



Canberra Baby

Directory

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2025 EDITION

How to navigate financial changes after having a baby, especially when applying for a home loan

Recipe:
Protein Chia
Tiramisu
Pudding

The benefits and barriers of reusable nappies

Practical steps for fathers to heal from birth trauma

Recipe: Nuts about Satay

Supporting single mums

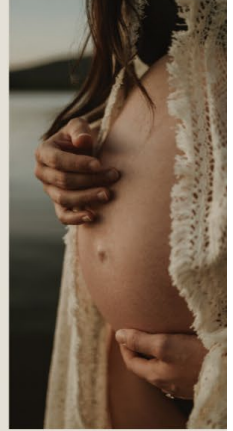
Coping with conflict when you start a family

Dads supporting dads – why is it so important?

How partners can make her labour easier and faster

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Emma Eyre Photography

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Welcome

Hello and welcome to the 2025 edition of The Canberra Baby Directory!

As I sit down to write this, I'm reminded of how lucky I am to be part of such a vibrant and supportive community here in Canberra. For over 30 years as a midwife and lactation consultant, I've walked alongside families as they've welcomed new life into the world. Now, through this directory, I get to continue that journey in a way that connects and supports even more of you.

Becoming a parent is an adventure like no other. It's joyful, messy, and sometimes downright overwhelming — it is also a time when community truly matters. That's what The Canberra Baby Directory is all about: bringing together trusted local resources, businesses, and support services to make your parenting path just a little bit easier.

This magazine is a celebration of all the incredible people in our region who dedicate their time and expertise to supporting families — people who are passionate about helping you thrive. From advice and education to heartfelt stories and practical tips, every page is designed with you in mind.

As a Midwife and also Mum of three I know how important it is to feel connected. So let this directory be your companion, a reminder that you're never on this journey alone.

Thank you for letting us be part of your story. Here's to a year of supporting stronger families, more meaningful connections, and plenty of wonderful memories.

With warmth,

Anne

Anne Endres
Editor-in-Chief
Canberra Baby Directory
Midwife & Lactation Consultant



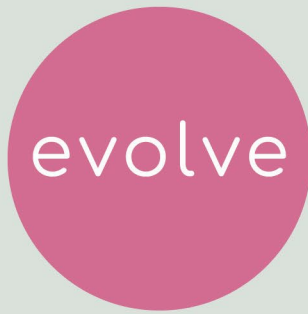
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POSTPARTUM WITH GEORGIE

Hi, I'm *Georgie!*



I'm a trained Postpartum Doula based in Canberra, specialising in postpartum support for Canberra families.

Whether you're preparing for your first baby or adding to your growing family, my goal is to guide you through these early days with practical help, emotional support, and a warm, reassuring presence. Knowledge is power and I aim to arm you with just that. Helping you grow your confidence in making informed decisions and reminding you of your strength & capability as parents.

The opportunity to give you the best start in postpartum is what I'm here for!

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How partners can make her labour easier and faster

We have said to partners get in there – it's the birth of your baby, but we haven't done a great job of preparing them.

We have said to partners get in there – it's the birth of your baby, but we haven't done a great job of preparing them.

Partners often feel:

- Worried about fainting and passing out.
- Worried about freaking out.
- Worried about getting stressed, making her stressed.
- Worried about being a good advocate for her, when she can't think or communicate easily during labour.
- Worried about feeling useless or getting in the way.

They are often led to believe in the antenatal appointments they are a third wheel – not that important.

This couldn't be further from the truth when they know what they are doing.

Women often feel the weight of the birth is all on their shoulders and feel like they are on their own even if their partners are present.

This happens because often partners don't know what to do and prefer to do nothing so they don't make mistakes.

Birth is the doorway into parenting and if you can walk through that door together, both with a clear understanding and role – this changes everything.

It will also set you both up beautifully for parenting. What you learn in birth is what you need for parenting. It requires teamwork.

Look at the 'Transform Your Birth' 2023 survey results.

I asked families, **'What did you use that had the most positive influence on your birth?'**

- Partner/ support person (131 responses)
- Breathing/ relaxation (83 responses)
- Practices (68 responses)
- Caregivers skill/ support (66 responses)

- Comfort tools (55 responses)
- Mind Tools (41 responses)
- Pharmacological support (23 responses).

Partners can make labour easier and shorter, primarily because of their influence on her oxytocin levels. Oxytocin is the hormone of love and labour is fuelled by this hormone. We get high levels of oxytocin during moments of connection, sex, orgasm AND it's what makes the contractions happen.

What then do you think is the most important thing a partner can do to help that labour along? – to love her!

Nobody in the room can do this better than the partner, making them as crucial for success as the birthing woman. They can talk to her lovingly, help her to find comfort and make the environment dark, quiet and beautiful. They can be her voice when she can't think clearly or speak clearly because they know who she is and what's important to her.

They can become the gatekeepers making her feel safe and reassured that someone has her back so she can surrender to the sensations of labour. When partners understand this they are absolute gold!

Do you think this transfers then to their confidence with a new baby? Most likely – and such a great start for what is to come next.

Why we have ignored the power of partners for so long is a huge oversight, and one I plan to keep changing.

