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welcoming your baby home

by laura forbes carlin and alison forbes

Your home is intrinsically connected to your physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being. Therefore, how you choose to arrange it, and what you place in it contributes directly to your sense of well-being, greatly influencing the quality of your day-to-day life. When you create a balanced, peaceful, healthy, and joyful home, you are in turn bringing these same qualities into your life.

The imminent arrival of a baby is a wonderful time to create a nurturing home that reflects your values and supports your daily routines. Turning your home into a source of support and inspiration will empower you to meet the challenging demands of parenthood. In addition, as you prepare your home to make space for your baby, you'll also prepare emotionally for parenthood; as your home changes, you too will begin to change.

One of the best ways to prepare for parenthood is to simplify. An organized, clutter-free home and a peaceful, comfortable environment for your baby can help daily routines flow easily. Clutter and disorganization can deplete your time and energy. Once you have a child, the number of repetitive daily tasks increases, such as changing diapers, picking up toys, changing clothes, and the amount of "stuff" in your home could more than double! If you feel overwhelmed by your life before having a baby, this feeling will most likely increase



exponentially when your child is born. The more you can simplify your home, the easier your day-to-day routines will become and the more time you will have to enjoy with your baby and partner.

It can be overwhelming to make changes to your home so start small. Write down everything that is on your mind - nothing

is too big or too small. "Mental clutter" is often as much of an issue as physical clutter. Go through your home and write down anything that needs to be repaired, organized, or re-decorated. Then prioritize your list. Frequently, there is less to do than you think and things that were once important may not seem so once you think it through.



Take this a step further and write down your goals and dreams for the first year of your baby's life. By doing so, you will be a step closer to manifesting your goals. Even if you cannot immediately take action, trust that your subconscious and universe are already at work making things happen. Place your goals in a cherished object, such as a lacquered box. Every time you see that box, you will be reminded of your goals. You might also keep it near your bed and review your goals before you sleep or when you wake. Use them as a guide as you prepare your home. For example, if you dream of special times bonding with your baby while nursing or reading, then create a comfortable, beautiful, organized place where you can sit with your newborn.

Next, look at each object in your home and ask yourself: Do I love this or need this? If the answer is no to both questions, it's time to let go. Be honest and anticipate the reality of a parent's schedule. If you haven't used something in ages, such as the fondue set you received as a wedding gift, you most likely won't use it once your baby is born. Donate or sell those items knowing that someone else may appreciate them much more than you. And before you go shopping for the new baby, take time to really think about what's important to you. Keep in mind that what you can buy and what you need are two different things. If you're not sure what you truly need, ask a friend whose parenting style you admire.

While you'll spend a lot of time and energy creating a home for your baby, it is equally important to have a space in your home that reminds you to take care of yourself. It is easy as a parent to devote all your energy and love to your child and forget to give yourself the same love and care, but the only way to truly nurture your child is to nurture yourself. Create a private space at home that supports and inspires the energy of turning within, such as a place to unroll your yoga mat, an altar, a comfortable chair where you can enjoy your favorite book, or a bedroom where you and your partner can unwind together.

As your children grow and change, so will your home, continuously reshaping to meet the ever-changing needs of your family. You will need to let go of items and re-organize as your family's needs change. Remember that your home is a living, breathing space that can be an on-going source of support, offering you healing, inspiration, peace and joy.