

If you have questions about caring for your new baby or where to go for help, call the Healthy Babies Healthy Children program at your local public health unit.

Algoma	705-942-4646
Brant County	519-753-4937
Chatham-Kent	519-352-7270
City of Hamilton	905-546-3500
Durham Region	905-668-7711
Eastern Ontario	613-933-1375
Elgin-St. Thomas	519-631-9900
Grey Bruce	519-376-9420
Haldimand-Norfolk	519-426-6170
Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District	905-885-9100, 1-866-888-4577
Halton Region	905-825-6000, 1-866-442-5866
Hastings and Prince Edward Counties	613-966-5500
Huron County	519-482-3416
Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington	613-549-1232
Lambton	519-383-8331, 1-800-667-1839
Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District	613-345-5685
Middlesex-London	519-663-5317
Niagara Region	905-688-3762
North Bay Parry Sound District	705-474-1400
Northwestern	807-468-3147, 1-800-830-5978
Ottawa	613-580-6744, 1-866-426-8885
Oxford County	519-539-9800
Peel	905-799-7700
Perth District	519-271-7600
Peterborough County-City	705-743-1000
Porcupine	705-267-1181
Region of Waterloo	519-883-2000
Renfrew County and District	613-735-8653
Simcoe Muskoka	705-721-7520, 1-877-721-7520
Sudbury and District	705-522-9200
Thunder Bay District	807-625-5900, 1-888-294-6630 (807 area only)
Timiskaming	705-647-4305
Toronto	416-338-7600
Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph	519-846-2715
Windsor-Essex County	519-258-2146
York Region	905-895-4511

To order by phone:
1-800-668-9938
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Or visit: www.serviceontario.ca/publications

Learn more: www.ontario.ca/children

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Tips for New Parents

Making the most of the early years

All children deserve the best possible start in life. A child's early years from before birth to age six are very important to his healthy development. This is a time when children's brains and bodies are developing at a rapid pace. Healthy babies are more likely to continue to be healthy through their childhood, teen and adult years.

The early years of your child's life are a very exciting time. Your baby is learning about you and the world around her.

You are your baby's best teacher. How you care, talk and play with your infant will influence how your child learns and grows.

Early experiences with you will benefit your child the most. Here are some suggestions to help you enjoy your time with your new baby in the first year:

- Babies love to be held. Take time to cuddle and hold your child.
- Comfort your baby when he cries.
- Learn your baby's cues — when she is hungry, sleepy or wants to play with you.
- Breast milk provides all the nutrition your baby needs for the first six months. Feeding can be a special way to feel close to your baby.
- Speak in a soft, gentle voice to your baby.
- Talk to your baby and tell him about the things that are around him. The way you talk to, play with, teach and love your child will help him grow and learn.
- Help your child explore safely. Share different textures, colours, sounds and smells.
- Share picture books and read simple stories, including in your first language. This is also an opportunity to cuddle with your child.
- Babies learn naturally through play. Have fun, play, sing to your child, play music and dance with her.
- Taking care of yourself is important too! Ask a trusted friend or family member to watch your baby so you can take a break.

A visit to your local Ontario Early Years Centre is an opportunity to connect with other parents of young children. You can also find out more about parenting and community programs for you and your baby. To find a location near you check www.ontario.ca/earlyyears.

Online and community resources

Ministry of Children and Youth Services: www.ontario.ca/earlychildhood

- Learn more about your child's development and Ontario government programs and services.

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care: www.ontario.ca/vaccines

- Learn about Ontario's free vaccination programs and the immunization schedule for your child.

Ministry of Education: www.ontario.ca/childcare

- You may need child care if you are returning to work — search online here for child care that best meets your needs.

Telehealth Ontario: call toll-free 1-866-797-0000

- Anyone can call for free confidential health advice or general health information from a registered nurse, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Ontario Early Years Centres: www.ontario.ca/earlyyears

- Drop-in centres where children up to age six and their parents and caregivers can enjoy programs and activities together such as playing, crafts and music circles.

Nipissing District Developmental Screen: www.ndds.ca

- Access to developmental information for your baby and child up to six years of age which will help you monitor and support your child's healthy development.

Ontario 211: call 211 or online at www.211ontario.ca

- Information and referrals to community and social services available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Phone service is available in more than 150 languages.

Canadian Paediatric Society:

www.caringforkids.cps.ca

- Helpful information for parents from Canadian paediatricians.