Tracey Anderson Askew is the Founder of **Transform Parenting**, a childbirth and parenting education organisation that provides programs both face to face and online, from pregnancy through to the first 7 years of parenting. She teaches the 'Transform Your Birth' course and has a podcast of the same name.

www.transformparenting.com.au



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PREGNANCY GIFT



Tracey Anderson Askew
Director of Transform Parenting





Marita O'Shea

Specialising in pelvic health

Marita has over 15 years experience working in pelvic health care. She has helped Canberra women during their pregnancy journey into motherhood.

Marita is passionate about providing women with the correct pelvic floor advice following delivery. Whether you have had a vaginal or caesarean delivery, birth is a major event that changes your body and can impact on mothers to varying degrees. A thorough assessment and management can help you through this period.

A postnatal pelvic floor assessment provides women with the information needed to ensure an optimal recovery and return to exercise safely.

A postnatal assessment involves an assessment of pelvic floor muscle activation, assessment and management of pelvic organ prolapse, perineal tears and abdominal separation. Issues such as bladder and bowel dysfunction and sexual pain can be assessed and managed.



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Coping with conflict when you start a family

Congratulations! You and your partner are having a baby. This baby was conceived with love and hope and expectations of creating an amazing addition to your blissful life. So, what could go wrong?

Well, statistically, LOTS!!! Around 50% (maybe even more) marriages end in divorce. But I don't want to talk about all that could go wrong. You can hear that anywhere. There are plenty of stories about conflict, separation and divorce.

What I want to talk about is how you can beat the odds and be one of those relationships that goes through the challenging times and not only survives but are stronger, happier and more in love than ever before.

MY TOP TEN TIPS FOR THRIVING IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP ARE:

1. Resolve problems as soon as possible – your relationship is more important than anything else. A bit like the oxygen mask in the aeroplane, your children will benefit by you and your partner working on your relationship and making sure that it is strong. Don't suppress your feelings around problems in the hope that they will resolve themselves. They won't.

2. This will sound like a contradiction, but: wait to resolve your problems when you are alone and both feeling calm. Set aside a time that you can both talk about any problems that arise for either or both of you. This should not happen within hearing distance of your children.

3. Agree before you start the conversation, that you will both listen to each other without interruption. If your partner defends themselves, listen with the intention of understanding what they're saying not to prepare your response.

This can be hard but once they feel understood, it will be easier for them to listen to you.

4. Keep a gratitude journal and write at least one thing that you appreciate about your partner every day. Share these with your partner sometimes.

It is important to have more positives in the relationship than negatives. The human brain hears negative information four times as loudly as positive information.¹

5. When conveying concerns, don't blame your partner. Recognise that you have a problem with the behaviour but that they probably did not intend to hurt you by behaving as they did. Be curious as to what need of theirs the behaviour is meeting.

6. Further to understanding why your partner is behaving in a way that upsets you, it is important to understand how their behaviour impacts on you and how that behaviour makes you feel. Feeling 'angry' or 'upset' is like the tip of the iceberg of feelings and it is important to be clear on what the underlying feeling/s are. For example, we often get angry when we feel scared or embarrassed.

7. Remember that your partner has needs they want met too and offer to brainstorm ideas together to get both your needs met. Write all ideas down without judgement. Even the silly ones. Sometimes the silly ideas are the ones that lead to resolution.

8. Have a regular date night. It doesn't have to be posh but needs to be just the two of you. This can be a chance to practice really listening (like in #3 above) to each other about good things. For example, one of my clients recalls one memorable date with her husband where he organised a bush walk and brought a thermos of tea and some fruit. She loved that it was simple and that it was just the two of them 'being' together.

9. Laugh with each other! Laugh at life, yourself and the two of you but never laugh at the other person unless they are laughing at themselves first.

10. Be kind to each other. Parenting is hard. Maybe the hardest job there is. And most of us try to do it without training. Know that the two of you are doing this together and support each other.

Keep in mind that while these tips sound easy, unless you have been brought up with them, and you've practiced them for years, these skills can be difficult to use particularly in the heat of an argument. Be patient with yourself and if you need help, reach out for it.

Every relationship faces problems. We were all brought up with different values and rules. And our differences around raising children often don't surface until we are raising our own. You can't prevent having problems but, if you use the tips above, you will increase the chances of your relationship not only staying as good as it was when you decided to have children but may even be better.

¹ Stephen Covey's Emotional Bank Account in *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

Ros Lockley is a mediator and conflict coach. She teaches parents to speak effectively with their children and with each other through parenting and couples courses. She also guides couples (whether together or separated) to discuss their problems through her business **Communikeys** and for Relationships Australia.

She can be contacted by email on ros@communikeys.com.au or by phone at 0448 242 101. For further information visit her website, communikeys.com.au.



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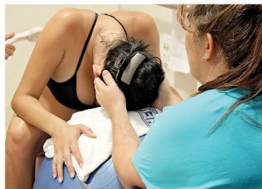
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The benefits and barriers of reusable nappies

Opinions on reusable nappies are far ranging. Some people love them, others hate them. What we do know is that the majority of children are now using nappies for approximately a year longer than what they were circa 30 years ago. Why is this? The widespread transition to disposable nappies around this time is the likely culprit. When my youngest son went to full-time day care in 2002, the Centre refused to use reusable nappies. Several years earlier, the family daycare we were using for my other sons also refused.

