

Suggested Reading List

Pregnancy

1. The Complete Book of Pregnancy and Childbirth (by Sheila Kitzinger)

Reassuring, informative, and uniquely inspiring, The Complete Book of Pregnancy and Childbirth is the indispensable encyclopedic reference for expectant mothers from the moment of conception to the moment of delivery and beyond. With extraordinary photographs of labor and delivery, authoritative advice on natural childbirth, and an up-to-the-minute directory of useful organizations and resources, this best-selling classic addresses the issues of greatest concern to today's parents.

2. Mothering Magazine's Having a Baby, Naturally (by Peggy O'Mara)

For more than twenty-five years, Mothering magazine has captured an audience of educated women who appreciate its "we'll inform, you choose" approach to parenting. Having a Baby, Naturally reflects this spirit with straightforward, uncensored information about pregnancy and childbirth, addressing common concerns and questions in a compassionate, nonjudgmental style. Written by Peggy O'Mara, the longtime publisher, editor, and owner of Mothering magazine, it synthesizes the best theories and safest practices used in natural childbirth, including recommendations from the World Health Organization, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Difficult subjects, such as birth defects, miscarriages, and postpartum depression, are also treated with sensitivity and candor. Finally, a book for the thinking woman who believes in her own inherent capacity to make smart, informed decisions about her pregnancy and birth, just as she makes in other areas of her life. Having a Baby, Naturally is a celebration of childbirth and an accurate and objective guide to helping women fortify their spirits, develop trust in their bodies, and make the best possible choices to protect their new baby's health.

3. Pregnancy, Childbirth, and the Newborn (by Peggy Simkin, Ann Keppler and Janet Whalley)

It covers all aspects of childbearing from conception through early infancy. It includes information on what to expect during pregnancy and birth and how you can work with your caregivers to make childbirth a happy and healthy experience. It is well organized for easy reading and quick reference. There are more than 45 charts and 150 photographs and illustrations to clarify the information -- more graphic aids than any other childbirth book. It includes the latest information on clinical tests and procedures in pregnancy, childbirth, and early infancy. It also covers concerns regarding the emotional aspects of childbearing, the partner's role, comfort measures, high-risk pregnancies, medications, vaginal birth after cesarean, breastfeeding, and understanding infant behavior.

4. Thinking Woman's Guide to Pregnancy and Birth (by Henci Goer)

The newest procedures, the latest information, the complete rundown on modern pregnancy and childbirth for women who want the facts. Every intelligent, informed woman is used to gathering the most complete information she can get before making a decision. But when it comes to one of the most important decisions in her life--how she will give birth--it can be tough to get the complete picture, even from an obstetrician. Surprisingly, much of the latest research goes against common medical opinion. Certified Lamaze instructor and activist Henci Goer brings women the carefully researched facts they'll want to have. Based on the latest medical studies and literature, The Thinking Woman's Guide To A Better Birth offers clear, concise information on tests, procedures and treatments--and gives advice about: cesareans, ultrasound, gestational diabetes, breech babies, inducing labor, IVs, electronic fetal monitoring, ruptured membranes, epidurals, episiotomies, vaginal birth after a cesarean, midwives and obstetricians, alternative birthing methods, choosing a birth location, drugs and delivery, elective induction, professional labor support, and much more.

5. Having Twins (by Elizabeth Noble)

With ongoing advances in assisted reproduction, increasing numbers of women are having twins, triplets, and more, and they're having them later in life. Having Twins -- and More is the original source parents consult for guidance through the multiple birth experience. For three decades Elizabeth Noble, a respected name in the field, has provided expectant parents with everything they need to make informed, safe choices and give birth to healthy babies. This comprehensive handbook emphasizes optimal health as well as physical and emotional adjustments to bearing and raising multiples, and it offers striking new insights into risks, complications, and treatments.

