

# PREPARING OUR CHILD FOR A SIBLING



## Preparing our child for the birth:

The birth time is unknown for some, and for some, it is scheduled.

The more details we have, the more we should share because the more our child knows what will take place, the calmer they might feel about it.

## Things our child can benefit from knowing:

- Who will care for them during their sibling's birth( and recuperation after birth)?
- If we won't be home for a couple of days, it's best to share the length of that duration. Young kids need our help to understand this in a tangible way. We can create a visual for our kids. An example is a calendar where our kids can stick a sticker on each day that passes, count how many days are left, and have this in a visual place like on the fridge. Another example is making a paper chain each day. Our child can tear off one, and on each piece of paper, we can write them a little loving note or draw them a picture.

This is what a paper chain looks like, we put one chain per day:



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## Preparing our child for the birth:

- If we plan on doing a **home birth**, we really want to explain how we will be proceeding and what it might be like for our child to hear us yelling/crying, etc. It's important we walk them through the things they might hear and witness- unless we plan on not having them home at that time. *This is a personal choice.*
- We can spend time **role-playing with a baby doll** what it's like to care for a baby. We can pretend the baby is crying, needs to be held, is cold and needs a blanket, diaper change or needs a bath. When we play with our child, we can get them involved by asking them to get a diaper, help wash the baby when bathing, cover the baby with a blanket, get us some water, etc. This will help our child see what it is like to care for a newborn and how they can be involved and useful. Children feel special when we allow them to participate in baby caring. Hopefully, we can implement this approach when bringing the newborn home.

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## Preparing our child for the birth:

- Our child might have worries about their life drastically changing once having a newborn in the house. We can reassure them by going through the things that will remain the same and differ due to having a sibling. Here are some examples; of course, it can vary depending on each of our unique lives:

### **THINGS THAT WILL REMAIN THE SAME:**

- Daddy will continue to be the one who brings you to daycare
- Your items, like the truck you received on your birthday, will always just be yours
- You will continue to go to the library weekly
- I will still lay down with you every night when its bedtime

### **THINGS THAT WILL BE DIFFERENT:**

- Grandma will be the one to pick you up from daycare, just for a little while
- We are going to put a crib in your room, and at a certain point, your sibling will be sleeping in the same room as you
- The family items we have, we will all be sharing them as a family with one more person

*The more specific and detailed the better.*