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This unfounded opinion that reusable nappies are unhygienic was the impetus that influenced decisions made by families on their continued use. Also, disposable nappies can be left on bub for a lot longer than reusable options, they don't need to be washed, and general convenience drives families away from reusable options.

So how did this influence add an additional year of nappy usage? Children in reusable nappies become very aware that they have soiled themselves at an earlier age than when using disposables. Disposable nappies are very good at keeping bums dry and consequently don't provide the 'effect' that children need to recognise they are wet. Their understanding of being wet encourages them to recognise the sensation of needing to urinate, which facilitates successful toilet learning.

Apart from your child potentially toilet learning at the age of 2, therefore reducing the amount of disposable nappies used, there are many other benefits to using reusable nappies. Benefits include:

REDUCED LANDFILL. Disposable nappies take 300-500 years to decompose in landfill. This means that every single disposable nappy used since they were invented, is still sitting in landfill. Landfill is a finite resource. Vanuatu are so concerned about the lack of landfill that they have implemented a ban of the use of disposable nappies on their Islands. Which also means rubbish bins aren't overflowing with disposable nappies before collection day.

REDUCED COST. The cost of buying your own stash of reusable nappies can range from \$500 - \$850. While I will not attempt to estimate the cost of electricity, water and chemicals as this varies significantly, I estimate that the cost of disposables for 3 years will be \$3,000 - \$3,500. This is a significant saving and if cared for correctly, your reusable nappies will last for several children, further extending the savings.

REDUCED EXPOSURE TO CHEMICALS. Disposable nappies may have any or all of the following, and more: sodium polyacrylate, dioxin, tributyl tin (TBT), phthalates, dyes, glyphosate (also known

as Roundup). These chemicals may cause allergic reactions, skin irritations and disrupt hormones.

While chemicals are used to clean reusable nappies, we have the option to choose which chemicals to use, therefore you can decide what you do and don't put on your bub.

HEALTHY HIP DEVELOPMENT. There is a lot of misinformation about reusable nappies being too bulky and detrimental to healthy hip development, however reusable nappies actually assist the hip to sit in the ideal position. Doctors who treat bubs with hip dysplasia often recommend the use of reusable nappies.

Reusable nappies can be a great option for families as outlined above. However, sadly there are still barriers which may prevent people from exploring this avenue, including:

Other People's Opinions. Everyone has an opinion. Stick to your guns. Your bub, your decision.

Too Much Information and Options. The internet particularly is full of pros and cons and there are many different brands to choose from. Deciding what is right for you can take some time and might take some trial and error.

Finding an Effective Wash Routine. This, can be the hardest part. With the right advice you can design a wash routine based on your specific washing machine and preferred chemicals. If you are buying a new machine, I recommend front loaders for best results.

Clothes Sizes. Unfortunately, clothing is no longer made to fit big cloth bums. Bub will likely grow out of the length (particularly the singlets that snap together between the legs). You can buy extenders (like a bra strap extension) to give additional length in those circumstances. Look for loose fitting pants or dresses to go over that gorgeous big bum.

Additional Washing. Once you have a good wash routine, you should be right. Yes, it is additional washing, but it isn't that consuming. If you want to use reusable nappies but just can't bring yourself to wash them, you could consider a nappy service. Additionally, if you like the idea of cloth nappies but really don't want to do it yourself, you could choose to use an Early Childhood Centre that supplies reusable nappies.

Upfront Cost. The initial outlay is significant. There are nappy hire options you can use to trial different brands before you commit, and the second hand market is a roaring trade.

Cathy Costa is the Director and founder of **Conder House Laundry & Linen Service**, a company that provides hospital grade laundry, linen and nappy services to the general public. She is a mother to 3 adult sons, her eldest being severely autistic, non-verbal and intellectually delayed. She is passionate about the environment, and in 2018 introduced Canberra's only modern cloth nappy service to provide Canberra Region early childhood services and residents with a reusable option. She actively employs persons with additional needs, achieving a 70% neuro-diverse workforce. conderhouse.com.au





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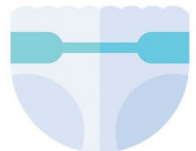


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RECIPE | 6 Ingredient Seed Cycling Nuts About Satay Recipe

This delicious and nutritious dish is a collaboration between Seed Cycle founder Mel and Remedy Kitchen founder Mel. This simple yet flavourful recipe is perfect for any meal and showcases how easy it can be to create healthy, delicious dishes with just a few key ingredients.

Ingredients

- 1 & 1/2 cup Wild Rice
- 500g Chicken
- 2 cups Spinach
- 1 cup shredded Carrot
- 1 cup Cucumber
- Shallots to garnish

Dressing

- 4 Tbsp Remedy Superb Seasoning Mix
- 4 scoops Seed Cycle, either phase one or phase two
- Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO) for cooking
- 2 Tbsp Sesame Oil
- 1/4 cup Tamari (soy sauce)
- 1/4 cup Honey
- 1 Red Chilli (or two if you like extra heat), finely chopped
- 1/4 cup Peanut Butter

Toppings

- Fresh Coriander
- Peanuts

Method

STEP 1 – COOK THE WILD RICE

Rinse and Cook: Rinse the wild rice under cold water. In a medium pot, combine the wild rice with 3 cups of water. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for about 45-50 minutes or until the rice is tender and the water is absorbed. Fluff with a fork and set aside.

