Successful Babies and Children Thrive in Healthy Families

Research suggests that healthy families need specific kinds of help to prevent stress and build positive outcomes for infants and children.

Keep Yourself and Your Family Strong by:

- Creating a sense of optimism
- Developing a positive self-image
- Demonstrating self-control
- Engaging in positive activities
- Maintaining personal wellness for parents and caregivers
- Making positive lifestyle choices
- Having access to positive, supportive adults
- Enjoying a stable living situation
- Enrolling in high-quality child care

New parents and caregivers can be overwhelmed with responsibilities. By focusing on strengths, parents, caregivers and communities can support children’s health, school success and transitions to adolescence and adulthood.

Learn More
mha.ohio.gov/kids

Information provided by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative.

Services to Help You and Your Family

Abuse and Violence
Ohio Domestic Violence Network
odvn.org
1-800-934-9840

Children with Special Needs
Ohio Department of Health
— Help Me Grow
ohiohelpmegrow.org
614-644-8389

Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities
dodd.ohio.gov
1-800-617-6733

Child Support
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
jfs.ohio.gov/ocs
1-800-686-1556

Employment
Ohio Means Jobs
ohiomeansjobs.com/omj

Unemployment
Compensation
unemployment.ohio.gov
1-877-644-6562

Financial Assistance
Ohio Works First
jfs.ohio.gov/owf

Food
Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program
614-644-8006

Food Stamps/Ohio Direction Card
jfs.ohio.gov/ofam/foodstamps.stm
614-466-4815

Health Care
Ohio Department of Health
www.odh.ohio.gov

Children and Family Health Services
1-800-755-4769

Legal Assistance
Ohio Legal Services
ohiolegalservices.org
1-866-529-6446

Mental Health/Alcohol And Drug Services
Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
mha.ohio.gov
1-877-275-6364

Shelter/Housing
Ohio Housing Finance Agency
ohiohome.org
1-888-362-6432
BY AGE 5, CHILDREN’S FOOTSTEPS ARE ON THEIR LIFE PATHS.

New Moms
Children’s brains are growing rapidly during infancy and early childhood. This is the time when learning is taking place at a fast pace. Parents are their child’s first teacher and can help them learn and grow.

Moms and New Parents Can Nurture Their Children in Many, Simple Ways
• Get children’s immunizations and developmental screenings on time
• Hold baby gently when he or she is upset
• Always use a soothing voice
• Talk, read and sing with babies and children
• Encourage exploration with safety limits
• Talk to baby in simple sentences
• Help children label their feelings
• Praise and compliment children often
• Offer choices to baby and children
• Provide opportunities for social and peer play
• Ensure children’s environments are free from second hand smoke, TV or other violence, and alcohol or drug use or activity

New Dads & Partners
Dads have a special place in the life of a child. They provide love and security, support to mother and baby and are actively engaged in their children’s wellness and development.

There are many different kinds of fathers. Dads can be part of a traditional two-parent family, a blended family, shared parenting, or be a full-time single parent. You may know what kind of dad you want to be based on your own childhood memories.

Dads Play an Important Role in the Growth of a Child
• Hold, rock, talk and read to baby and young children, even before they are born
• Help babies and children explore the world and find new things to try
• Attend preschool parent night and talk with your preschool teacher
• Provide security for mothers and children, financial and emotional
• Please don’t work too much! Spend quality time with your child

Trusted Caregivers
Choosing someone to care for your new baby while you are away will be an important task.

Some Things to Consider When Choosing Other Caregivers
• Never allow new people, including partners, to be alone with your child until you are sure they will care for your baby properly
• Before allowing someone to care for your baby, observe their day-to-day interactions
• Be aware of potential caregivers’ pasts, patterns and promises
• Make sure caregivers know the rules about safe sleep, healthy food choices and the preferred ways to re-direct toddlers’ and young children’s behaviors