KARITANE®
Partnerships made for parents

KARITANE CARELINE: 1300 227 464

Parenting Tips: Birth to 12 Months

Together, we'll know what to do.



KARITANE®
Partnerships made for parents

Responsive Parenting



Learning how to care for and nurture your baby to provide them with a lifetime of positive benefits takes commitment, effort, support and some humour. But you don't have to learn it all on your own. We're here to partner with you.

Responsive parenting involves tuning in to your baby's social, emotional and physical needs. You are parenting responsively when you act promptly and match your actions to what your baby is trying to communicate to you.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Each parent brings their own experiences, values beliefs about family life and parenting.

- The early relationship you form with your child sets them up for life in terms of brain development and future relationship skills.

REALITIES

All families experience rough waters sometimes.
For example:

- Financial pressures or adjustments.
- Isolation.
- Poor sleep.
- Communication and relationship breakdown between parents.
- High expectations of yourself, baby or partner.

SAFETY

Seek help if:

- You are finding it hard to understand your baby's cues.
- You aren't coping with parenting, or there is ongoing conflict as you try to co-parent.
- You are finding it difficult as a parent to navigate life's storms.

PARENTING TIPS

- Learn to read your baby's verbal and non-verbal cues to respond appropriately to their needs.
- Occasionally you will misread your baby's cues, this is normal.
- Discover what kind of family you want to be by defining your goals, beliefs and values.
- Develop family traditions, share responsibilities, and allow for moments of fun.
- Be open to advice but remember every family is unique, what works for one doesn't always work for another.
- Parenting is about trying your best, not perfection.
- Healthy eating, sunshine, fresh air, time with friends and relaxing is good for everyone.
- Maintain friendships while making new social connections through parenting groups and supports.
- You are starting a new parenting partnership with your partner, so you'll need to negotiate how you're going to parent together as a team.
- Respectful and clear communication is key for couples (remember, you are both learning to manage the changes in your life).
- Tell your partner how you are feeling and listen to your partner. It's important to share how you're both feeling.
- Accept help or ask for support when needed.

KARITANE®
Partnerships made for parents

Feeding - Breastfeeding

Feeding can be an enjoyable, shared family experience and a great way to bond. In the early stages of feeding, you and your baby will learn a lot from each another. Be patient, enjoy the experience together.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Meeting your baby's nutritional needs is important for their growth, development and wellbeing.
- It is recommended that babies are exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months.
- Breastfeeding is recommended to continue until 12 months of age and beyond.
- Babies may feed anywhere from 6 to 12 times per day.
- Solid foods can be introduced at around 6 months of age.
- Breastfeeding on demand is recommended to meet the changing nutritional needs of your baby. It involves feeding your baby when they are showing signs of hunger.

  These include:
  - Sucking noises.
  - Opening mouth.
  - Turning towards your breast.
  - Sucking fingers/fists.
  - Crying (this is usually the last cue).

REALITIES

Your baby might become fussy or refuse a feed.
Reasons for this include:

- Engorgement/getting a large amount of milk too quickly.
- Low milk supply/slow letdown.
- Incorrect attachment to the breast.
- Sore or damaged nipples.
- Blocked ducts or mastitis.
- Your baby is overtired or just not hungry.
- As many as 96% of people who breastfeed experience nipple pain when first attaching their baby to the breast. You may feel like giving up but try and persist as it's usually temporary and there are so many benefits in breastfeeding for both you and your baby. Seek help early if you are experiencing pain.

SAFETY

- Taking care of yourself while breastfeeding is important. Eat a well-balanced diet, drink lots of water and rest where you can.
- Avoid co-sleeping while breastfeeding.
- Avoid alcohol, drugs and smoking.



KARITANE.COM.AU

BREASTFEEDING TIPS

- Ensure your baby is properly attached to your breast (your baby's mouth is open wide with the top and bottom lips curled out, not tucked in).
- If your baby is attached properly, most of the areola is usually in their mouth and there is no pain.
- If you feel pain, carefully take your baby off your breast and then reattach.

Good attachment



Not properly attached



NSW Ministry of Health, 2021

- Breastfeeding is the perfect time to bond and connect with your baby. Some tips include:
  - Soft words.
  - Gentle touches.
  - Speaking to your baby while feeding.