STEP 2 – PREPARE THE CHICKEN

Season and Cook: Heat a drizzle of EVOO in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the chicken, season with a pinch of salt and pepper, and cook until golden brown and cooked through, about 6-8 minutes per side. Remove from the pan and let rest for a few minutes before slicing into bite-sized pieces.

STEP 3 – MAKE THE SATAY DRESSING

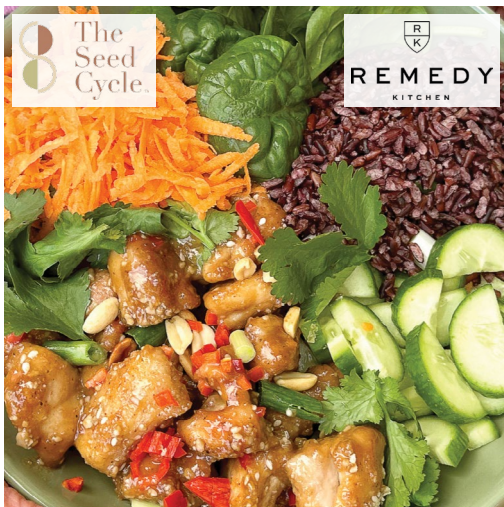
Mix Ingredients: In a small bowl, combine the Remedy Superb Seasoning Mix, Seed Cycle, sesame oil, tamari, honey, chopped red chilli, and peanut butter. Whisk until smooth and well combined.

STEP 4 – ASSEMBLE THE DISH

Combine Ingredients: In a large bowl, combine the cooked wild rice, sliced chicken, spinach, shredded carrot, and cucumber. Pour the satay dressing over the top and toss to coat everything evenly.

STEP 5 – GARNISH AND SERVE

Transfer the mixture to serving bowls. Garnish with chopped shallots, fresh coriander, and a sprinkle of peanuts. Serve immediately and enjoy!



Watch us make
this recipe here

See theseedcycle.com.au/about
for more recipes and ideas!



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Supporting single mums

We sat down with Lu from The Fourth Connection to discuss the importance of looking after single mums.

What do you offer and why do you do it?

Through The Fourth Connection we help new mothers to maintain social connection during the first 12 weeks of motherhood (the 'fourth trimester'). We provide companionship and peer support through phone calls, and our service is completely free for participants.

New motherhood can be hard (really hard), I started The Fourth Connection to fill a gap in existing support services specifically for single mums. Our services are focused on single mothers as they are at higher risk of social isolation and loneliness. Whether you are a single mum by choice or by circumstance, we can support you.

Why is community and connection so important for single mums?

Parenting a newborn as a single mum can feel relentless – and lonely. Without a partner or key support person the days seem to blur into another as there is no circuit-breaker (such as a partner coming home from work who can hold the baby while you shower or go for a walk). There often isn't anyone to make you a cup of tea or bring you something to eat when you are stuck under a sleeping (or feeding) baby. Connection with friends, family, colleagues and others helps to break the monotony – and can make a meaningful difference to a single mum's ability to navigate the postpartum period.

Research shows that social support plays a key role in postpartum recovery, adjustment and bonding with baby. Research has also consistently shown that

social support is a significant protective factor against postpartum depression. As such, we believe providing and maintaining social support for single mums in the postpartum period is essential.

What are the best ways our community can support single mums?

In our experience, the simplest of supports can make a world of difference to a single mum. Please don't wait until the baby is six weeks old until you reach out, chances are she needs your support earlier than that. The first six weeks can be difficult for her to leave the house both from a confidence and physical perspective (for example, if she is unable to drive for a certain period of time after the birth). The key thing you can do is call and text her, let her know that you are thinking of her and that you are happy to pop by and say hi. If she doesn't get back to you (because the overwhelm of new motherhood is real!) then reach out again. And again.

Simple ways to make a difference are to bring basic provisions when you visit. It could be fresh fruit, bread or milk. Perhaps you could cook an extra serving or extra batch of dinner and drop it around to her (either fresh or frozen). You could offer to mind the baby while she has a shower or gets some fresh air. Pop on a load of laundry, hang the laundry out, unload the dishwasher or perhaps take the rubbish out. All relatively minor things but they will make a difference – every small chore you can help with is one less thing that she needs to do. She's a single mum, so if you don't do it, she will have to.

What do single mums need most to help their parenting journey?

It's really important for single mums to reach out. 'It takes a village to raise a child' is the absolute truth. You need connection and support from your networks to navigate the postpartum period. You do not need to do this on your own, regardless of whether you are a single mum by choice or by circumstance. There are plenty of support services available to you and some wonderful ways to make social connections locally (such as the MACH First Time Parent Groups and MEGA Mums).

The best approach if a single mum friend isn't responding or accepting help?

We would recommend continuing to reach out to her – parenting a newborn solo can be especially overwhelming and chances are that she genuinely does need some help. It could be that responding to messages feels overwhelming, or that she

doesn't know how to acknowledge that she needs some help.

