

# POWER OF KNOWING

An educational resource for patients and families.

## HELPING YOUR CHILD COPE WITH A NEW BABY

### The unknown is often scarier than the known

Bringing a new baby home can be very exciting and at the same time very challenging and stressful. Knowing about common responses and developmental regressions can be helpful to parents.

### Common responses for children:

- Increase in imaginative play. This is a healthy coping response.
- Increase or regression in independence with feeding, toilet training, dressing.
- Sleep disturbances (nightmares, night terrors, waking more in the night).
- Increase in aggressive or attention seeking behaviors.

### How to help your child prepare for the new baby:

#### **Before arrival of baby:**

- Include children in the preparations around the house.
- Avoid big changes (toilet training, new school, new move, new room or bed).
- Keep routines (small changes: shorten bedtime routine, switch spouse).
- Review their own baby items (baby book, clothing) or visit a friend with newborn.
- Create an activity space near baby feeding area (include children).

#### **Day baby is born:**

- Be prepared to give full attention to your children first (no baby in your arms).
- Give a gift for the sibling (at hospital or when baby comes home). They will see you and others buying many things for new baby; help them feel special too.
- Make some individual time for firstborns.

#### **After arrival of baby:**

- Again, try to spend individual time with firstborn (each day/weekly).
- For toddlers, let them pretend they are a baby or they are the mom of a new baby. Pushing them to be a “big girl” or “big boy” can add stress. Be patient.
- Include toddlers in diapering/dressing/washing by giving them a job.
- Reduce tantrums: adequate sleep and nutrition. Manage tantrums: be calm, ensure safety, and follow through on limits (do not rationalize or negotiate).

### Child Life Services

A child life specialist is available to provide more support. For services, please email: [khchildlife@fakeeh.care](mailto:khchildlife@fakeeh.care).

## Suggested Resources

### Video:

[Arthur's Baby](#)

### Activities:

Create book to prepare Search: “Nate gets a baby brother” to design your own

Create a New Sibling Chart Search: New Sibling Chart

### Websites:

Search: preparing sibling for a new baby.

[www.babycenter.com](http://www.babycenter.com)

[www.brighthorizons.com](http://www.brighthorizons.com)

[www.raisingchildren.net.au](http://www.raisingchildren.net.au)

[www.kellymom.com](http://www.kellymom.com)

## School Age and Teens:

[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)



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