Birth

1. Ina May Gaskin's Guide to Childbirth (by Ina May Gaskin)

Founding member and former president of the Midwives Alliance of North America and author of *Spiritual Midwifery*, Gaskin offers encouragement and practical advice in her upbeat and informative book on natural childbirth. Since the mid-1970s, Gaskin and the midwives in her practice on a Summertown, Tenn., commune known as "The Farm," have attended over 2,200 natural births. Gaskin, who learned the rudiments of her gentle birthing technique from the Mayans in Guatemala, has helped bring attention to the method's remarkably low rate of morbidity and medical intervention. Couples considering natural childbirth will get inspirational coaxing from more than a dozen first-person narratives shared by the author's clients. Gaskin decries what she sees as Western medicine's focus on pain during birth, arguing that natural birthing can not only be euphoric and blissful but also orgasmic (a survey of 150 natural birthing women "found thirty-two who reported experiencing at least one orgasmic birth"). The second half of Gaskin's book deals with the practical side of natural birthing, including how to avoid standard medical interventions such as epidurals, episiotomies and even prenatal amniocentesis that may be unnecessary, even dangerous, to mother or child. While this may not be the definitive guide to natural childbirth, it is a comfortable and supportive read for women who want to trust their bodies to do what comes naturally.

2. Birthing from Within (by Pam England and Rob Horowitz)

Pam England, a registered nurse and certified nurse midwife, developed the "birthing from within" approach in a series of birthing classes to help mothers reclaim and celebrate the spiritual, emotional, and psychological aspects of birth as a rite of passage. Her book is a collection of methods that have been used for class participants. England is quick to point out that this "is not a script or a rigid method," and she encourages parents and professionals to use those portions that are helpful. There are numerous exercises and activities to help parents, especially mothers, be in contact with their bodies and feelings. The author recommends throughout that the mother and her healthcare professional work together, giving numerous suggestions for making this a successful partnership. England has done a fair amount of research and does include numerous references; at the same time, she makes it a very personal book. It will appeal especially to patrons interested in alternative birthing methods.

3. Gentle Birth Choices (by Barbara Harper and Suzanne Arms)

Expectant parents are faced with a daunting array of choices to make about prenatal care, labor, and birth. In *Gentle Birth Choices* Barbara Harper, renowned childbirth advocate, nurse, midwife, and mother of three, explains all the available choices and shows how to plan a truly meaningful, family-centered birth experience. She dispels the medical myths that so often shift control of birth away from women and re-imagines birth without fear or violence and with minimal pain. She provides practical advice for couples wishing to explore options such as hiring a doula or laboring in water to avoid the unwanted effects of drugs and epidurals.

4. Spiritual Midwifery (by Ina May Gaskin)

This is the classic book on home birth that introduced a whole generation of women to the concept of natural childbirth. Back again are even more amazing birthing tales, including those from women who were babies in earlier editions and stories about Old Order Amish women attended by the Farm midwives. Also new is information about the safety of techniques routinely used in hospitals during and after birth, information on postpartum depression and maternal death, and recent statistics on births managed by The Farm Midwives. From the amazing birthing tales to care of the newborn, *Spiritual Midwifery* is still one of the best books an expectant mother could own. It includes resources for doulas, childbirth educators, birth

centers, and other organizations and alliances dedicated to improving maternity care at home and in hospitals.

Ina May Gaskin is one of the Founders and the current president of the Midwives' Alliance of North America. She is a powerful advocate for a woman's right to give birth without excessive and unnecessary medical intervention. Her clinical midwifery skills have been developed entirely through independent study and apprenticeship with other midwives around the world. Ina May and fellow Farm midwives were instrumental in the development of the rigorous Certified Professional Midwife (CPM) certification process.

5. Gentle Birth, Gentle Mothering: A Doctor's Guide to Natural Childbirth and Early Parenting Choices (by Sarah Buckley)

An authoritative guide to natural childbirth and postpartum parenting options from an MD who home-birthing her own four children. Sarah Buckley might be called a third-wave natural birth advocate. A doctor and a mother, she approaches the question of how a woman and baby might have the most fulfilling birth experience with respect for the wisdom of both medical science and the human body. Using current medical and epidemiological research plus women's experiences (including her own), she demonstrates that what she calls "undisturbed birth" is almost always healthier and safer than high-technology approaches to birth. Her wise counsel on issues like breastfeeding and sleeping during postpartum helps extend the gentle birth experience into a gentle parenting relationship.

