



Being a mum

Information for you

An Easy Read guide





How to use this guide



Parenting SA wrote this document. When you see the word 'we', it means Parenting SA.



We wrote this guide in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.



This Easy Read guide is a summary of another guide. This means it only includes the most important ideas.



You can find the other guide on our website at www.parenting.sa.gov.au/easy-guides/being-a-mum-parent-easy-guide



You can ask for help to read this guide.

A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.



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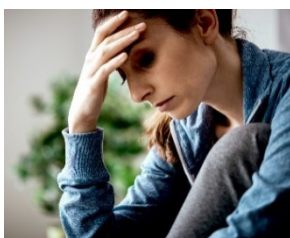


What is this guide about?



When you become a mum, you might feel:

- happy
- proud.



It can also make you feel:

- worried
- scared.



When you become a mum, you might find some things hard.



But most mums work things out as they go along.



The most important thing you can do is make your children feel:

- loved
- safe.



Being a mum



We all have different ideas about what being a mum can be.

Our ideas can come from:



- how we grew up



- our background or religion



- the media and internet



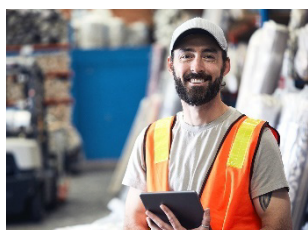
- what other people do.



Some parts of the community think that:



- mums are the ones in the family who look after the children



- their partner is the one who earns money to support their family.



But this is changing.

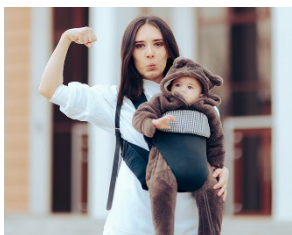


Looking after children is best when mums and their partners:

- work together
- support each other.



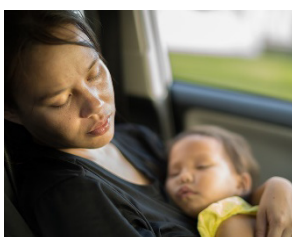
Important things you can do as a mum



You might feel that you must be a perfect mum like on TV.

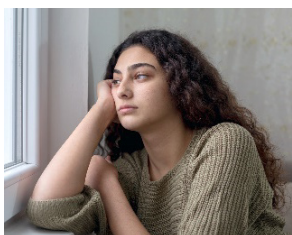


There's no such thing as a perfect mum.



You might feel lots of things when you become a mum.

It's important for you to:



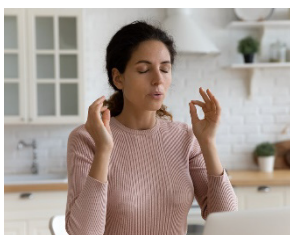
- know how you're feeling



- talk to someone you trust about your feelings.



This includes when you feel angry.



When you feel angry, you could:

- stop what you're doing
- take a deep breath.

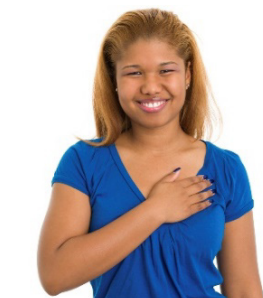


It's also important for you to stay calm.



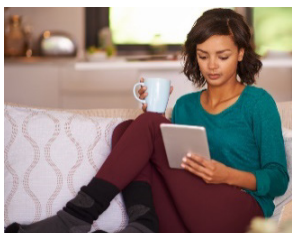
You are an expert on what your children:

- want
- need.



Trust yourself.

You will work out what is best for your children.



It's important to make time for:

- yourself
- what you need.

It's also important to make time for your:



- partner



- family



- friends.



Your relationships with them can help support you.



Getting good information



There is lots of information about being a mum.

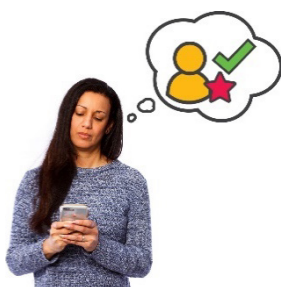
This information can come from:



- your family and friends



- the internet.