KARITANE®
Partnerships made for parents

Feeding – Bottle Feeding

Bottle feeding is used to offer expressed breast milk or formula to your baby. Making it work for you and your baby takes a little preparation. Ensure that you're using good hygiene techniques (washing hands, sterilising equipment, cleaning benches). Always hold your baby when feeding. You are nourishing their brains as well as their bodies through bonding and connection.



KARITANE.COM.AU

WHAT TO EXPECT

Bottle fed babies can be fed on demand, similar to breastfed babies. However, this can lead to:

- Wasted breast milk or formula.
- Wind pain due to quick flow of milk.
- Symptoms of reflux.

REALITIES

Fussy feeding behaviour can be common and may be related to:

- Poor sleep routine.
- The flow of milk being too slow or too fast.
- Getting confused with feeding if they are breast and bottle fed.
- Being held in an uncomfortable position while feeding.
- Health issues.
- Oral abnormalities.

SAFETY

Always check the temperature of the milk before feeding.

- Don't leave your baby unattended with a bottle.
- Avoid putting your baby to sleep while drinking from a bottle.
- Sterilise bottles and equipment until your baby is 12 months old to reduce risk of infection.

BOTTLE FEEDING TIPS

- Knowing how much milk is enough for your baby is based on weight gain, contentment between feeds, behaviour during and after the feed, and your baby's general wellbeing.
- Feed your baby their bottle over 20 to 30 minutes to make digestion easier.
- Choose a cow's milk-based formula (if not using expressed breast milk).
- Check the formula meets Australian Standards.
- Follow the mixing directions and expiry date on the formula tin.
- Allow your baby to let you know when they have had enough to drink.
- Seek professional advice before changing formula.

You and your baby are learning together. Be patient, knowing that you and your baby can work through anything together.

KARITANE®
Partnerships made for parents

Introducing Solids

Starting solids can be an exciting time, with lots of learning along the way. From the age of 6 months, milk alone won't meet your baby's nutritional or developmental needs, so it's recommended to introduce solids at this time (unless medically advised by a health professional). Where possible have your meals with your baby. Family meal times are a great way to connect each day.

WHAT TO EXPECT

A variety of foods other than milk are recommended when your baby begins displaying these signs:

- No longer pushing objects out of their mouth automatically.
- Good head control when sitting in a supported position.
- Interested in others eating.
- Milk alone no longer satisfies hunger.

REALITIES

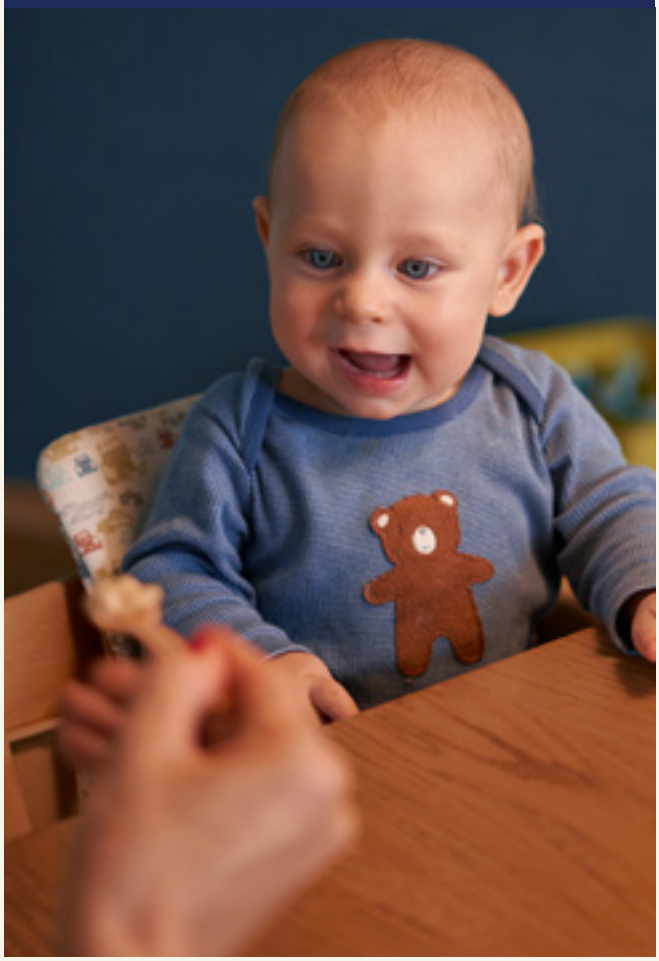
- Getting messy, spitting out food or even gagging can be normal as your baby learns to eat solids. The gag reflex helps prevent your baby from choking.
- Some babies have a change in digestion when starting solids. If constipation occurs, introduce fibrous foods like pear, kiwi fruit and prunes, avoid bananas, persimmon and starchy food for a few days.
- Even without teeth, your baby can learn to chew. Once teeth appear, gently clean with a soft wet cloth.
- Your baby won't be used to new textures like lumpy or dry foods. Be patient as they learn to accept and enjoy solid foods. It is important to encourage them to progress to lumpy foods at around 6 to 9 months.

