

CELEBRATE 3.21 • FOR NEW FAMILIES

New & Expecting Parent Welcome Packet

You are not alone



A gentle welcome for new and expecting parents of a baby with Down syndrome: a letter of congratulations, first steps when you're ready, trusted local and national resources, words from families who've been there, and space for notes. Created to share with DSACO, hospitals, pediatric offices, and churches.

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WELCOME

Congratulations, and welcome

Dear new parent,

Congratulations on your baby! Whether your little one is here or on the way, and whether you found out about Down syndrome before birth or after, **you are not alone.**



You may be feeling joy, fear, grief, love, questions, or all of these at once. Every feeling is OK. Take your time.

Here's what many families in our community want you to know: your baby is first and foremost **your baby**, with a personality all their own. Today, people with Down syndrome go to school with their friends, play sports, work, fall in love, and live long, full lives. And there's a whole community here, ready to cheer you on.

This packet has a few first steps, some trusted resources, and space for your own thoughts. There's no rush.

With love and congratulations,

Your Celebrate 3.21 family [and a local family's names, if they'd like]

Words many families love to hear: "Congratulations!" · "What's the baby's name?" · "Can I bring you dinner?"

WHEN YOU'RE READY

Gentle first steps

No need to do everything at once. Here's where many families start.

1

Enjoy your baby

Snuggle, name, photograph, and celebrate. Your baby is a baby first.

2

Connect with other families

The Down Syndrome Association of Central Ohio (dsaco.net) offers new-parent support, including visits and calls with experienced parents.

3

Talk with your pediatrician

Ask about the health checks recommended for babies with Down syndrome (such as heart, hearing, and vision). The American Academy of Pediatrics has guidance your doctor can follow.

4

Ask about Ohio Early Intervention

Free support for babies and toddlers with developmental needs, from birth to age 3. Learn more at ohioearlyintervention.org.

5

Take care of you

Accept help. Rest when you can. Talk to someone you trust about how you're feeling.

TRUSTED RESOURCES

- Down Syndrome Association of Central Ohio: dsaco.net
- National Down Syndrome Society: ndss.org
- National Down Syndrome Congress: ndsccenter.org
- Global Down Syndrome Foundation: globaldownsyndrome.org
- Ohio Early Intervention: ohioearlyintervention.org

BOOKS FOR NEW PARENTS

- *Babies with Down Syndrome: A New Parents' Guide*
- *Bringing Your Baby with Down Syndrome Home*
- *Bloom* (Kelle Hampton), a mom's memoir
- More in the Celebrate 3.21 Book List

FROM PARENTS, TO YOU

What we wish we'd known

Local parents of kids and adults with Down syndrome share what they'd tell a new family. **[Collect 4-6 short quotes, with permission]**

" [Quote] "

— [Parent, child's age]

" [Quote] "

— [Parent, child's age]

" [Quote] "

— [Parent, child's age]

" [Quote] "

— [Parent, child's age]

FOR FRIENDS & FAMILY OF NEW PARENTS

- Say "Congratulations!" and ask the baby's name
- Bring a meal or offer a specific kind of help
- Send a card, just like you would for any baby
- Follow the parents' lead on what to share
- Keep inviting them, even if they can't come

FOR YOU

My notes & questions

A place to write it all down: questions for the doctor, hopes, and the little moments you don't want to forget.

QUESTIONS FOR OUR DOCTOR

PEOPLE TO CALL

Pediatrician

DSACO

Early Intervention

A parent friend

Other

MOMENTS I WANT TO REMEMBER

When you're ready, we'd love to celebrate your family on 3.21. No pressure, ever. [Name] · [phone] · [email]