

Wives Can Help Husbands Gain Confidence with Infant Care

All new parents suffer self-doubt. Full of questions, they feel the stress of parenting. New dads, however, often feel a greater lack of confidence than moms when it comes to providing infant care.

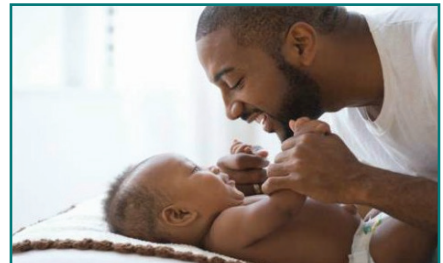
Most dads are eager to provide daily care for their newborn. According to research, a wife's words of encouragement or criticism directly affect a dad's ability to provide that care. In fact, she may be the most important factor in helping her husband gain the confidence to care for their infant.

Harsh, critical words cause dads to withdraw from care giving. Moms need patience not to take over and push dads out. Careless remarks and little support from family members also undermine a father's desire and ability to provide care.

Children have healthier and happier outcomes when their fathers provide loving care. They exhibit better behavior, have better school performance, and develop a higher self-esteem. Fathers who provide daily hands-on care with their infant continue this involvement as their child grows.

Help your husband be a confident childcare father.

- Attend an infant care class - together.
- Praise his efforts at changing diapers, dressing the baby and other daily care tasks.
- Avoid critical remarks.
- Let him learn methods to calm the baby when she cries. Leave the room.
- Encourage him to care for the baby while you do errands or other needed tasks.
- Allow him to burp the baby. He can also give a bottle of formula or breast milk.
- Learn his techniques and methods. Moms do not always have the right answers. Dads have great ideas too.



*Brought to you by Parent Help Line at HSHS St. John's Children's Hospital
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