SAFETY

- Stay with your baby at meal times.
- Use a harness in high chairs.
- For infants under 12 months, avoid whole nuts, seeds, hard fruit, hard vegetables, honey and raw eggs.
- Avoid herbal teas, juice and soft drinks.

TIPS FOR INTRODUCING SOLIDS

- Offer solid food on a spoon 30 minutes after a milk feed.
- Start slowly – offer solids once per day and work up to 3 times per day over a 4-week period.
- Start with pureed foods and progress to family foods by 12 months.
- Offer iron-rich foods like iron fortified cereals, meat, poultry, fish, vegetables, fruits, legumes and tofu.
- You can introduce foods in any order.
- Allow your baby to decide when they have had enough. Look for signs such as turning or looking away, pushing food out of or closing their mouth, playing with or throwing food.
- From 6 months of age, you can introduce a cup for water.
- Gradually wean off bottles by 12 months of age.
- Be responsive to your baby's hunger and full cues.



KARITANE®
Partnerships made for parents

Understanding Sleep

Each baby develops their own sleeping patterns in their own time. Some babies need a lot of support to feel calm enough to fall asleep. Unlike us, their brains are not able to regulate the emotions associated with tiredness. But rest assured, if you respond to your baby's cues for tiredness and comfort consistently and sensitively, you can help improve sleep quality and duration.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- It is normal for young babies to be unsettled at periods throughout the day and night.
- To fall asleep, your baby needs to be well fed and feel calm and secure in their relationship with you.
- Following a feed, play, sleep cycle helps prepare your baby for sleep.
- The average baby takes between 30 seconds and 30 minutes to fall asleep.
- Babies sleep in cycles of 20 to 40 minutes.
- Your baby is likely to stir and possibly fully wake at the end of a sleep cycle.
- Babies under the age of 12 months wake at least once per night.

FEED, PLAY, SLEEP CYCLE



A TYPICAL SLEEP



REALITIES

There are many things that can impact your baby's sleep, like:

- Development.
- Temperament.
- Sleep environment.
- Relationship with parents.
- Life events.
- Physical health.

TIRED SIGNS

Recognising and responding to tired signs can help you better prepare your baby for sleep. Signs include:

- Yawning.
- Clenching fists.
- Jerky movements.
- Frowning.
- Getting easily distracted.
- Staring into space.
- Irritability.
- Crying (usually the last cue).

SLEEP ASSOCIATIONS

Sleep associations can help your baby settle to sleep. As your baby develops, some sleep associations may no longer be helpful. Whenever a change is needed, expect that there will be unsettled behaviours like grizzling or taking longer to fall asleep.

Common sleep associations include:

- Wrapping your baby in a wrap or sleeping bag.
- Quiet music or parent singing.
- A dummy.
- Rocking in arms or cot.
- Patting to sleep.
- Small soft toy (from 12 months of age).
- Follow safety instructions with use of wraps, sleeping bags, or toys.

GETTING YOUR BABY TO SLEEP

- Once you have recognised your baby's tired signs, it's time to prepare them for sleep using their sleep association/s.
- As your baby calms and relaxes, put them in their cot while awake and allow time for them to settle.
- Stay close - your baby may wriggle and cry a little as they settle in for sleep. We all move around as we try to get comfortable in bed.

KARITANE®
Partnerships made for parents

Tips for Better Sleep



SLEEPING TIPS

- Provide exposure to daylight and age-appropriate play every day.
- Put your baby to bed in their own safe sleep space in your room.
- Respond to your baby calmly and predictably, as this can reduce the time it takes your baby to go to sleep or resettle after waking. Your baby is more likely to respond when you are feeling calmer.
- Ensure your baby has a clean nappy, face and hands. Bathing your baby at night may extend their sleep time.
- Offer healthy, regular feed patterns (avoid feeding your baby to sleep if you can).
- A quiet, darkened room in combination with soft talking, singing, reading or relaxing music may help with sleep.
- Eliminate screen time or bright lights before bed.
- Soothe and comfort your baby with affection before sleep by giving them a cuddle or infant massage.

