

Infant Mental Health Recommended Reads

This list has been compiled by Mayo Primary Care Adult Psychology service in conjunction with Mayo CYPSC. All books are available from your local Mayo library on request. It's free to join the library.

INFANT MENTAL HEALTH

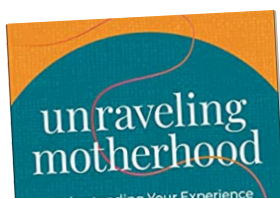
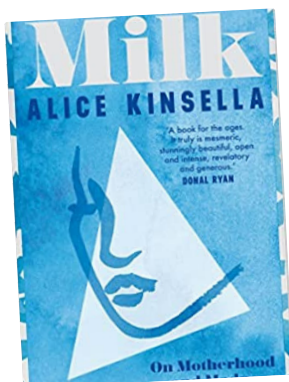
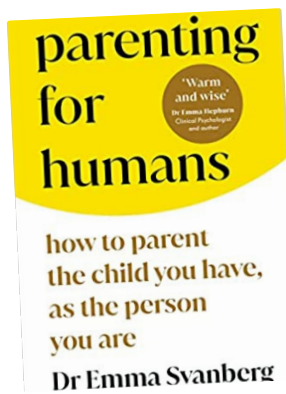
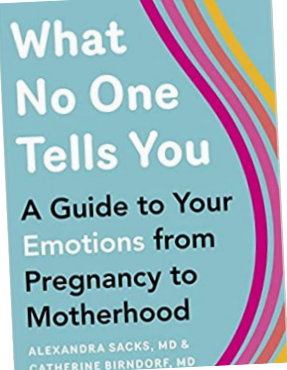
Your baby's mental health is their social and emotional wellbeing. It develops through their relationship with you. Attachment is the relationship that you and your baby build over time. Attachment happens through interaction with your baby in everyday moments.

TRANSITION TO PARENTHOOD

Becoming a new parent is a major life event. Life significantly changes with so much to get used to – changes in lifestyle, our identity, our relationships, physical changes, sleep deprivation, to name but a few – while at the same time trying to get to know our baby! No wonder the reality of new parenthood can feel like an absolute emotional rollercoaster. Realistic expectations, good quality support and self-compassion can help with this profound adjustment.

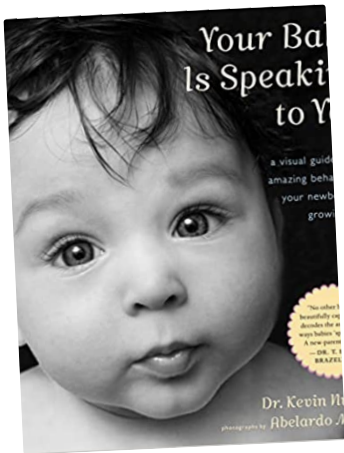
PERINATAL MENTAL HEALTH

It's normal to feel overwhelmed sometimes. Many parents feel stress, anxiety, low mood and depression. Feeling intensely distressed at times does not make you a bad parent. Taking care of a baby is physically and emotionally tiring. Ask for help when you need it.

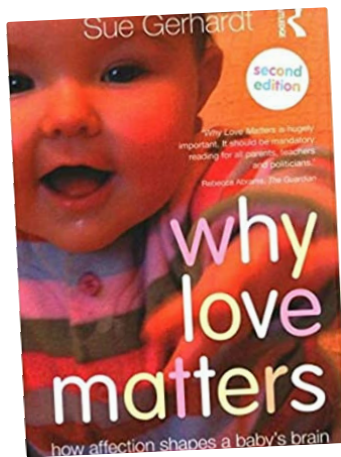


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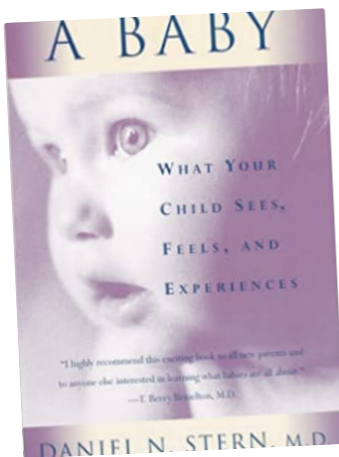
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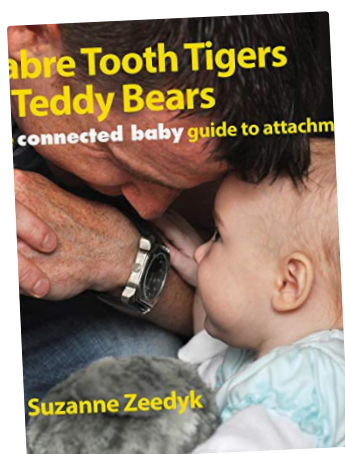
***Your Baby Is Speaking To You: A Visual Guide to the Amazing Behaviours of Your Newborn and Growing Baby* by Dr Kevin Nugent:** Through intimate access to babies and their families, Dr. Kevin Nugent and acclaimed photographer Abelarado Morrell capture the amazingly precocious communications strategies babies demonstrate from the moment they are born.



