

Balancing Housework And Your Baby

Babies need constant attention – they require constant feedings and diaper changes, and they require them at all hours. Tending to a baby is a full-time job, so it's no big surprise when dishes start piling up and you're running out of clean baby bibs.

Still, a clutter-free home can make your life feel just a little less hectic. Here are some tips for new parents hoping to keep their homes clean and organized while caring for their baby:

- Declutter. Less clutter in your home will help you keep your sanity. Get your partner or a friend to help you sort through, store or get rid of things you no longer need. Having fewer objects in the house means fewer items to be dusted, wiped, polished, picked up and rearranged.
- Invest in a sling. With your baby in a sling or other carrier, your hands will be free to fold laundry, dust and vacuum. As the baby gets older and you are able to do more activities outside of the house, the sling will also help you carry your baby through stores and other areas.
- Let products make your life easier. Some products help simplify routine household tasks. For example, Pak-It (www.pakit.com) water-soluble liquid packets deliver concentrated glass cleaner, disinfectant, and multi-purpose cleaning products, such as those for floors, kitchens, bathrooms and laundry. Pak-It products come prepackaged in biodegradable packets -; users simply put the packet in water. A busy mom, for example, can toss Pak-It Laundry Detergent directly into the laundry machine while still holding her baby.

– Take advantage of naps. It's certainly okay to sneak in a few chores while your baby sleeps. But if you're exhausted, listen to your body and use the time to catch a few winks yourself.

– Don't stress out too much. Twenty years from now, what will you regret more – letting laundry pile up or neglecting to spend enough time with your baby? Your health and the baby's needs come first. Besides, if you think your home's messy with a new baby, just imagine how it's going to look with a teenager!

6 Tips for Baby's Immune Development

Scuba diving can be an exotic and enriching activity, but for many, it can also be a therapeutic one. The weightlessness of a water environment allows individuals with a range of injuries or disabilities to exercise, relax, have fun, and gain confidence. Children and adults with challenges including traumatic brain injuries, amputation, spinal cord injuries, cerebral palsy, and blindness can enjoy the physical and psychological benefits of scuba diving. Diveheart, a nonprofit organization founded in 2001, trains thousands of volunteers and works with injured and disabled individuals across the world, in areas including the United States, Mexico, UK, Malaysia, Israel, Philippines and the Caribbean. As Darrell Young, a Vietnam veteran who is paraplegic as the result of a spinal cord injury, explains in a testimonial on the Diveheart website, "Diving gives me a high expectancy of myself. It gives me a goal to accomplish knowing that when it comes to the finish line it doesn't matter how I finish my dive, but

the feeling of strength I gain from diving,” he says.

Diveheart relies on volunteers and donations to help provide adaptive diving and scuba therapy experiences at no cost to the participants. Most of the initial training and first diving experiences occur in school or community pools. Participants don't even need to know how to swim to benefit from therapeutic scuba diving, and the learning curve is almost immediate, according to Diveheart's website details. Diveheart works to spread the word that diving is a real option with many benefits for the individuals affected with injuries and for the volunteers who get involved as “dive buddies.”

The basic experience of being in the water with the support of a trained “dive buddy” can relieve pain, improve focus, and bring joy, according to Diveheart participants. Diveheart also provides adaptive dive training for those who want to take the next step and become adaptive divers or dive buddies to help others. Most Diveheart participants are eager for destination scuba-diving adventures once individuals are trained and comfortable with the scuba experience. Diveheart offers opportunities for fundraising and also works to find grants for those who struggle with the cost of a dive getaway. In addition, Diveheart works with the science and medical communities to provide data and research opportunities on the benefits of therapeutic scuba diving for a range of medical conditions. For more information on participating, volunteering, or donating, visit diveheart.org.