

The Soon-to-be Parent's 'Are we Ready??' Checklist

Becoming a parent is so exciting but BUSY! Below is a helpful list to guide your baby preparation (while you still have some spare time!)

THE BABY 'STUFF':

There are lots of mixed opinions on what is absolutely necessary - but you can always get things later.

- Determine what you will buy new and what you can find used
- Hint: to save money, accept hand-me-downs from friends, scour thrift shops, and connect with your local buy-and-sell group (often on Facebook)

FINANCIAL & LEGAL:

- Open a joint account (if you are deciding to combine finances and haven't done so already)
- Create a budget or modify your existing one. There are many new expense categories to consider when a baby comes along!
- Prepare your will – including determining legal guardians
- Life insurance

SELF-CARE:

Some ideas:

- Haircut / massage
- Dentist
- Exercise of your choosing, as your body will allow
- Time with friends
- Time to yourself doing things you really enjoy

THE OH-SO ANNOYING ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS:

- Have your Record of Employment on deck for your maternity EI application (if applicable)
- Identify possible daycares & put name on waitlists, as it can take up to 1-2 years
- Consider arranging for a cleaning service to come in the first while, even if it is only every 2 weeks or 1x/month

Right after your baby's birth:

- Apply for a Social Insurance Number
- Open an RESP (Registered Education Savings Plan)
- Passport application (you never know)
- Add your baby to your group insurance plans at work
- Although you likely can't do any of these ahead of time, you can look into the process and required paperwork

MAKE TIME FOR ADVENTURE:

- There's the popular babymoon (i.e. taking a trip before you have a baby); but you don't need to go far – really, it's about having some quality adventure time with your partner where you can experience something new together
- Hint: you may have to be realistic about what you can do if you are late in your pregnancy – but it doesn't need to be physically demanding! It may just mean going to a new restaurant, or taking a day trip out of town

RELATIONSHIP TASKS (THESE ARE OFTEN FORGOTTEN!):

A strong relationship is the BEST thing you can do for your baby. Having some conversations about what you are both expecting and fearing about the coming months will help you to talk through any unresolved issues or sticking points.

Some possible topics that may be wise to discuss:

- Expectations around in-laws / parents and the role they would play. Everything from what 'visiting hours' are going to look like, as well as the amount of involvement they will have, and how you would like them to support you.
- Finances. Who will contribute what? What expenses will be shared vs. individual?
- Roles & responsibilities (who will do what, and how will that change from your current division of labour?)
- Jointly create a '4th Trimester Plan', which has you get really detailed about how life is going to look with a baby



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