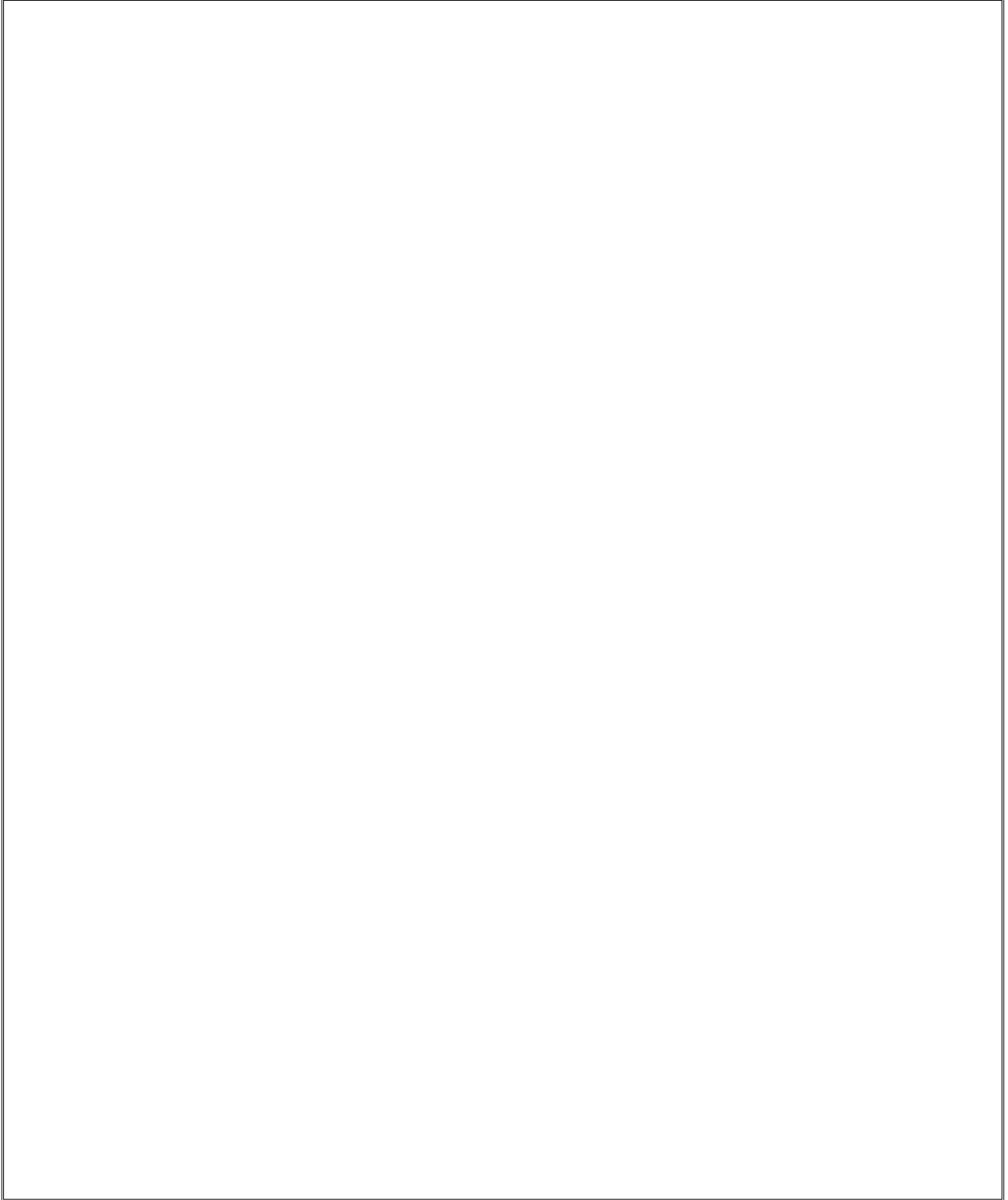
Picture Memories



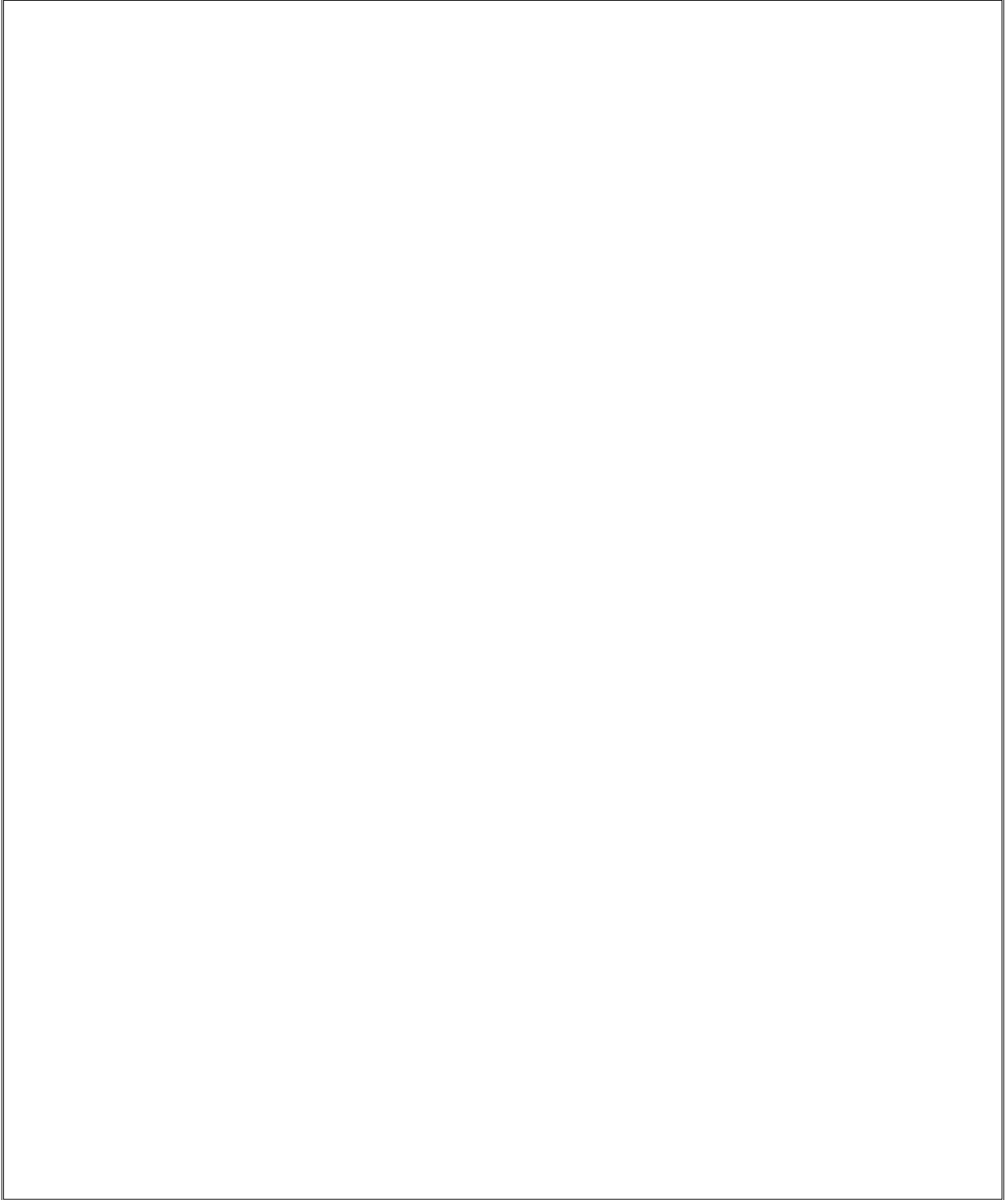
Picture Memories



Picture Memories



Picture Memories



Finding Child Care

There are services that will help you find quality child care. Refer to the [Community Resources](#) insert for more information.

The choice is yours!

- * Visit the child care center or home you think you will be using and talk to the caregiver. Make sure you feel good about the caregiver and the place your child will go each day.
- * Ask to speak with other parents about their experiences with the caregiver.

Going back to work:

- * If you are going back to work, prepare yourself mentally. Take some time to think about the positive reasons you are going back. Also think about how you will feel when you leave your child for the first day, and how you will handle these feelings. This will make your first few days easier.
- * If possible, return to work in a gradual manner by working a few hours or a few days at a time.

Once you've chosen a caregiver:

- * Make a list of things your child will need each day at child care. Shop ahead and have a good supply of the basics such as diapers and formula.
- * Write out a time schedule for the morning the night before. Decide what time to get ready to leave and include time with your child, if possible.
- * Give your caregiver a written list of things about your child, including eating and sleeping routines and activities your child enjoys.
- * Put a photo of yourself and other family members in with your child's belongings to take to child care.