You could also try some more proactive approaches along the lines of "I'll be on your side of town tomorrow so will pop past and drop a few things off. Would love to say hi but no stress if it's not a good time I can just leave them at the door. I'll be there about 3" or "I've just left a few goodies on your doorstep and put the bins out while I was there." Continuing to reach out to her is the most important thing, especially during those first 12 weeks.

Louise (Lu) Starr is the founder of **The Fourth Connection** and mum to one very busy toddler. She is passionate about supporting new mums and helping to connect them to the wonderful networks of support across Canberra. To learn more about **The Fourth Connection**, please visit thefourthconnection.org.au or on Instagram, [@thefourth.connection](https://www.instagram.com/thefourthconnection).





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PHOTOGRAPHY



the wait



the beginning



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Practical steps for fathers to heal from birth trauma

Let's talk about something we rarely do: the emotional impact of birth trauma on fathers. We often focus on the person giving birth (as we should), but we can forget how intense the experience is for the partner watching from the sidelines. Many fathers witness chaos, fear, and helplessness, and it can stick with them. It can even hang around for years. This matters because if it's not addressed, it affects how men show up – as dads, as partners, as people.

So if this is you, know you're not alone. You don't have to keep carrying this in silence.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR TRAUMA

Birth trauma for dads is a bit different. You didn't experience it physically, but the emotional weight is real. It can feel like standing on the edge of a battlefield, wanting to do something, but feeling powerless. Maybe you were terrified for your partner's life, maybe the baby's. These emotions can have profound internal impacts that don't go away easily.

You might find yourself replaying moments in your head, feeling disconnected or overwhelmed. Some dads shut down emotionally; others try to overcompensate, controlling every detail around them. Anxiety sneaks in, and before you know it, you're burnt out and every day can feel like you're fighting a battle with yourself.

That's trauma. It doesn't always come with loud alarms and flashing lights. It creeps in, weaving itself into your thoughts, mood, and how you behave. The first step to healing? Recognise it for what it is.

START YOUR HEALING

The key to healing is to give yourself permission to feel. It's okay if you felt scared, anxious, or even overwhelmed. That doesn't make you weak. In fact, it's a testament to how deeply you care for your family. You don't always have to be the "rock". You're allowed to be human too. Acknowledging that what you went through was tough is a major step toward healing. Just because you weren't the one giving birth doesn't mean your trauma isn't real.

Next time those feelings surface, take a moment. Pause and breathe. You don't need to solve everything immediately, but sitting with those emotions for a minute lets you process what's going on. It's uncomfortable, but healing doesn't happen without a little discomfort. And from there, you can start to move forward in a healthier way.

FINDING THE RIGHT SUPPORT

One of the best things you can do is seek support. We all need it. Whether it's talking to a trauma-informed therapist, joining a group of fathers who've been through similar experiences, or even opening up to a close friend, having someone to talk to

makes a huge difference. It's not about being "fixed", it's about being heard and understood.

There's something incredibly powerful about finding a community of fathers who've experienced similar things to yourself. It reminds you that you're not alone, and your feelings are valid. By sharing your story, you not only heal yourself but help other fathers do the same. It's not about "fixing" anyone; it's about healing together.

REBUILDING CONNECTION WITH YOUR PARTNER

As you process your own feelings, you'll notice how it positively affects your relationship with your partner. Birth trauma often drives a wedge between couples, making you feel disconnected from the person you're supposed to be closest to. The key is open, honest communication.

Share what you experienced during the birth: the fears, the moments that stayed with you. You might be surprised at how much this strengthens your bond. It's not about comparing experiences or trying to problem solve, but about understanding each other more deeply. This kind of connection works to bring you closer together and back onto the same page.

And remember, give your partner the same space. Let them talk without jumping in to fix things. Just listening can build trust and strengthen your bond. Healing happens when both people feel heard and supported.

HEAL, CONNECT, THRIVE

Healing from birth trauma as a father is a journey, but it's one worth taking. It's about recognising your emotions, seeking support, and becoming more present for yourself and your family. By embracing this process, you're not

only healing yourself—you're helping pave the way for other fathers to do the same.

You deserve to feel whole, to heal, and to connect more deeply with the people you love.

Matt Musgrave is the driving force behind **Strong Space Counselling**, a Canberra-based telehealth service that specialises in men's mental health. Whether you're dealing with anxiety, depression, trauma or challenges in fatherhood, Matt and his team can help.

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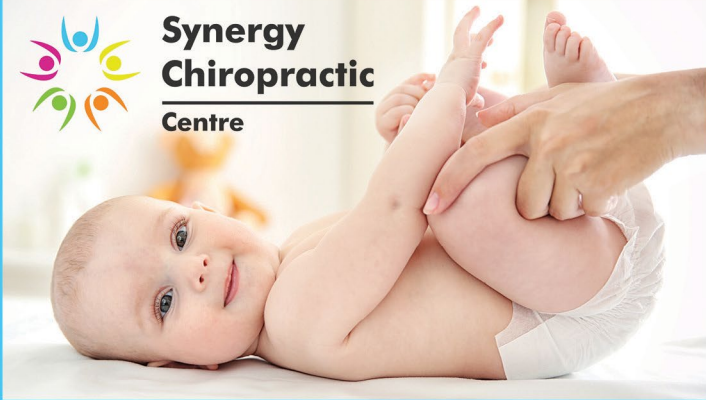
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Ingredients

- 1 cup espresso
- 1/2 cup almond milk
- 3 tbsp chia seeds
- 2 scoops Seed cycling + Protein
- 1/2 cup yoghurt
- Chocolate or cacao for topping

Method

1. Brew Espresso: Start by brewing 1 cup of espresso and let it cool slightly.
2. Mix Chia Pudding Base: In a jar, mix the cooled espresso, 1/2 cup almond milk, and 3 tbsp chia seeds. Stir well to combine.

