



# survival techniques for new parents



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Tresillian 24 hr Parents Help Line  
**(02) 9787 0855**  
or 1800 637 357  
(Freecall outside the Sydney Metropolitan area)  
[www.tresillian.net](http://www.tresillian.net)

Speak to a Tresillian Child & Family Health Nurse  
on-line at [ninemsn.com.au/messengermums](http://ninemsn.com.au/messengermums) or  
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Being the parent of a newborn infant requires large amounts of energy and good humour. Some times this is difficult if you are feeling tired and overwhelmed by your new responsibilities as a parent. The positive aspects of being a new parent are the many rewards and precious moments you will receive from seeing your baby grow and develop.

### Important Points to Remember

There are several points you need to remember:

- Parenting is a learnt skill – most parents learn on the job
- Be kind to yourself – remember you are new at being a parent
- Start each day afresh even if the day before things had been difficult
- There are lots of supports available to help you in your new role. A great place to start is your Early Childhood Health Centre, they will know what is available in your community for new parents
- Think positively, be practical and stay in touch with the outside world
- Try to retain your sense of humour!



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### Caring for Yourself:

- Take time out each day to do something you enjoy – this may be a walk in the park, swimming or reading a book for 30 minutes
- Try to make friends with other new parents – share babysitting or cups of tea
- Try to limit the amount of housework or home maintenance you need to do (especially in the early weeks of parenthood)
- Learn some quick relaxation techniques to use when things get difficult (see below)
- Try to sleep or rest when your baby is asleep
- Take care of your physical needs by eating well and exercising regularly
- Think about what help you need around the house – list this on a piece of paper – so when people ask if they can help you have lots of things you can ask them to do
- Join a new parents group – this allows you to meet other new families in your community
- Arrange regular child care by a grandparent, friend or in council operated occasional care
- Take care to avoid heavy lifting or placing strain on your back by twisting when lifting your baby or baby equipment
- Be efficient when cooking and make extra meals that can be frozen for the time when you are feeling too tired to prepare a meal
- Talk about your feelings or concerns to a sympathetic listener – this may be a friend, parent or health professional
- If you are feeling lonely or isolated ask your Child & Family Health nurse if they can arrange a volunteer home visitor to visit you on a regular basis

### Caring for your Partner:

- Plan time together
- Arrange a night out – but don't forget to arrange the baby sitting
- If a night out isn't possible – think of activities that you can do as a family e.g. a picnic in the park, a ride on a Ferry, a walk around your neighbourhood
- Find time to have a conversation together about your feelings, relationship and needs

### A Quick Relaxation Technique

This takes only a minute or two and can save you from hours of stress

1. Breathe out with a long sigh, dropping your shoulders as you do so.
2. Relax your face, unclenching your jaw. Become aware of your facial muscles, eyes and forehead, and try to relax them.
3. Keep your breathing easy and quiet.
4. Repeat this technique again, as often as you feel is necessary.

*Adapted from Fowler, C & Gornall, P. 2001 How to Stay Sane in Your Baby's First Year, 3rd ed., Simon & Schuster, Sydney.*

**If you still need further assistance contact the  
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