***Why Love Matters* by Sue Gerhardt:** Explains why loving relationships are essential to brain development in the early years, and how these early interactions can have lasting consequences for future emotional and physical health. The brain's emotion and immune systems are particularly affected by early stress and can become less effective. This makes the child more vulnerable to a range of later difficulties such as depression, anti-social behaviour, addictions or anorexia, as well as physical illness.



***Diary of a Baby: What Your Child Sees, Feels and Experiences* by Daniel Stern:** Every new parent desperately wants to know what goes on in the mind of their baby. Now a noted authority on infant development and psychiatry brings us closer than ever before to penetrating your child's consciousness. In alternating sections of evocative prose, representing the baby's own voice, and explanatory text, Daniel Stern draws on the latest research findings to recreate the baby's world.



***Sabre Tooth Tigers & Teddy Bears: The Connected Baby Guide to Attachment* by Suzanne Zeedyk:** Attachment is simply the need that all babies have to know that someone will share their fears and joys. This book uses the analogy of "sabre tooth tigers & teddy bears", in order to make the concepts of attachment accessible to as wide an audience as possible.

Transition to Parenthood

Infant Mental Health Recommended Reads

What No One Tells You

A Guide to Your
Emotions from
Pregnancy to
Motherhood

ALEXANDRA SACKS, MD &
CATHERINE BIRNDORF, MD

What No One Tells You: A Guide to your Emotions from Pregnancy to Motherhood by Alexandra Sacks & Catherine Bindorf: Here, finally, is the first-ever practical guide to help new mothers feel less guilt and more self-esteem, less exhaustion and more pleasure, and other tips to navigate the ups and downs of this exciting, demanding time



Newborn Mothers: When a Baby is Born, So is a Mother by Julia Jones: Newborn Mothers is about doing less, not more. It answers your real questions about the transformation to motherhood including ... Is baby brain real? Are you actually losing your mind? You were told these are the best days of your life. Are you the only one finding it this hard?

parenting for humans

'Warm
and wise'
by Emma Svanberg
Clinical Psychologist
and author

how to parent
the child you have,
as the person
you are

Dr Emma Svanberg

Parenting for Humans: How to Parent the Child You Have, As the Person You Are by Emma Svanberg: As well as learning to parent ourselves, this book will show us how to parent the child we actually have, not a textbook version, but our complicated, messy child with their own powerful needs. And by tuning into their language, learning how to hold them, not mould them, we can really start enjoying them for the funny and unique human beings that they are.

THE BIRTH OF A MOTHER

"A warm, insightful book about the steps which new mothers must encounter on their road to motherhood."
—T. BERRY BRANTON, M.D., author of
Empower Your Child's Emotional and Behavioral Development

HOW THE
MOTHERHOOD
EXPERIENCE
CHANGES YOU
FOREVER

DANIEL N. STERN, M.D.
Author of *The Birth of a Baby*

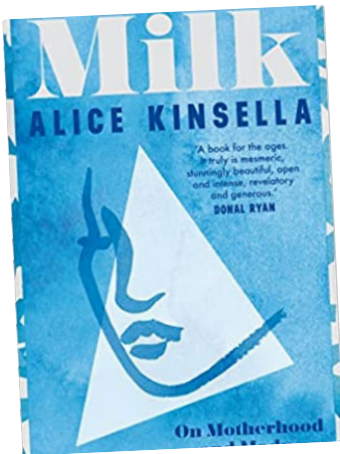
The Birth of a Mother: How the Motherhood Experience Changes You Forever by Daniel Stern, Nadia Bruschiweiler-Stern & Alison Freeland: At the heart of this book is an arresting premise: Just as a baby develops physically in utero and after birth, so a mother is born psychologically in the many months that precede and follow the birth of her baby.

Transition to parenthood

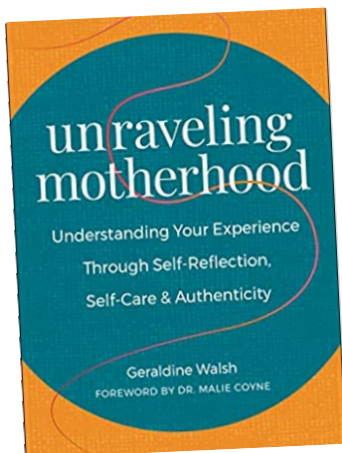
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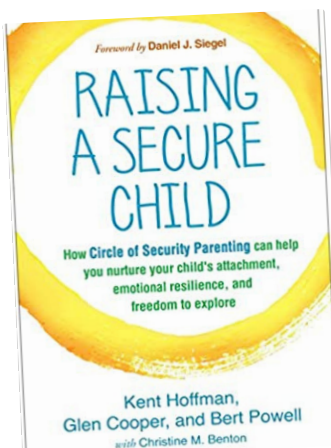
***Good Moms have Scary Thoughts* by Karen Kleiman:** This book is packed with world-class guidance, simple exercises, and nearly 50 stigma-busting cartoons from the viral #speakthesecret campaign that help new mothers validate their feelings, share their fears, and start feeling better. Lighthearted yet serious, warm yet not sugary, and perfectly portioned for busy parents with full plates.