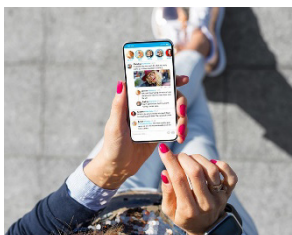


If you find information on the internet, make sure it's from someone:

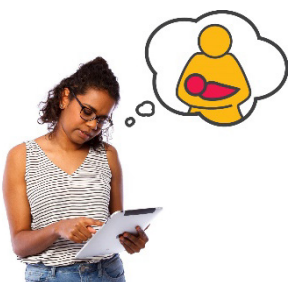
- who is an expert
- you trust.



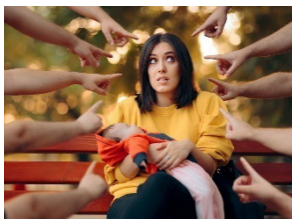
This includes looking for information about childcare services.



Some mums like sharing their experiences on social media.



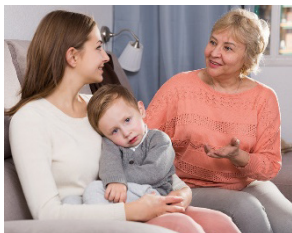
If you share your experiences on social media, you might get support from other mums.



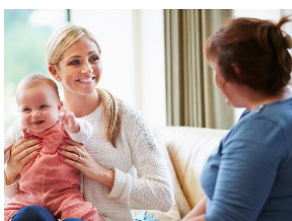
But some mums might make you feel bad about the way you care for your children.



Before you share anything on social media, think about what might happen.

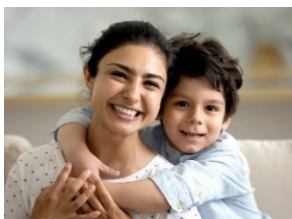


Your family and friends might give you information about how to be a mum.



It can help to:

- listen
- be open to ideas.



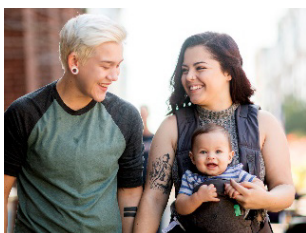
But you can also make your own choices about how to be a mum.



Working with your partner



If you have a partner, it is easier to help your child grow when you work together.



When your child is born, you and your partner can share ideas about how to support:

- each other
- your family.

It's good for you and your partner to talk about what is important for:



- you



- your family.



It's also okay if you and your partner don't agree on how to support the family.



Children can cope when parents support them in different ways.



But it's harder for children to cope when parents:

- fight
- put each other down.

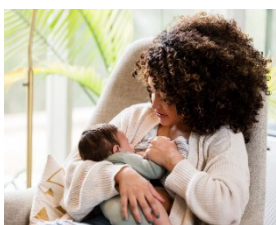


What are the different types of mums?

First time mums



When you have your first baby, there are big changes in your life.



What your baby needs might be more important than other things in your life.

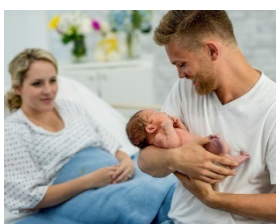
Some things you could try



Feel proud about what you do each day.
This includes small things, like making the bed.



Set goals that you can reach.



Support your partner to care for your new baby from the start.



It's okay if you need to:



- put your crying baby safely in their cot



- take a few minutes to give yourself a break.



But make sure the baby is safe first.



It's okay to ask for help if you need it.



You can ask:



- your family and friends



- your doctor



- other health care workers.

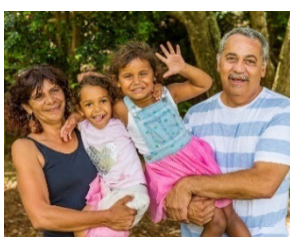


Mums with a partner



Children can learn different things from what other people do.

This includes learning about:



- relationships with people



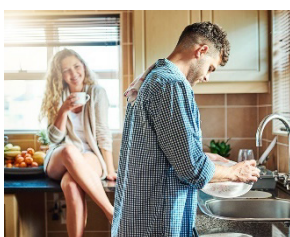
- getting along with other people.