3. Add Protein Powder: Add 2 scoops of seed cycling protein powder to the chia mixture and stir thoroughly until the protein powder is fully incorporated.
4. Chill: Place the jar in the refrigerator and let it chill for at least half an hour to allow the chia seeds to expand and the mixture to thicken.
5. Add Yogurt Layer: Once the chia pudding has set, gently layer 1/2 cup of yogurt on top of the chia mixture.
6. Top with Chocolate: Before serving, top with a sprinkle of chocolate or cacao for a delicious finishing touch.



Tried and loved this recipe?

Or created one of your own recipes, don't forget to post a photo and tag The Seed Cycle on Instagram (@the_seed_cycle and #TheSeedCycle) so all your delicious creations can be seen!

Head to theseedcycle.com.au/about for more recipes and ideas!

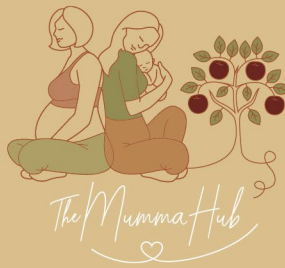


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How to navigate financial changes after having a baby... especially when applying for a home loan

Are you about to welcome a new baby, or perhaps are in the new postpartum period and thinking about buying a new property or refinancing? You've already considered the needs of the baby but have you have considered where to next when beginning your mortgaging journey. I understand it can feel overwhelming, I've personally recently been there so can sympathise with the position you're in. I had a one-year-old, a new baby on the way, selling our current property and in the process of building the next. Let me impart some of my knowledge, experience and expertise with you to support you in this process.

Being on parental leave will affect the outcome of whether or not a lender will choose to provide you with a loan, but don't be disheartened as there are a few things you can do prior to going on leave, and whilst on leave, to ensure you have your best foot forward when applying.

First of all, cut down any credit card debt you have, even better, if this is not an essential item for your family, get rid of it.

Start thinking about what you spend money on and how often. Add this to a spreadsheet. Have a think, does this look good to a lender? A typical lender may ask to look at approximately 3-6 months of your bank statements. This will enable them to determine what your living expenses look like per month. Consider cutting back on unnecessary take away, online shopping and those little treats. This is important as if you are above HEM (Household Expenditure Measurement) your borrowing capacity reduces accordingly.

After taking a look at the above, create a new budget. From here, keep track of all of your family's expenses, both big and small. When the time comes to crunch the numbers, this careful tracking will be extremely helpful to your broker. From your point of view, it will also ensure you are sticking to your budget, as we all know children are little money pits.

Do not be disheartened by strict budgets, tracking spending or cutting back as income is an essential element when approving or denying a loan application. However, children, or being on parental leave will add another element. Lenders will require additional documentation around your leave, including when it will start and end, and what your income will look like when you return to work. They will also consider whether you're getting paid from your employer, or Centrelink, or both throughout this period.

As well as what your income will look like when returning to work, they will need to know whether this is on a fulltime, part time or casual basis. To ensure the information you are providing is accurate they may request a letter from your employer that will verify all of this information.

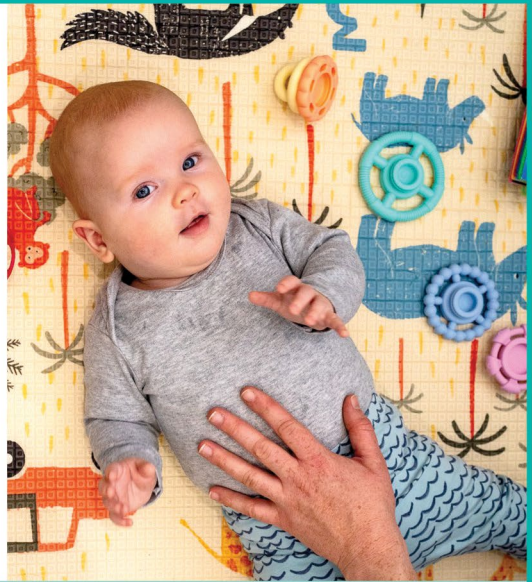
Matthew Rastar works at Clarity Home Loans, Canberra's largest and most well-regarded mortgage broking firm. Their brokers don't work on commission and any bonuses they receive are fixed. Therefore, you can rest assured each broker promotes options that are in the clients' best interest.

Matt knows firsthand what it's like to grow a family whilst navigating a new financial landscape. At **Clarity Home Loans** the team are experts on writing loans with families who are on leave raising children. For an obligation free chat call, **Matthew Rastar** on **02 6209 1990**.

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about us

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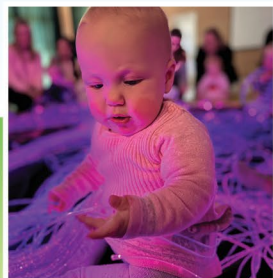
Baby Sensory has been specifically designed for babies from birth to 13 months, to aid your child's development. The classes are filled with an incredible variety of sounds, smells, sights, textures, music, dance, singing and more.

