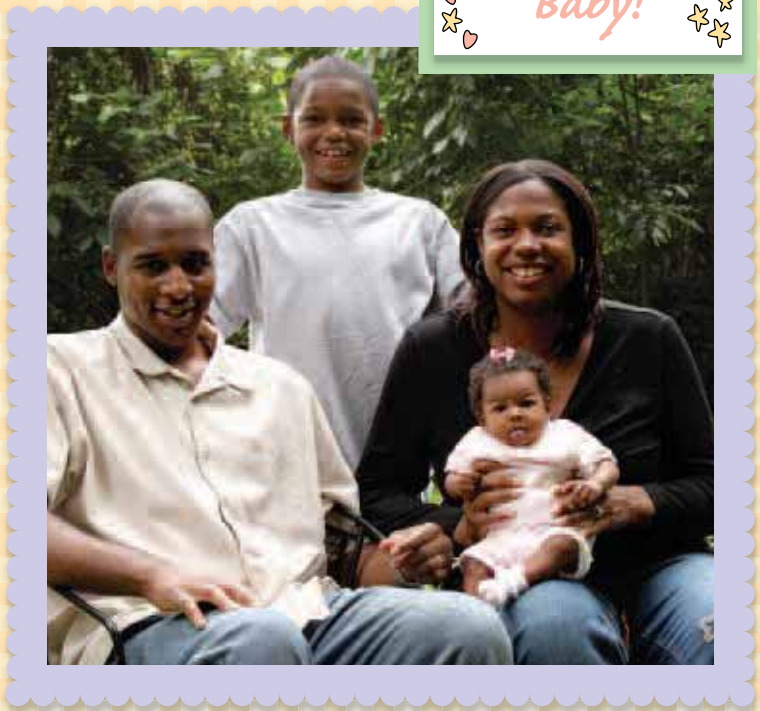




Our Healthy Baby's Family Album

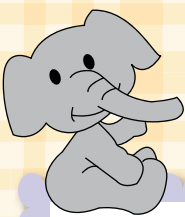
B
A
B
Y

Welcome
Baby!





Dear baby,
 Even before I
 knew you ... I cared
 about you!



I've always wanted to be a mom. Your grandma told me the best stories about being pregnant. So I wanted to make this special album about you.

Getting healthy before pregnancy is important!

When we decided to have a baby, I visited my doctor to make sure I was healthy. The healthier I was, the better it would be for both of us.

I made certain my weight was right for me. Pregnant women who are overweight risk getting high blood pressure or high blood sugar (gestational diabetes), which can be serious problems. I cut back on sweets and fatty foods and ate more fruits and vegetables.

When it came time to party, I picked fruit juice. I knew there was **no safe amount of alcohol to drink**. Beer, wine, wine coolers and liquor can all

cause birth defects or mental retardation in the baby.

It wasn't easy, but I stopped smoking too. Smoking can make it harder to get pregnant or cause a miscarriage. Secondhand smoke is harmful too, so I told my friends not to smoke near me.

You'd be proud of me!



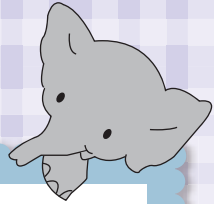
I took a multivitamin with folic acid every day **BEFORE** I got pregnant to lower the risk of some birth defects. I also ate green leafy vegetables and fortified bread and pasta that were high in folic acid.



Family matters!



Let's hope you get your dad's smile



Know your family history.

There was so much to think about and learn. Your dad talked to Aunt CeCe and I talked to Grandma about our family histories. I knew that lots of family traits could be passed on to you. Not just things like Aunt CeCe's twinkly eyes and Grandma's laugh, but also family diseases like **sickle cell and diabetes**. We wanted to give you a good start in life, so we talked to our family and we got tested.



Grandma and me



Aunt CeCe



Our Family Tree





Dads are important, too!

Your dad was so excited when he heard the news. He came with me to the clinic as soon as I took the home test. Even though you are not our first baby, we read a lot about childbirth. Some information had changed over the years.

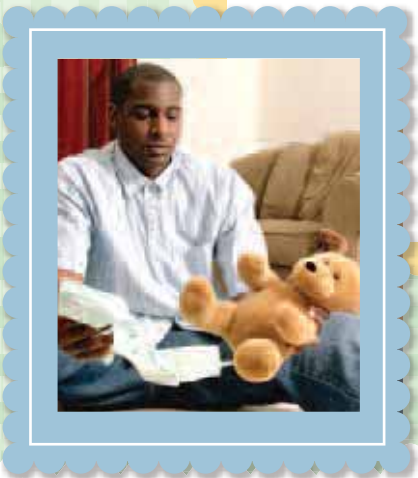


When my belly started to bulge, your dad was so sweet. He always asked me how I was feeling and took good care of me. It felt great to have his support.

We even took a childbirth class to get updated and help us get ready.



I met lots of other pregnant women who had the same feelings I did. Some really did crave pickles and ice cream!



Dad practiced changing diapers again. Styles are always changing!





Taking care of
you started ...
before you were
even born.



Healthy choices are the first step to a healthy baby.

It was important to help you grow. So **I tried to eat well**, with low-fat milk and cheese, lean meats, more fruits and vegetables and whole grains. Having a small baby wouldn't make my delivery any easier. Small babies often have trouble breathing and lots of long-term health problems.

I went to every prenatal visit so that you and I stayed healthy before you were born. I asked my doctor lots of questions. He was so helpful and made me feel at ease. **I didn't take any drugs or medicine** unless the doctor told me to take them. I even asked about taking over-the-counter medicines.

It was a challenge, but **I stayed off cigarettes and alcohol completely**. Because **whatever I used, you shared**. I also kept **away from secondhand smoke** so you would be healthier. I even asked my friends and co-workers not to smoke around me. Your Grandpa only smoked outside when he visited.