Feeding and Nutrition

Breastfeeding:

Breast milk is best for your baby. It has all the nutrition your baby needs. Breastfeeding for even a few weeks is better for your baby than not breastfeeding at all.

- * Your ability to breastfeed your baby depends on the support you get from other people. Ask your spouse or partner, family, and friends to be supportive. There also are services that can help you.
- * Mothers who breastfeed may lose weight faster, have less stress, build strong bonds with their babies, and have a decreased risk of breast cancer.
- * Breastfeeding can save you several hundred dollars over the cost of buying formula.
- * Breastfeeding can help protect babies against childhood illnesses.
- * Breastfeeding can reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

If you are planning to go back to work, you may need to use a breast pump to maintain your milk supply. You can buy or rent a pump. Eligible women in the WIC program (Women, Infants and Children) may qualify for a free pump.

Infant Feeding:

- * Your baby should have ONLY breast milk or formula for the first 4 to 6 months of life.
- * It's time to start adding solid foods when your baby is able to sit by herself and grab for things, likely around 6 months. Start with simple, basic foods such as rice cereal with breast milk or formula.
- * You can add foods like vegetables, fruits, and strained meats and poultry when your baby is between 6 to 8 months. She should still be getting breast milk or formula.
- * When your baby is about 8 to 10 months old, give her finger foods or table foods that she can pick up and feed to herself. Make sure she's not putting anything into her mouth that's large enough to cause choking.

Toddler Feeding:

Your toddler needs about 1,000 calories a day divided between three small meals and a couple of snacks. Her diet should include meat, poultry, fish, eggs or other proteins, fruits, vegetables, milk, cheese, other dairy products, cereals, potatoes, rice, and grains.

See the [Community Resources](#) insert for more information.

Books to Read with Your Child

Most libraries in Kent County regularly offer free story times and playgroups for babies, toddlers and preschoolers.

Newborn – 3 months

American Babies

The Global Fund for Children

What Does Baby See? / Elliot Krelloff

Beddy-Bye, Baby / Karen Katz

Tickle, Tickle / Helen Oxenbury

Baby Faces / Margaret Miller

3 – 6 months

Baby Nose to Baby Toes / Vicky Ceelen

This Little Piggy / Annie Kubler

Bunny Eats Lunch / Michael Dahl

Where is Baby's Belly Button? / Karen Katz

Hooray for Fish! / Lucy Cousins

6 – 10 months

You and Me, Baby / Lynn Reiser

Baby at the Farm: A Touch and Feel Book

Karen Katz

Snuggle Puppy: A Little Love Song

Sandra Boynton

Big Board First 100 Words / Roger Priddy

Head, Shoulders, Knees, Toes / Annie Kubler

10 – 12 months

Baby Animals on the Farm / Kingfisher

Baby, I Love You / Karma Wilson

Green Hat, Blue Hat / Sandra Boynton

Cookie's Week

Cindy Ward and Tomie DePaola

I Love You Through and Through

Bernadette Rossetti-Shustak and

Caroline Jay Church

1 year

Who's at Home?: A Lift-the-Flap Book

Nancy Davis

Uh-Oh! / Rachel Isadora

Trucks Go / Steve Light

Where's my Sweetie Pie? / Ed Emberley

Little Critter's Where's My Kitty?

Mercer Mayer

Fifteen Animals / Sandra Boynton

2 years

I Can Do It Too! / Karen Baicker

Happy Birthday, Little Pookie

Sandra Boynton

What Color Is Your Apple? / Begin Smart

Sitting in my Box / Deb Lillegard

Jump! / Scott Fischer

Bear in Underwear / Todd Doodler

3 years

The Pigeon Finds a Hot Dog / Mo Willems

I Ain't Gonna Paint No More!

Karen Beaumont

Lola at the Library / Anna McQuinn

Pete the Cat: I Love my White Shoes

Eric Litwin

Go Away, Big Green Monster! / Ed Emberley

I'm the Best / Lucy Cousins

4 years

Rhyming Dust Bunnies / Jan Thomas

26 Letters and 99 Cents / Tana Hoban

There Was an Old Monster / Ed Emberley

A Fish out of Water / Helen Palmer

Super Hungry Dinosaur / Chris Waddell

5 years

The Handiest Things in the World

Andrew Clements

Sky-High Guy / Nina Crews

Monkey with a Toolbelt and the Noisy

Problem / Chris Monroe

Farmer Joe and the Music Show

Tony Mitton

Lion's Lunch / Fiona Tierney



Toilet Training

Learning to use the toilet is a big milestone for young children, but it is important to remember that children toilet train at different ages. Some children show an interest at 18-24 months, but others may not be ready until much later. If you begin before your child is ready, both you and your child will be frustrated. Waiting will make toilet training much faster and more pleasant.