SAFETY

- If you are feeling overwhelmed and distressed, calmly put your baby in their cot, step out of the room, take some deep breaths and then return to settling your baby.
- Always ensure your baby is sleeping in their own sleep space. Follow the Red Nose Australia 6 Safe Sleep Recommendations:
  1. Sleep baby on their back from birth, not on the tummy or side.
  2. Sleep baby with head and face uncovered.
  3. Keep baby in a smoke free environment before and after birth.
  4. Provide a safe sleeping environment.
  5. Sleep baby in their own safe sleeping place in the same room as an adult caregiver for the first 6 to 12 months.
  6. Breastfeed baby if possible.

MORE TIPS FOR BETTER SLEEP

- It can take several attempts to settle your baby until they fall asleep. Listen to your baby and respond to their cries. If they become louder or more distressed, try:
  - Soothing words or sounds.
  - Gentle patting on their body or cot.
  - Gentle rocking in cot or your arms.
  - Giving them a dummy.
- If your baby is getting upset, pick them up and check:
  - Are they wet/dirty?
  - Are they well?
  - Are they hungry?
  - Are they too hot or too cold?
  - Do they just need a cuddle?
  - Is it time to try something else, like a bath, a walk in the pram or a rest in your arms?
- Sometimes nothing works, and that's OK. Next sleep cycle you can try again.

KARITANE®
Partnerships made for parents

Routines

Every home is unique, which means there's no one-size-fits-all approach to developing routines. Consider what's appropriate for the age of your baby and what works best in your home. At Karitane we recommend being responsive to the needs and cues of your baby.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Anything you do consistently can be considered a routine.
- Babies grow rapidly and their needs can quickly change, so your routines are often changing.
- It can take your baby several months to get used to a routine, so be patient and support them as best you can while they adjust.

REALITIES

- Any routine needs to be flexible as circumstances change. Even a hot day could mean your baby will need an extra feed.
- Some changes are short term, such as illness, returning to work, teething or travelling. Begin putting the routine back in place as soon as possible. This will take consistency and time.

TIPS FOR ROUTINE DEVELOPMENT

- A daily routine of feed, play, sleep, good nutrition, physical activity and being outdoors is beneficial for your baby.
- You can develop a healthy routine by understanding your baby's cues.
- Watch for signs of hunger from your baby and respond by offering a feed (this may include solids from 6 months of age).
- Include play so your baby can develop and learn (when your baby is very young, playtime will be much shorter). Watch for signs of tiredness after play (this is a great time for a nap).
- Set realistic expectations for yourself and your baby, and be patient.

FLEXIBLE DAILY ROUTINE – FOLLOWING FEED, PLAY, SLEEP CYCLE

- Variations may be needed to meet your baby's needs.
- Up to 12 months of age, your baby may still wake at night for a feed.
- This is a guide only. It's important to respond to your baby's needs and cues.

AGE	FEED-PLAY TIME	SLEEP / REST TIME	AVERAGE NUMBER OF SLEEPS & FEEDS
0 - 6 weeks.	1 hour.	Ranging from 1½ - 3 hours.	5 - 6 sleeps & 6 - 10 feeds.
6 weeks - 3 months.	1 - 1½ hours.	1½ - 2½ hours.	4 - 5 sleeps & 6 - 8 feeds.
3 - 4½ months.	1½ - 2 hours.	1½ - 2½ hours.	3 sleeps in daytime & 5 - 6 feeds.
4½ - 6 months.	2 - 2½ hours.	1½ - 2 hours.	3 sleeps in daytime & 4 - 6 feeds.
6 - 9 months.	2 - 3 hours.	1 - 2 hours.	2 - 3 sleeps in daytime & 3 feeds.
9 - 12 months.	3 - 4 hours.	1 - 2 hours.	2 sleeps in daytime & 3 feeds.

KARITANE®
Partnerships made for parents

Development



Children grow and develop at their own rates. What is normal for one child may be different for another. As a parent, it's important to provide your baby with lots of opportunities to safely explore their environment and play and interact with you. Doing this helps your baby's language, emotional and problem-solving development.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Your baby will grow and develop at amazing speed in their first year of life. Besides growing bigger, your baby will learn a range of new skills like:
  - Rolling.
  - Crawling.
  - Standing.
  - Walking.
- Talking and interacting with others.
- Using their hands to hold toys or feed themselves.
- Your baby will also learn feelings of safety and belonging. We call this social/emotional development. At around 7 to 9 months some babies experience separation anxiety and may get upset when you leave the room. This is a normal part of development.