Some things you could try

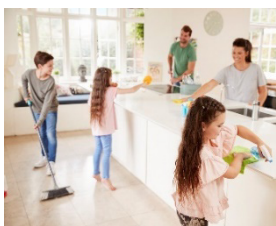


It's best when you and your partner show that you both:

- care for each other
- respect each other.

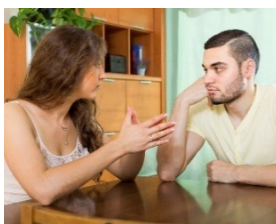


It's also good when you and your partner share daily tasks, like washing the dishes.



This shows children how to:

- work well with others
- help their family.



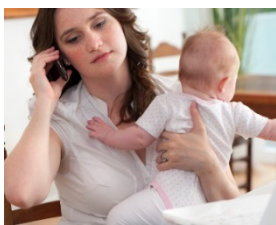
If you and your partner don't agree on something, it can help to:

- be calm
- talk about it.



It's good if you and your partner can agree on how to work out problems about raising your children.

Mums with no partner



Looking after your children by yourself can be hard.



But you might also like deciding how to care for your children on your own.



It's okay to feel both of these things at different times.



Some things you could try



Try to build a group of people who can support you.

For example, you can join a local parent's group.

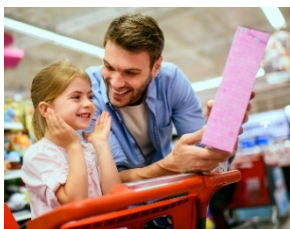


Try to spend time with other adults.



It's best not to talk to your children about what worries you.

You might try talking to another adult instead.



Your children can learn different things if there is a man in their life.



This could be someone you trust, like:

- a member of your family
- a friend.



If your child spends time with their dad, let them have their own relationship with him.

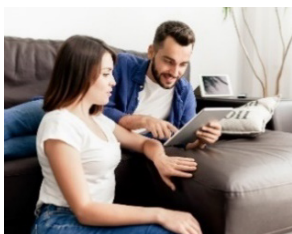
They shouldn't feel guilty about loving both of you.

Step-mums



You might be in a relationship with someone who already has children.

You might live in a home with:



- your partner



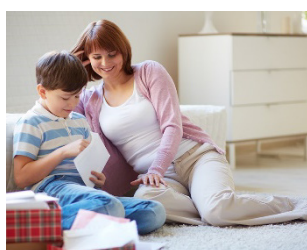
- their children



- your own children.



You and your partner's families change when you become a step-mum.



When you become a step-mum, be patient.

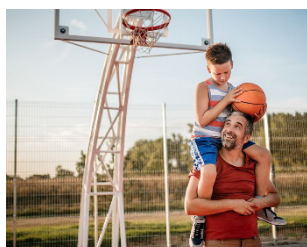
Give your partner's children time to get to know you.

Some things you could try



Do things together with:

- your partner
- their children.



But it's also good to let your partner and their children spend time together without you.



And it's good for you to spend time with your own children.



Work with your partner to fix any problems.



When your partner's children do something wrong, let your partner deal with it.



What can all mums do?

Show your love



Showing love to your children is very important.



Your children need to feel:

- safe
- respected
- loved.

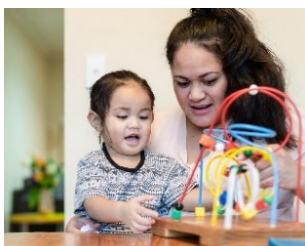
Some things you could try



Show love when you respond to what your baby needs.

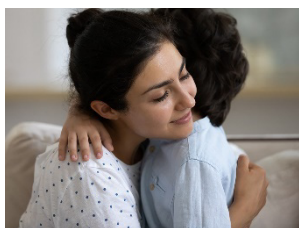


For example, you can show love to your baby when you feed them.



Show that you enjoy spending time with your children.

It is good to play and have fun together.



Tell your children you love them.

Give them hugs.



Do small things to make your children feel special.

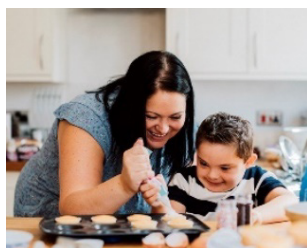
For example, you can write a note that says 'I love you' on it.



