

Introduction

A healthy start is the best gift you can give your child. As parents, you face a big responsibility in caring for yourselves and your children. This guide will provide you with important information to help you make healthy choices for your family.

The Grey Bruce Health Unit and the Ministry of Community and Social Services, in partnership with other agencies in Grey and Bruce, want to support your family through the changes of childbirth and child-rearing. We call this program “Let’s Grow”. We hope that this guide along with the other features of the “Let’s Grow” program will provide you with the information and support you need to nurture your family and be the best parents you can be! *Read on and learn!!!*

Note: The information in this guide is intended for both men and women who are expecting a baby. We encourage you to read the entire manual.

How To Use This Guide

The earlier in pregnancy you read this guide and use the information, the more beneficial it will be. Share the information with each other and with other expectant parents. We hope the activities are fun as well as informative. There may be words in this guide that are new to you. You will find definitions on page 60.

After Your Baby Is Born...

Your Physician or Midwife will arrange appointments with you after hospital discharge. You will also receive a phone call from a Public Health Nurse within 48 hours of your discharge. This call gives you an opportunity to talk with a Public Health Nurse. A home visit is also available to you. The Public Health Nurse can provide resources, health teaching and also link you to a number of services in your community.

If you have questions call your local Health Unit office. A Public Health Nurse in the Family Health Program will help you. See page 58 for a listing of Health Unit phone numbers.

Table of Contents

Watching Your Baby Grow

Your Baby’s Growth & Diary	2
Your Unborn Baby’s Lifeline	7

Nutrition for Mom

Building a Healthy Baby	8
Healthy Weight Gain	10
Dental Health	14

Keeping Baby Safe

Preterm Labour	15
Hazards in Pregnancy	16

Body Changes During Pregnancy

Physical Changes During Pregnancy	22
Personal Comfort	24
Sexuality During Pregnancy	26

Physical Activity for the Pregnant Woman

Physical Activity	28
Pelvic Floor/Kegel Exercises	31

Family Life

Building a Healthy Family	32
Preparing for Parenthood	34
The Expectant Dad	35

Labour and Delivery

Learning To Relax & Breathe	36
Last Weeks of Pregnancy	37
Labour and Delivery	38
Caesarian Birth	41

The Six Weeks After

Your Newborn at Birth	43
Breastfeeding	44
Feeding Questions	45
Car Seat Safety	51
Being a Dad	52
Why do Babies Cry?	54
Cord Care	55
Circumcision	55
Six Weeks Postpartum	56

Looking For More Information

Other Contacts and Resources	58
Book List	59
Definitions	60
Let’s Grow	62