REALITIES

- Each baby is unique and will learn at their own pace – try not to compare your baby to others.
- Introduce new things slowly. Learning new skills and being exposed to new activities and environments can be unsettling for your baby.
- As a parent, you knows your baby best. If you're concerned about your baby's development, discuss this with your health professional.
- Avoid screen time for babies. Interacting with you is the best way for them to develop.

If you have a parenting question,
call Karitane Careline: 1300 227 464

TIPS FOR HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT

- Place your baby on their tummy for a few minutes several times a day to encourage crawling and eventually standing and walking.
- Play with your baby throughout the day by talking, singing, reading and making time for indoor and outdoor play.
- Talking, singing and reading can be done when changing, bathing or feeding your baby.
- Provide a clean, safe place to play, such as a clean mat on the floor.
- Have a variety of age-appropriate toys available with different colours, sounds and textures.
- Talk to your baby. If they notice or reach for something, talk to them about that object.
- Recognise the emotions your baby shows and talk about that emotion.

DEVELOPMENT DIAGRAM



SAFETY

- Tummy time is best done on the floor.
- Never leave your baby alone on a change table, bed or highchair. As your baby learns to roll and crawl, ensure your home is safe (power cords and outlets not accessible, small objects or choking hazards out of reach of your baby).

KARITANE.COM.AU

KARITANE®
Partnerships made for parents

Parent Wellbeing

Babies develop and thrive in homes which are nurturing and stable, even though families may experience rough times. Looking after yourself and seeking help when you need it can help navigate these times.

REALITIES

- Many people feel an expectation to be the perfect parent. It takes practice to get better. Be patient with yourself and your partner.
- It is common to feel a loss of identity. Being a parent can feel different to the identity you may have been used to before having children.
- Taking leave from your career when you have a baby is a big decision. It is common to feel conflicted about this.
- Many parents experience anxiety and/or depression (around 1 in 5 mums and 1 in 10 dads). Help is available via the ForWhen Helpline: 1300 242 322.
- Many parents struggle with how to be a role model when they themselves may not have had a role model to follow.
- Struggling to get the balance between career and family is common. Paid paternity leave can be limited, and the expectation can be to adapt very fast.
- Caring for your baby can take over everything, and at times it may feel as though your relationship is coming last.



WELLBEING TIPS

- Adjusting to parenting takes time for everyone. Learning any new skill takes time. You don't have to be perfect, just give it a go.
- It is normal not to know exactly what your baby needs all of the time.
- Being a perfect parent is an unrealistic expectation. Don't believe everything you see on social media.
- Looking after yourself is important. When you're happier you're better able to support your partner and your baby. Identify what was important to you before you had children, and find a way to include that in your life.
- Times are changing, so choose parental leave that is right for your family. Be brave, even if you are the first in your workplace. Discuss your plans with your partner and employer. It's OK if you want to return to work, but it's also OK if you change your mind.
- Seeking help early is important and forms part of managing problems successfully. Accept help from others, especially your partner.
- Check in with your partner and be specific about what you need. Respectful communication is important.
- Get involved with your baby's routine. Be a team with your partner and embrace that each of you will handle your baby differently.
- Take time to connect every day and spend time with your baby. Never underestimate the power of a smile and a cuddle.
- Quality time as a couple is important to stay connected. Discuss what quality time means to both of you. Don't assume a romantic dinner is the magic fix.

SAFETY

- Sometimes you'll feel like you know what you're doing. Other times you won't. But you don't have to learn it all on your own. Getting support that you or a family member needs is a sign of great strength. Support networks exist to promote the health and wellbeing of the entire family.

If you have a parenting question,
call Karitane Careline: 1300 227 464

KARITANE CARELINE: 1300 227 464

FOR ALL ENQUIRIES

138-150 The Horsley Drive,
Carramar NSW 2163

(02) 9794 2300

Together, we'll know what to do.

At Karitane, we understand there's something new and unique to every parent's experience. And while your natural instincts, or well-studied learnings will certainly kick in, it's also okay to not have every answer. So, as you venture out on the journey of parenthood, know that no matter what hurdles come your way, together, we'll know what to do.

CARELINE 1300 227 464
KARITANE.COM.AU