I never knew I liked spinach and black beans until I was pregnant. Maybe that's because you like them?



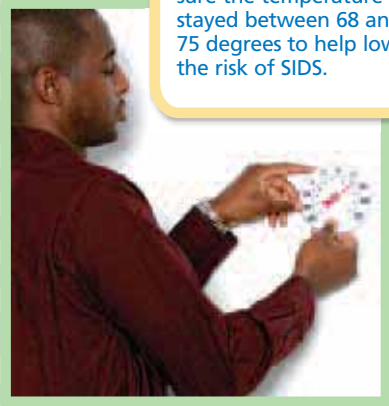


Getting ready for your arrival!

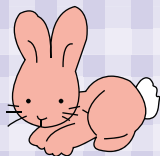
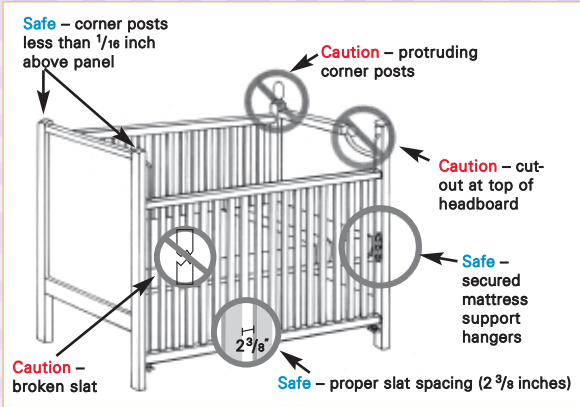
Put baby's safety and comfort first.

There was so much to think about, not just the colors for your room. ✓ Got car seat. ✓ Made sure your crib and room were safe for you to sleep in. ✓ Checked the stroller wheels were sturdy.

✓ We put a thermometer in your room to make sure the temperature stayed between 68 and 75 degrees to help lower the risk of SIDS.



✓ We used this chart to make sure your crib was safe.





It's a... ?



We had our ultrasound today and it looks like a girl! How exciting!

We wanted you, but not before you were due. The doctor said you were growing on schedule and I was taking good care of both of us.

Being African American, I was at a higher risk for going into early (preterm) labor. That's why **I memorized the warning signs** and kept my doctor's number handy.



Preterm labor is labor three or more weeks before your due date.

Know the warning signs of early (preterm) labor.

- Contractions of the uterus – that are less than 8 minutes apart (4 or more in an hour), that may be painless or may feel like the baby is “balling up”
- Cramps like those with your period – that come and go, or that don't go away
- Cramps in the abdomen or stomach – with or without diarrhea
- Increase or change in vaginal discharge – watery or with mucus or blood
- Low, dull backache – that comes and goes, or that doesn't go away
- Pressure – that feels like the baby is pushing down; comes and goes
- You may or may not feel pain

Tip: While resting, drink two or three glasses of water or juice. Many times the signs of preterm labor will go away.

If the signs of preterm labor are still present after one hour, call your doctor or clinic.



Our baby shower



Family support means a lot.

So many people have helped us get ready for you. What would I have done without Grandma and friends to help me through the tough times?

Aunt CeCe and your dad took turns driving me to prenatal appointments. They knew it was important to keep my regular checkups. We wanted to keep a close watch on how you were growing.

My friend, Chauna, was pregnant at the same time so we went through everything together. We walked almost every day. The regular exercise made us feel better and stronger, and helped control our weight.

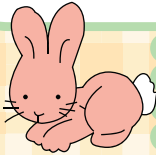
Just before my due date, everyone threw us a baby shower.



It's almost time!

A full-term pregnancy is 37 to 42 weeks.

The goal was to make it to 40 weeks!

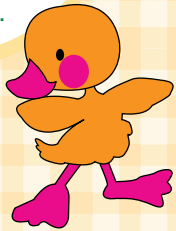


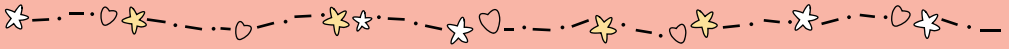
Due Date

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday		
1	2	3	4	5		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		



Your dad was so nervous. He drove to the hospital to see how long it would take to get there.





It's a girl!



Everyone was so excited to hold you! Because I took care of myself, the delivery went well! You were a healthy 7.5 pound baby and 20 inches long.

Keep baby safe.

We wanted to keep you safe when you slept. Dad agreed not to nap on the sofa with you. You and I snuggled in bed while breastfeeding; and then you went back to your own crib to sleep.

And well fed.

I learned during one of my prenatal classes that **breastfeeding would help you be healthier. Breast milk digests easily, and it's free.** Plus, no bottles to wash or formula to buy. That convinced me to give it a try. We had to work at it, but we figured it out!





Our family was bigger than we imagined ...



Chauna's support was so special because she went through the same things, too! Her little girl was born just a few weeks before you, and just as healthy.



Here you are with your godparents. Probably the only time in your life you will keep white clean!

Let others help.

Babies need family, even before they're born. And I found out our family was bigger than I thought. Dad, your big brother, Grandma, Aunt CeCe ... were always ready to help.

I even made some new friends. A couple of times when I worried about how you were developing, I called the CARE-LINE (1-800-662-7030). I still call there for parenting information.

Our pastor helped us through some stressful times while I was pregnant. We knew that we wanted you to grow up in the church. Your baptism was a highlight of your first year!





**Happy
1st Birthday
Sweetie Pie!**

**J
O
Y**



Our Healthy Baby's Family Album was developed as part of a statewide initiative.

For more information about pregnancy, prenatal care and parenting call the **CARE-LINE** 1-800-662-7030

