

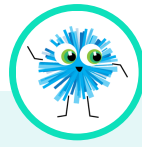
Things to communicate

BEFORE YOU HAVE A BABY

I am so excited for you

Adding another member to your family is a HUGE change. You're going to have to be more flexible and have better communication than you've ever had in your life, while simultaneously doing the hardest thing you've ever done. I want nothing more than for you to have a successful transition into parenthood, so I put together a list of questions to discuss with your partner before bringing baby home.

-
- How will the night waking be divided?
 - If you choose to breastfeed, how will the non-lactating spouse help with baby's feeding?
 - If you choose to bottle feed, how will you divide up the feeding responsibilities?
 - Will you have a "safe word" to use when you're overwhelmed, at your whits end, or not ok, but don't know exactly what you need?
 - How will you prioritize the postpartum parent getting a break even when the baby prefers them?
 - How will you prioritize the primary caregiver getting a break even when the baby prefers them?
 - What healthy snacks will you keep on hand for times you forget to eat?
 - Who will cook meals for the family?
 - If you choose not to cook, make a list of options that have healthy meals you can easily access.
 - Who do you trust that you can call when you need someone physically present to help?
 - What is a list of things you are willing to ask other people for help with?
 - Who do you trust that you can call when you have questions or need advice about the baby/parenting?
 - Who will contact the baby/parenting help person ahead of time to let them know you'd like them to be a resource for you?
 - Who do you trust that you can call when you need help with your relationship/communication after the baby is born?

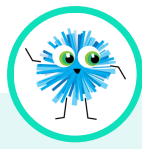


Things to communicate

BEFORE YOU HAVE A BABY

continued

- Who will contact the relationship help person ahead of time to let them know you'd like them to be a resource for you?
- When family or friends come to visit, what are your expectations for them? Will you ask them to help around the house or with the baby?
- When friends or family from out of town visit will they be allowed to stay at your home or will you ask them to give your new family space and stay elsewhere?
- When you have visitors from out of town will you extend the typical hospitality (ie. Planning meals, going on outings,)?
- If visits will look different than people have experience in the past, how will you communicate ahead of time that you are currently focusing on finding balance in your new family dynamic, and would like their help arranging meals or entertainment?
- How will you decide who takes baby to their regularly scheduled doctor visits?
- If baby is ill, how will you decide which parent takes off work to stay home with them?
- What are some small attainable ways you can show your significant other that you still love/care about/desire them while you're navigating this new journey together?
- If the postpartum parent is experiencing postpartum depression/anxiety/OCD will your doctor be supportive in finding the right avenues for them?
- If there is an emergency with the baby while they are not with you, which parent should the caregiver contact first?
- Who will be responsible for baby's laundry?
- Who will handle pet care when the baby arrives?
- Will both parents' current household duties be sustainable with the added responsibilities of a baby? If not, how can you restructure the workload to be manageable for all parties?
- How will you handle arguments that seem trivial to one parent?
- How will you handle arguments that are clearly not about the topic currently causing high emotions (ie. An argument about a dirty plate in the sink is likely about something bigger than that one single dirty plate)?



Things to communicate

BEFORE YOU HAVE A BABY

continued

- Who will take care of school needs for any older children in the home?
- Who will manage the family schedule, or how can you keep the schedule a joint venture where one person is not bearing the primary load?
- Who will be responsible for stocking diapers, wipes, and other disposable items?
- Will the diaper bag be restocked upon arriving home or prior to departing? Who will be in charge of restocking the diaper bag?
- If one parent is required to travel, how will you setup the stationary parent for success as a solo parent?
- Are you comfortable with full time childcare? Part time?
- What kind of child care are you comfortable with? Daycare facility? In-home daycare? Nanny? Family member?
- If you are not planning on having childcare help because one parent will be staying at home, how can you ensure that parent gets adequate time to recharge and care for themselves?
- If you spend 20 minutes pooping, are you prepared to spend the following 20 minutes with the baby while your spouse has some time to themselves?
- If one parent works outside of the house, do they "need a minute" when they get home to transition roles? How will this be handled?
- Are both parents comfortable changing the baby's diaper?
- If the baby poops while with one parent or caregiver, is it acceptable for that person to avoid changing the diaper until someone else can take over?
- If there are bodily fluids involved in a messy situation, are both parents capable and willing to clean the mess?
- Do you have a therapist you trust in the event that things get challenging for one or both parents?
- Would you be open to writing positive cards or notes to each other prior to the baby's arrival, then saving them to share during a difficult time after the baby is born?
- If the baby is sick and waking up more than usual at night, will the night waking responsibilities change?