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Every week is different, meaning you leave class each week armed with new songs and activities to help entertain your baby and support their development during your time together at home. Please visit our website (see below) to find your nearest class and join in the fun!

HOW OLD DOES MY BABY NEED TO BE TO START?

Our classes are for babies aged 0-13 months. We recommend starting whenever you feel ready and comfortable for an outing with your baby. Our classes are just as much for you, as they are your baby! All you need to bring with you is a small blanket and your nappy bag! We take care of the rest.



www.babysensory.com.au/canberra-act/

Email Mia at canberra-act@babysensory.com

Follow us on Instagram and Facebook to get a sneak peek into our classes @babysensorycanberra

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Dads supporting dads – why is it so important?

I'm James the founder of Blokes & Bubs. I am a new dad too and have felt the struggles of feeling overwhelmed, isolated, stressed or even at times feeling a little useless. Despite having support from my amazing partner, I couldn't help but feel like there was a lack of support groups for dads that I could join in the Canberra community, unfortunately this is probably an issue nationwide.

Dads supporting each other is a fundamental aspect of fatherhood that brings numerous benefits to both fathers and their families. Coming together to share experiences, to offer advice and provide emotional support, creates an environment that fosters, growth, understanding, and resilience.

Dads thrive and grow by sharing parenting strategies and experiences, which can help gain new perspectives and learn from each other's success and challenges. This collective wisdom not only enhances parenting skills but also enriches the overall experience of fatherhood, leading to more confident and effective parenting.

Coming together also has emotional wellbeing benefits for all dads involved. Parenting can be demanding and stressful but having a group of supportive dads to turn to can help alleviate feelings of isolation and pressure. Sharing joys and struggles of fatherhood with like-minded individuals who understand, can also reduce stress, boost positive mental health, and create a sense of camaraderie that is essential for navigating the complexities of parenting.

When fathers unite to share their journeys, they not only strengthen their own abilities as parents but also contribute to building a supportive environment where all dads can thrive in their roles. The bond formed through mutual support among dads is invaluable and plays a vital role in shaping positive fatherhood experiences.

Come join us on Saturdays for a coffee and a play as we take on the adventure of fatherhood together, sharing tips, laughs and the occasional nappy explosion. You can find us on Facebook **Blokes & Bubs (Canberra Dads Group)** or if you have any enquiries I can be emailed, **james_leins@outlook.com.au**. Cheers to the fun times ahead with our little legends. (All ages welcome).





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A Mumma's Natural Connection

Mikayla is a Maternal Consultant providing holistic support, coaching, evidence-based information and external referrals for mums up to 12 months post-partum. She provides support for many challenges including sleep, breastfeeding, birth recovery or for those who are just feeling a bit lost and unsure. The goal is for every mum to leave feeling connected, empowered, and supported in their journey. Appointments can be made by calling World of Wellbeing 6260 4774.

mummasnaturalconnection.com

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Hi, I'm Kimberley Lee, founder of Appleoffsprings! Our Canberra-based brand is dedicated to supporting mothers with wearable, affordable breast pumps and fast-heating milk warmers. Designed with Australian moms in mind, our products make your breastfeeding journey comfortable and convenient. Discover Appleoffsprings and see how we make motherhood easier! Empowering moms with practical solutions—because you deserve the best.

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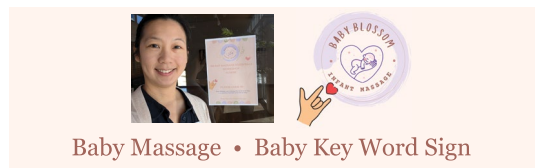


COMMUNIKEYS

Having a baby puts a lot of pressure on any marriage: there are sleepless nights, financial pressures and communication issues. Just because you love each other doesn't mean that you have the same views on raising your children. This can make discipline hard if you need to be in agreement. What if there was another way, where you could have different styles of parenting but still be effective when disciplining your children? Ros Lockley is an experienced communicator, mediator and trainer and can help you communicate better with your children and with each other.

www.communikeys.com.au

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0488 087 769 | naomi.b@babyblossominfantmassage.com

Canberra Doulas 2025


Birth & Postnatal Doula Information Sessions held once a month on Saturdays by the local Doulas of Canberra.

Open to all expecting families in Canberra and surrounding areas.

Come along to find out how we can support you in Pregnancy, Birth & Beyond.

See Facebook for more details and to RSVP.


