

## Preparing Your Child for a New Sibling

For parents the arrival of a baby is a happy event. This is not necessarily true for an older child. By steadily preparing your child for your newborn's arrival, you can help alleviate their fears and let them share in your excitement.

- Tell your child that the baby will be arriving. Don't leave it until the last minute.
- Children can accompany mum to the hospital for checkups.
- The child will be able to see the baby on the scan and this will help make it more real.
- Let your child help pack your bag for the hospital and the clothes for the newborn.
- Talk to your child about who will mind them when you go to the hospital to have the baby.
- It can be useful to talk to your child about what the baby will be like and what you expect the baby will be able to do.
- Ensure your child is one of the first to see the new baby when it arrives. Allow them time with the baby before other people arrive.
- Bring a small gift to the hospital and then give it to your child as a gift from their new sibling.
- Try to keep the child's routine as much unchanged as possible when mum is in hospital.
- When you bring the newborn home from hospital continue to keep the older child involved.
- When the newborn is sleeping ensure to spend some quality time with your older child.
- Remind relatives and friends not to neglect your older child. The older child will want to talk about things other than the new arrival.
- Talk to your child about their feelings and tell them it's OK to be a little jealous, they will soon get use to the new arrival.
- Let your older child know that you still love them and care for them as much as you did before the new arrival.