How do you know your child may be ready to start toilet training?

- * Likes to sit on the potty
- * Talks about going to the potty
- * Senses the need to go
- * Can tell you when he has to go
- * Is able to follow simple instructions
- * Is able to pull his pants up and down
- * Is dry after a nap or through the night

If your child cries or gets upset when you put him on the potty, he may not be ready.

It is important for parents to be patient with toilet training. Remember, it takes time. It will help your child if you praise his success and don't make a big deal of accidents or setbacks.

If you have any questions or concerns about toilet training, ask your medical home. Also, there are books that you can borrow or buy for your child about "going to the potty." Ask your local librarian or bookstore for recommendations.

Preschool Time

How can preschool help my child?

Preschool is an important step to prepare your child for future success. A high quality preschool can help get your child ready to read and ready to learn. Research shows children who attend a quality preschool program often have better social skills, better test scores, and are less likely to repeat a grade.

In preschool, your child will have opportunities to make decisions, solve problems, share, take turns, follow directions, listen, create, discover others, and above all begin to love learning!

There are two free preschool programs in Kent County: Head Start and the Great Start Readiness Program.

- * **Head Start** is for 3- and 4-year-old children that meet income guidelines. There are Head Start sites across Kent County.
- * **The Great Start Readiness Program** is for eligible 4-year-old children. Most school districts in Kent County, as well as some community agencies, have a GSRP preschool program.

There also are many tuition-based preschool programs in the community.

The **Community Resources** insert has phone numbers and websites that can help you find a great preschool for your child.



A Healthy Home

Asthma Asthma is a disease that affects your lungs. It causes repeated episodes of wheezing, breathlessness and chest tightness. Asthma can be controlled by taking medicine and avoiding irritants that can cause an attack. Common irritants found in the home are tobacco smoke, fragrances, cockroaches, pet dander, mold, excess moisture, and excessive dust.

Carbon Monoxide Carbon monoxide is an odorless and tasteless gas that can be given off during the burning of fuel. Sources of this deadly gas in the home include furnaces, gas stoves and ovens, kerosene heaters, generators, vehicles and any other items that burn fuel. Carbon monoxide starves the body of oxygen and can cause death in people of any age. Installing a detector is the first line of defense.

Lead Lead causes brain damage in young children. An estimated 90% of all childhood lead poisoning cases in Kent County are the result of deteriorating lead-based paint and lead dust found in the home. This dangerous dust can be found in any home built before 1978, the year lead-based paint was banned. Infants and toddlers have the highest risk of being lead poisoned, especially when they are beginning to move around on their own. Lead can be controlled through cleaning interventions and home repair.

Mercury Mercury is a toxic element that can be released if the product such as a fluorescent bulb, thermostat, thermometer, or battery breaks. It needs to be cleaned up in a certain way. Call the Kent County Health Department or the Michigan Department of Community Health.

Pests Have you seen a cockroach, mouse or rat in your home? These pests not only carry disease, but people can be highly allergic to them and they can cause asthma attacks in people with asthma. You may qualify for free help to use a method called Integrated Pest Management to reduce/eliminate the pests in your home. Call the Healthy Homes Coalition to learn more.

Radon Radon is the second leading cause of cancer after tobacco smoke. Radon is a naturally occurring, radioactive gas produced by the breakdown of uranium in soil, rock and water within the earth. As this gas escapes, it gets into your home through small openings and can build up. There are services that will provide free testing or low-cost do-it-yourself test kits.

There are organizations and services in the community available to help make sure that you have a healthy home. Please refer to the [Community Resources](#) insert to learn more.

This information is provided by the Greater Grand Rapids Children's Environmental Health Initiative.

Great Start Parent Coalition

Parents are their children's first—and most important—teachers! You can play an active role in the work to support all young children and families in Kent County. The Great Start Parent Coalition is made up of committed parents from all over the county who want to ensure a GREAT START for their own children and all children in the community.