When your children grow up, keep showing them love.

Be someone your children can look up to

Children can learn things from you by:



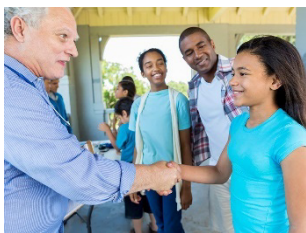
- watching



- listening.



Some things you could try



Treat others the way you want:

- to be treated
- your children to treat other people.



Live by what you:

- believe in
- think is right.



It can help to learn how to control your emotions when bad things happen.



But it's also important to show your emotions at the right time.



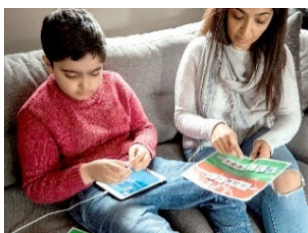
Support your children



You are the best person to help your children learn about:

- living in our world
- getting along with other people.

When you support your children, they can:



- learn new things



- reach their goals



- be the best people they can be.



Some things you could try



Teach your children new things as they grow up.



Make sure your family:

- is strong
- works well together.



For example, you and your family can share housework.



Support your children to do jobs around your home.



You can help your children:

- learn new skills
- work out what they like to do.



It's important to treat everyone in your family with respect.



It's important to make time to learn what's happening in their lives.



Use kind words to teach children about how you want them to behave.

Help your children connect with:



- friends



- trusted adults, like teachers.



It's also important to say 'Sorry' if you make a mistake.

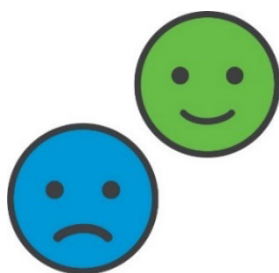


Connect with teenagers



When your child becomes a teenager, they go through lots of changes.

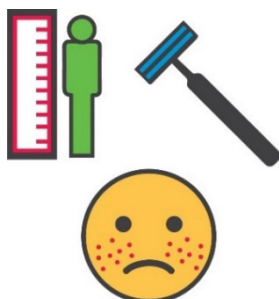
These changes can affect how they:



- feel



- think



- look.



Some things you could try

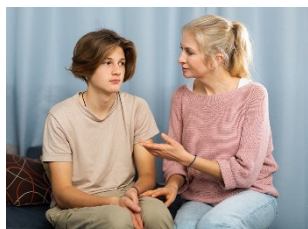


It can help to:

- keep talking to your teenager
- be ready when they want to talk to you.



Be respectful when you talk to your teenager.



For example, you might say:

- 'I feel angry when I do all the housework'
- instead of
- 'You're lazy'.



Help your teenager get information about things, like:

- relationships and sex
- drugs and alcohol.



Try and find information that is:

- up-to-date
- from an expert.



As your children grow up your role as a parent may change.

This might include letting them do more things on their own.

Support for you



It's important that you ask for support if you need it.



There are services that can support you to be a mum.



Parenting SA



Parenting SA is part of the Government of South Australia.



They have guides about being a parent.



You can visit the Parenting SA website.

www.parenting.sa.gov.au



Parent Helpline



Parent Helpline can give you advice about:

- your child's health
- being a parent.



You can call Parent Helpline.

1300 364 100



1800 RESPECT



If you experience violence, get help when it's safe to do so.



1800RESPECT is a family violence counselling service. They can give you counselling and support.

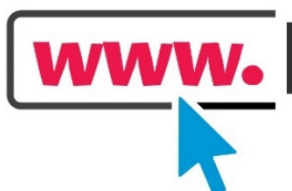


They will keep your information safe and private.



You can call 1800RESPECT.

1800 737 732



You can also chat online on the 1800RESPECT website.

www.1800respect.org.au



Child and Family Health Service (CaFHS)



CaFHS is a free service that can support:

- you
- your children if they are aged 0 to 5.



You can call CaFHS to make an appointment.

1300 733 606



You can visit the CaFHS website.

www.cafhs.sa.gov.au



Raising Children Network



The Raising Children Network can give you information about raising your child.



You can visit the Raising Children Network website.

www.raisingchildren.net.au



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