Baby

1. The Baby Book (by William Sears, Martha Sears, Robert Sears, and James Sears)

William and Martha Sears, a pediatrician and a registered nurse respectively, team up with two of their doctor sons to update their 1993 guide to "attachment parenting." Advocating a "high-touch style of parenting to balance the high-tech life of the new millennium," the authors teach new parents how to bond with their babies through seven fundamental behaviors, including breastfeeding, "babywearing" and setting proper boundaries. When parents keep close to their babies by bringing them into bed at night and picking them up when they cry, the infants develop better, the authors argue; rather than becoming spoiled, they become more healthy and independent. From tips for a healthy birth, getting your baby to sleep and feeding him the "right fats," to information about early health concerns, the major steps in infant development and troublesome but typical toddler behavior, the authors of this comprehensive volume (who share their own parenting experiences along the way) are assured and reassuring experts.

2. The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding (by La Leche League International)

All parents want the best for their babies, and there's no doubt about the fact that human milk is the ideal food for human babies. What's the secret of successful breastfeeding? For almost fifty years mothers who have been in touch with La Leche League have found the kind of information and support they needed to breastfeed their babies. The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding was the first book of its kind, written for mothers by mothers. Over the years, more than two million mothers have turned to it for information and inspiration. Since 1955 when La Leche League started with seven women in the Chicago suburbs, it has grown into the leading breastfeeding advocacy organization in the world, with more than three thousand groups in fifty countries. La Leche League International regularly holds seminars and workshops for health care professionals and parents, and publishes more than twenty books on child care.

3. Nighttime Parenting (by William Sears)

Why do some families have fewer sleep problems than others? What works for most parents most of the time and why?

Parenting is a full-time, twenty-four-hour-a-day job. Nighttime Parenting was written to make that job easier and to help the whole family--mother, father, baby--sleep better. It helps parents understand why babies sleep differently than adults, offers solutions to nighttime problems, and even describes how certain styles of nighttime parenting can aid in child spacing and lower the risks of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Renowned pediatrician Dr. William Sears helps you find a solution to your baby's sleepless nights and offers comprehensive, caring advice.

4. The Continuum Concept (by Jean Liedloff)

"The Continuum Concept" introduces the idea that in order to achieve optimal physical, mental and emotional development, human beings - especially babies - require the kind of instinctive nurturing as practiced by our ancient relatives. It is a true 'back to basics' approach to parenting. Author Jean Liedloff spent two and-a-half years in the jungle deep in the heart of South America living with indigenous tribes and was astounded at how differently children are raised outside the Western world. She came to the realization that essential child-rearing techniques such as touch, trust and community have been undermined in modern times, and in this book suggests practical ways to regain our natural well-being, for our children and ourselves.

5. Unconditional Parenting (by Alfie Kohn)

Author of nine books, including the controversial *Punished by Rewards*, Kohn expands upon the theme of what's wrong with our society's emphasis on punishments and rewards. Kohn, the father of young children, sprinkles his text with anecdotes that shore up his well-researched hypothesis that children do best with unconditional love, respect and the opportunity to make their own choices. Kohn questions why parents and parenting literature focus on compliance and quick fixes, and points out that docility and short-term obedience are not what most parents desire of their children in the long run. He insists that "controlling parents" are actually conveying to their kids that they love them conditionally—that is, only when they achieve or behave. Tactics like time-out, bribes and threats, Kohn claims, just worsen matters. Caustic, witty and thought-provoking, Kohn's arguments challenge much of today's parenting wisdom, yet his assertion that "the way kids learn to make good decisions is by making decisions, not by following directions" rings true. Kohn suggests parents help kids solve problems; provide them with choices; and use reason, humor and, as a last resort, a restorative time away (not a punitive time-out). This lively book will surely rile parents who want to be boss. Those seeking alternative methods of raising confident, well-loved children, however, will warmly embrace Kohn's message.

6. Dr Jack Newman's Guide to Breastfeeding (by Jack Newman & Teresa Pitman)

Breastfeeding is healthy and natural, but it's not always easy. Dr. Jack Newman, a leading authority on infant care, and Teresa Pitman, former executive director of La Leche League Canada, have the answers that many new mothers are looking for. From achieving a good "latch" to dealing with jaundiced or colicky babies to coping with breast pain and surgeries, *Dr. Jack Newman's Guide to Breastfeeding* includes information on every question a nursing mother could have. If you're expecting, nursing your newborn or wondering about when to wean your toddler, this is the guide you need, for your first baby or your fourth.