Kylie 0402078003

 CanberraDoulas



We are a small not-for-profit providing companionship and social support to single mothers during the fourth trimester. We can provide support from your expected due date (or from birth if bub arrives early!) until the baby is 12 weeks old. Our friendly volunteers provide support through phone and video calls, and our services are provided on a voluntary basis - there is no cost to our participants. You can self-refer to our free services at any time during pregnancy or the 12 weeks after birth.

thefourthconnection.org.au

 @the.fourth.connection



SEAHORSE PLAYGROUP is a social gathering for LGBTQIA+SB parents, carers, and their children here on Ngunnawal and Ngambri land. Our aim is to create a community space where Queer families are celebrated and normalised. Get-togethers start with a baby Acknowledgement of Country, followed by a parent/carer check-in where we talk about the 'highs and lows' of the week. Sessions also include a featured activity run by our facilitator. To see more of what we do, check out our Instagram.



www.rainbowfamilies.com.au/seahorse_playgroup_canberra_ngunnawal_land_2024

seahorseplaygroup@gmail.com  @seahorseplaygroup

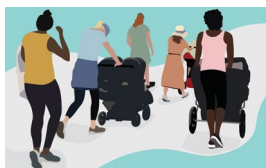


At **ROUNDABOUT CANBERRA** our mission is to re-home quality baby and kid's items via community services in the Canberra and surrounding areas. We provide safe, high quality essential baby and children's items to families in need through our network of community and not-for-profit organisations. We gladly accept pre-loved baby and children's goods in excellent and clean condition. For a full list of what we accept, including safety standards, and details on our donation times, check out our website.

roundaboutcanberra.org



6193 6452  roundaboutcanb  @roundaboutcanberra

Karinyahouse



No woman should be navigating parenting alone. For over 27 years, **KARINYA HOUSE** has had the privilege of walking alongside women in Canberra and the surrounding region who are experiencing crises, before, during and after pregnancy. As a local not-for-profit organisation we provide safe housing, health advice, casework, counselling, trauma services, baby goods and much more - we have supported over 2,500 women in Canberra since we began. For more information on the services we provide, please see our website.

www.karinyahouse.asn.au

02 6259 8998  Karinya House  @karinyahouse



We believe your family deserves the best start in life. **PERINATAL WELLBEING CENTRE** is a community based non-government organisation providing support to families in the Australian Capital Territory. Perinatal Wellbeing Centre programs are designed to provide the support you need at every stage. Our team of Perinatal Mental Health Workers can work with you to tailor your own pathway through our services.

www.perinatalwellbeingcentre.org.au

02 6288 1936 | support@perinatalwellbeing.org.au

  @perinatalwellbeingcentre

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Socials

Facebook

Appleoffsprings
Australian Breastfeeding Association - ACT/ Sth NSW Region
Baby Blossom Infant Massage
Baby Sensory Canberra, ACT
B Eco Family Baby Shop
Blokes & Bubs (Canberra Dads Group)
Bub & Me Physiotherapy
Canberra Osteopathic Centre
Canberra Postnatal Care
Communikeys
Conder House Laundry & Linen Service
Country Children's Physiotherapy
Elise Kate Photography
Elysium Studio Pilates
Emma Eyre Photography
Evolve Midwifery Service
Fourth Trimester Placenta Services
Gymbaroo Canberra
Happy Faces Orofacial Myology
Her Physio
Heartfelt Healing Therapies
Hire for Baby (Canberra)
Holly & Sage Photographer & Birth Doula
Innate Being Therapies
Kangatraining Canberra Airport District, Queanbeyan and Kingston
Karinya House
Little Hands OT
Live Well Holistic Wellness Centre
Movement Centre Canberra
North Canberra Osteopathy
Perinatal Wellbeing Centre
Photos by Laurinda
Postpartum with Georgie
Roundabout Canberra
Strong Space Counselling
Super Safety Mum
Synergy Chiropractic Centre
The Mumma Hub
The Seed Cycle
Tiny Teach CBR
Transform Parenting
Universal Chiropractic Canberra
Yoga For Birth and Beyond

Instagram

@_appleoffsprings_
@babysensorycanberra
@bbim_babymassage
@b.eco.family
@bubandmephysio
@canberrapostnatalcare
@communikeys.rl
@conderhouselaundrylinen
@countrychildrensphysiotherapy
@elisekatphotography
@elysiumstudiopilates
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@evolve_midwifery
@fourth.trimester.canberra
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@happyfacesom
@her_physio
@heartfelthealingtherapies
@hireforbabyhq
@holly_and_sage
@innatebeingtherapies
@kangatrainingcanberraairport
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@movement_centre_canberra
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@photosbylaurinda
@postpartumwithgeorgie
@roundaboutcanberra
@seahorseplaygroup
@strongspacecounselling
@supersafetymum
@synergychirocanberra
@the.fourth.connection
@the_mumma_hub
@the_seed_cycle
@tinyteachcbr
@transform_parenting
@northcanberraosteopathy
@perinatalwellbeingcentre
@universalchiropracticcanberra
@wellwomandieterics
@yogaforbirth

Canberra Baby Directory



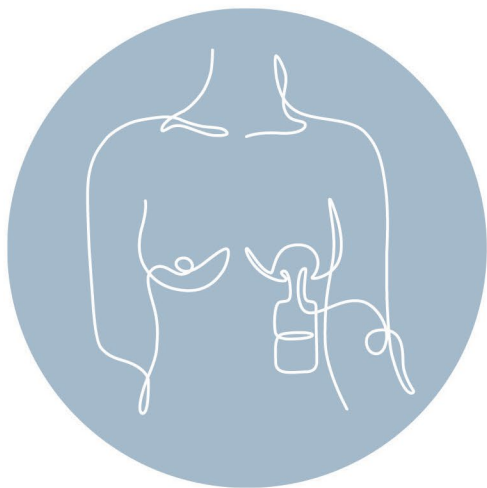
Instagram



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Website



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