

Baby's First Birthday



Back when you first knew you were pregnant you suspected that nothing would ever be the same again. And pregnancy did slow you down a bit, but not enough to force you to stop doing most of those things that were important to you. Yes, you did have some pretty serious questions about the labor and birth experience, and may have spent a lot of time preparing for it.

But, there was no way anyone could prepare for the full-time responsibility of taking care of a new infant. You would not have believed, if anyone had told you, the many things you would have to give up to insure that this child would have a good start in life.

Time is chief among them. Time to sleep in with your husband on Saturday morning, making love in a leisurely fashion, when neither of you was too weary to enjoy it, and neither of you had to be anywhere else right away. Time to get together with a friend to see a new movie, or take another class towards your degree, and actually do the studying for it. Time just to sleep through at night.

For the past year, your attention has been centered on an area - as one woman put it - about the size of a receiving blanket. Your baby's needs came first, and being able to take care of your needs has almost been a thing of the past.

You were there every day, slogging through the constant rounds of feeding and changing and cleaning up after your little one, in between those times when you were feeding, changing and cleaning up after him. Many of you have even figured out how to juggle your baby against a demanding work schedule-no small trick, that.

And now, it's your baby's first birthday. If anyone tells you that your child will hardly know what is going on, that a cake and presents would mean little to him, they're probably right. Still, it is fun to see how he responds to a cake with a candle in it-will he really be able to blow the thing out? And after you have finished cleaning the cake and ice-cream out of his hair and off the floor, you will still have the precious memory-the look of discovery in his eyes as he opens his first present.

But let us not forget that this day should really be a celebration of you, the mother. This is the day when you deserve to be fully congratulated for having made it through this year of initiation to motherhood. You have done well. That secret, alchemical change from young women to mother has been taking place during this time. You know you will be a good mother to this child, as he grows and his needs change. All you have to do is look at that eager little child of yours to know that.

This is your day, Mom. Don't be afraid to pat yourself on the back, you deserve it. Get together with some friends and celebrate.