The Coalition's mission is to increase parents' skills, knowledge, and participation in early childhood planning and decision making in the community.

The Coalition is always looking for new members. It is open to any parent or caregiver of children under the age of 12 in Kent County.

What's in it for me?

- * The opportunity to help make early childhood services and programs in Kent County accessible and effective for families.
- * Set an example for your child to be involved in the community and advocate for change.
- * Gain valuable information about community resources that may benefit your own children or those you know.
- * Meet other parents who want the best for young children in Kent County.
- * Learn skills that will help you as a parent, professional, and community member.

Learn more about the Great Start Parent Coalition at www.greatstartkent.org.



Acknowledgements

This book is made possible with generous funding from:

Great Start Collaborative of Kent County

Early Childhood Investment Corporation

Early On Michigan

First Steps

In addition, several other community organizations provided information for this book, including:

Kent County Health Department

Kent Intermediate School District

Grand Rapids Public Library

Kent District Library

Greater Grand Rapids Children's Environmental Health Initiative

**Thank you to everyone who helped to create this
Welcome Home Baby book!**





Printed by Custom Printers on paper that meets the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) standards for 50% post-consumer reclaimed material.

The FSC encourages responsible management of the world's forests.

Graphic design by Eva Sitek CPM.



www.welcomehomebabykent.org 616-632-1001

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Community Resources

Important Phone Numbers

In case of an Emergency call 911

Call 211 for help with basic needs, such as food, housing, and utilities. 2-1-1 is a **FREE** information and referral service hotline operated by Heart of West Michigan United Way. It is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to all Kent County residents. **If you are using a cell phone, call 459-2255.**

Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222



Services for Families with Young Children

There are many free or low-cost services to help families with young children. You can always contact Welcome Home Baby for information about and referrals to community services, 632-1001 or www.welcomehomebabykent.org.

Here are a few of the services available in the community:

Concerns about your child's development:

Early On 1-800-EARLY-ON = 1-800-327-5966
www.1800EarlyOn.org

Ages & Stages Questionnaire (information about child development):

Connections / Child and Family Resource Council 454-HOPE = 454-4673
www.childresource.cc

Child care:

Great Start CONNECT 1-877-61-GREATSTART = 1-877-614-7328
www.greatstartconnect.org

Kent Regional 4C

www.4cchildcare.org for a "Parent's Checklist to Choosing Quality Childcare"

More Community Resources

Preschool:

Head Start / Michigan Family Resources
Free program for eligible 3- and 4-year-old children.
453-4145 or 800-472-6994 / For Spanish, press 8
www.michiganfamilyresources.org

Great Start Readiness Program
Free program for eligible 4-year-old children. Contact your local school district.

Tuition-based Preschools
Contact Great Start Connect or your local school district.

Great Start CONNECT 1-877-61-GREATSTART = 1-877-614-7328
www.greatstartconnect.org

Home visiting, parenting education, and family support services:

Healthy Start of Kent County 632-7021
Free program for all first-time mothers and their babies.

Bright Beginnings 365-2277
Free program for all families with children birth to kindergarten entry.

Kent County Maternal Infant Health Program 632-7058 or 632-7258
Free maternal-infant health program for Medicaid-eligible families.

MOM's Program of Spectrum Health 391-6135
Free maternal-infant health program for Medicaid-eligible families.

Moms Bloom 828-1021
Free program for all families with newborns.

Early Head Start 453-4145
Free program for eligible pregnant women or children birth through age two.

Public assistance / Apply at DHS:

DHS 248-1000 / For Spanish, press 2.
121 Franklin, SE Ste 200
Grand Rapids MI 49507
Walk-in hours are 7–10a.m., Monday–Friday

Breastfeeding support services:

Kent County Health Department,
632-7058 / Community Nursing
632-7100 / Main number

Kent/MSU Extension 336-3265

La Leche League 752-8300

Metro Health 252-7612

Saint Mary's Health Care 685-6536

Spectrum Health 391-9437

baby beloved, inc. 977-5683

Nutrition & food:

WIC / Women, Infants and Children 632-7200

WIC is a supplemental food program for pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women, infants and children to age 5. It is free for eligible families.

