

What is Babywearing?

“Babywearing” simply means carrying or holding a baby or young child by wearing a baby carrier. There are many types and styles of baby carriers commonly used for babywearing, from highly constructed commercial baby carriers to unstructured pieces of cloth.

There are several nonprofit organizations, as well as solo volunteer advocates, dedicated to providing free help for caregivers interested in babywearing. With in-person help, most caregivers can quickly and easily learn to carry their babies and young children comfortably so that they can start reaping the rewards of babywearing. In addition, there are ample free internet resources to help caregivers learn babywearing, including the following:



Babywearing International Inc. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting babywearing. The organization's website, BabywearingInternational.org, includes articles as well as a discussion forum.



TheBabywearer.com is a website with articles about babywearing, reviews of baby carriers, and very active discussion forums.

This brochure is published by Babywearing International Inc., a nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote babywearing, with benefits for both the child and caregiver, through education and support. Visit BWI on the web at:

BabywearingInternational.org


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International Babywearing Week
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Babywearing

Benefits for Mothers
With Postpartum
Depression or
Depression



BABYWEARING
INTERNATIONAL

"I had terrible postpartum depression. Once I started babywearing, it made such a difference in our little world! I could talk on the phone, even put on a little lipstick, and still have my little bundle right there with me."

Erin

This benefit has been documented by research comparing Kangaroo Mother Care, a specialized form of babywearing for premature babies, to typical neonatal intensive care. Anecdotal evidence strongly suggests that this increased confidence also applies to mothers at risk for or suffering from depression or postpartum depression.

- Babywearing promotes bonding between the mother and infant. In one study, one group of mothers was given soft baby carriers when their children were born, and another group was given plastic infant seats. At 13 months of age, the children of the mothers who were given soft carriers were found to be

securely attached to their mothers in 82% of cases, compared to compared to 38% in the other group.

- Babywearing helps satisfy the baby's need for human interaction. Human touch, which is facilitated through babywearing, reduces the baby's need for eye contact and verbal interaction, both of which can be a struggle for mothers suffering from depression.

"I *wanted* to be doing something for my girl, I wanted to be a nurturing mother, but was emotionally blanked out by the depression. My daughter's reactions to babywearing showed me that it was good for her and helped to give her what she needed, even when I was a complete mess inside."

Marie

- Babywearing allows a mother to care for her baby while attending the daily tasks of living. With her baby comfortably and securely held in a soft baby carrier, a mother has both hands free to make a sandwich, fold the laundry, or attend to older children.

- Babywearing allows for a less cumbersome stroll. Stairs, doorways, bumpy sidewalks and woodland trails are not obstacles to a babywearing mother like they are to a mother with a stroller. Babywearing makes it easier to get exercise and sunshine, which benefit a mother's well-being.

"I am quite sure that without babywearing I would have ended up with postpartum depression. It is less overwhelming to deal with all the demands of parenting when wearing a baby makes the baby happy (or sleepy) and lets the parent get something else done!"

Kathy -- medical doctor and patient at high risk of postpartum depression

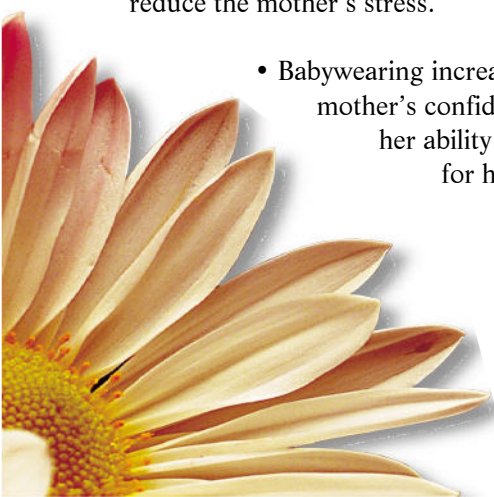
Babywearing Makes Motherhood Easier

*Babywearing benefits all mothers
... especially those with depression*

- Babywearing reduces infant crying significantly. In a study published in the journal *Pediatrics*, researchers found that babywearing for three hours a day reduced infant crying by 43%. Less crying means less stress for the mother.

- Babywearing helps infants fall asleep more easily and sleep longer, both of which also reduce the mother's stress.

- Babywearing increases the mother's confidence in her ability to care for her child.



Sources:

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