



10 THINGS YOUR CHURCH CAN DO TO SUPPORT THE HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT OF INFANTS

1. **Become Safe Sleep Ambassadors.**

Learn the ABCs of safe sleep, that babies are safest when they sleep Alone, on their Backs and in a Crib. Utilize materials in the Every Baby to 1 Toolkit (brochure, bookmark, flyer, pastoral sermon notes) during your church's Safe Sleep awareness campaign. Provide materials to church and community members.

2. **Establish a formal, written Safe Sleep policy for your church.**

Provide a copy of the written policy to parents and families who utilize your church's nursery, children's church and outreach services. A sample policy is included in the Every Baby to 1 Toolkit.

3. **Become a baby friendly-church.**

How sensitive is your church to the needs of a mother? Do you offer childcare? Do you support breastfeeding mothers? Are you kind to the mother with a fussy baby? The World Health Organization has developed certain baby friendly policies that can be adopted for your church. Visit: <https://www.babyfriendlyusa.org/about-us/baby-friendly-hospital-initiative/the-ten-steps>.

4. **Give New Parent Baskets.**

Give a basket to parents in your church after they announce their pregnancy or after their baby dedication. Fill the basket with baby items like diapers and onesies and resources like the brochure and resource guide included in the Every Baby to 1 Toolkit.

5. **Host a mom and baby shower.**

Host an annual mom and baby shower. Invite pregnant women or moms with newborns to a party where guests bring supplies families can use like diapers, onesies, books, toiletries and wipes. You could also provide free hairstyling, make-up, or manicures for first time moms. If you don't know a pregnant woman or new mom to invite, have the party anyway and donate the items to a local shelter or organization that serves children and families.

6. **Host a parent's class for new and expecting parents at your church.**

For many first time parents the first few nights at home with their newborn can be overwhelming. You can play a crucial role in providing education to expectant parents before baby's arrival. In this class you can provide education on topics such as: a) What to expect in the delivery room; b) How to change a baby's diaper; b) Safe Sleep 101; c) Developmental milestones, d) Medical appointments and vaccines during the first year and more.

7. Conduct a diaper drive.

Babies use a lot of diapers and diapers can be expensive. On average, newborns use 70-84 diapers per week and the average cost for an 80 count box of diapers is \$24. Many families struggle to afford the nearly \$100 each month to keep their little one in diapers. Collecting diapers to give to families is a very useful, valued gift.

8. Take meals to new parents and those experiencing pregnancy complications.

After childbirth it can be difficult for families to prepare healthy meals for their family. The responsibilities of caring for a newborn can be exhausting and the last thing any new parent wants to worry about is what's for dinner. When a member of your congregation has a baby or is facing pregnancy complications like bedrest, offer to deliver a healthy meal. They'll be glad you did.

9. Offer transportation and other forms of support for expectant and new parents.

The recommended prenatal visit schedule for expectant moms includes an average of 15 visits! During these visits parents hear the sound of their child's heartbeat for the first time, learn whether they're having a boy or a girl, and it's also the time doctors can detect potential pregnancy complications. Newborns have an average of 7 or more medical appointments during their first year of life. But many expectant parents don't have a reliable source of transportation to make it to all of these visits or someone to care for their other children during these medical appointments. Could your church van be used to transport expectant moms to medical appointments? Or is there a person in your congregation who could provide child care for other children while mom or dad visit the doctor.

10. Sponsor a quit smoking class.

We all know our body is our temple, and for expectant parents, their body is also their baby's temple. Smoking while pregnant contributes to preterm and low birth weight babies. Likewise, smoking around infants contributes to asthma and infant mortality. Contact your local Health Department, American Lung Association, or American Heart Association to sponsor a quit smoking class for church and community members who smoke.

1 MORE THING

Encourage other churches in your community to implement the Every Baby to 1 Toolkit.

Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed.
Ecclesiastes 4:9 (NLT)

We'd love to hear what your church is doing to promote the healthy development of infants in your community. Share other things your church can do on Facebook and Twitter. #EveryBabyto1

CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION:

New Bethel Church - 745 Walker Ave. Kansas City, KS

913-281-1993 • info@everybabyto1.org

www.everybabyto1.org

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