Libraries:

Kent District Library 784-2007
www.kdl.org

Grand Rapids Public Library 988-5400
www.grpl.org

Cook Library Center 742-0692 or 475-1150
Offers books in Spanish.
www.gaah.org

Car seat safety:

Safe Kids Greater Grand Rapids 391-7233

Child custody and support:

Friend of the Court 632-6888
82 Ionia Ave. NW Ste 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

More Community Resources

Counseling services & substance abuse treatment:

network180 1-800-749-7720 or 336-3909
The community mental health authority for Kent County.

Call your child's medical home or your health plan to learn more about services available to your family.

Your child's medical home Name _____

Phone _____

Also on pg. 3 in *Welcome Home Baby*.

Your health plan Name _____

Phone _____

Services to help quit smoking:

American Lung Association 1-800-586-4872 / For Spanish, press 8.

Teaming Up To Quit 391-6178

Tobacco Free For Good 975-0123

Michigan Department of Community Health 1-800-784-8669

Environmental health:

Refer to page 44 of *Welcome Home Baby* for more information.

Healthy Homes Coalition of West Michigan 241-3300
For assistance with carbon monoxide, lead, pests, and radon.

Asthma Network of West Michigan 685-1430

Kent County Health Department 632-6900
For assistance with radon and mercury.

Michigan Department of Community Health 1-800-648-6942
For assistance with mercury.

Newborn Health

A newborn is a baby who is one month old or younger.

This information will help you in the care of your newborn.

It is recommended that your newborn baby should get his first checkup at his medical home by the time he is 4–5 days old. This is to make sure that he is able to feed properly and shows no signs of jaundice or infection, that his weight is within the normal range, and that there are no other concerns. Please see page 3 in the *Welcome Home Baby* book for more about medical home.

However, there are times when parents need to call their baby's medical home either before or after their scheduled checkups. Call right away if your newborn shows any of these symptoms in the first few weeks after leaving the hospital:

- * No wet diapers in 24 hours
- * Axillary (under the arm) temperature above 100.4° F
- * Vomiting green bile or blood
- * Will not eat, either by breastfeeding or taking a bottle
- * Very hard to wake up or unusually sleepy or lethargic
- * Circumcision problems, such as bleeding at the circumcision site or blood stains on diapers
- * Yellow color in the whites of the eyes or on the skin
- * Breathing problems; blue lips or fingernails
- * Hard to console; crying more than usual



Always call your baby's medical home if you suspect something is not right!

Baby's medical home _____

Phone _____

Family Health & Support

You are important to your child.

Remember to take care of yourself as you care for your family.

Postpartum Depression

Postpartum Depression is one of the most common complications of childbirth. It is not the “baby blues.” Postpartum Depression interferes with your ability to enjoy your newborn. Symptoms do not go away within a few weeks of the birth.

Some of the symptoms are:

- * Tearfulness
- * Extreme sadness
- * Guilt
- * Anxiety
- * Sleep problems
- * Feelings of inadequacy
- * Inability to enjoy fun activities
- * Unable to concentrate
- * Having negative thought about your baby or harming your baby
- * Having thoughts of harming yourself



If you are experiencing any of the above symptoms, please seek help. Even if you are only feeling sad, getting help early is important.

- * Talk with your doctor or home visitor.
- * Contact your HMO on your insurance card.
- * Call **network180** for a referral to an agency that can help.
1-800-749-7720 or 336-3909

Fatherhood

Dads play a unique and hugely important role in their children’s lives. Research has shown that growing up with a loving and involved father helps children emotionally, financially, and academically.

Dad’s Count is helping Kent County fathers build strong relationships with their kids. To learn more, call 632-7281.

Family Health & Support

Family Planning

Research has shown that spacing pregnancies between 18 months to 5 years apart will result in a healthier pregnancy and, quite possibly, a healthier baby. Talk with your health care provider or your home visitor about spacing your children and your birth control options.

If Someone Hurts You or Tries to Control You

No one ever has the right to hit, kick, slap, push, or try to force you to do things that you don't want to do. No one should threaten to hurt you or people or things that you love. No one should call you names, make you feel that you don't count, or keep you from seeing or talking to family or friends. You deserve better and so does your baby.

**Break your silence. Tell someone what is happening to you.
Find someone to support you.**

Domestic violence hotlines:

YWCA Domestic Violence 24 Hour Crisis Hotline 451-2744

National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-7233

National Sexual Assault Hotline 1-800-656-4673

Sexual Abuse Crisis Line 776-RAPE = 776-7273
24 hours

Domestic violence shelters:

YWCA Domestic Crisis Center 451-2744

Safe Haven Ministries 452-6664