***Milk: On Motherhood and Madness* by Alice Kinsella:** *Milk* is at once a gentle and meditative story of one woman's experience of new motherhood as well as a confronting and often painful examination of the experience of having children in contemporary Ireland. *Milk* is an unflinching and unique memoir that looks at the experience of motherhood against the backdrop of a seemingly changed Ireland.

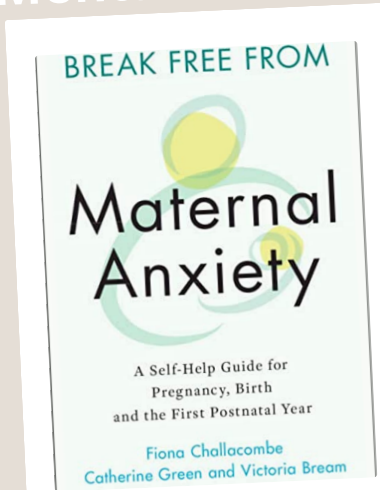


***Unraveling Motherhood: Understanding Your Experience Through Self-Reflection, Self-Care and Authenticity* by Geraldine Walsh:** When trying to unravel an idea as big as motherhood, where do you begin? We each have our own understanding of what motherhood entails. As these preconceived ideas falter and fail during the many intense, exhausting and overwhelming periods of motherhood, we begin to doubt our ability to be a mother. We begin to doubt ourselves. We begin to unravel.

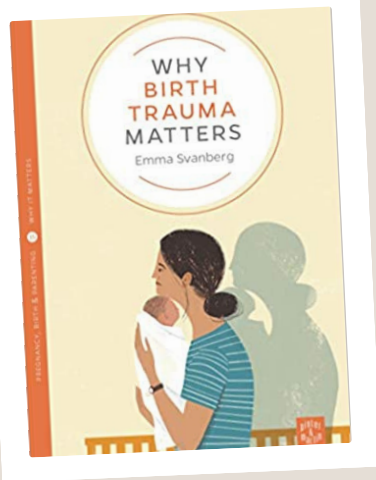


***Raising a Secure Child: How Circle of Security Parenting Can Help You* by Kent Hoffman, Glen Cooper & Bert Powell:** Today's parents are constantly pressured to be perfect. But in striving to do everything right, we risk missing what children really need for lifelong emotional security. In this book, learn what emotional needs a toddler or older child may be expressing through difficult behaviour or how your own upbringing affects your parenting style--and what you can do about it.

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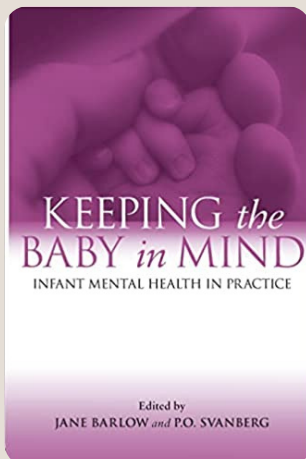


***Break Free from Maternal Anxiety: A Self-Help Guide for Pregnancy, Birth and the First Postnatal Year* by Fiona Challacombe, Catherine Green & Victoria Bream:** Severe anxiety affects a huge number of women in pregnancy and the postnatal period. This practical self-help guide provides an active route out of feeling anxious. The book teaches step-by-step cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) techniques to overcome maternal anxiety in all its forms.

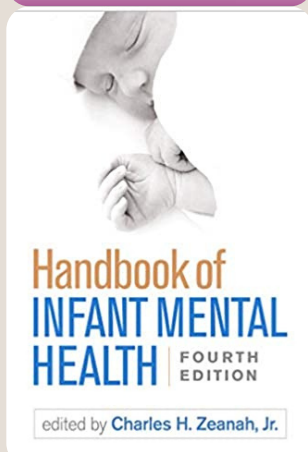


***Why Birth Trauma Matters* by Emma Svanberg:** The author explores what happens to those who go through a bad birth. She explains in detail how birth trauma occurs, examines the wide-ranging impact on all of those involved in birth, and looks at treatments and techniques to aid recovery. By drawing on her own research and the work of experts in the field, and sharing the first-hand experiences of women, she shows how it is possible to begin to move on.

Academic Texts



***Keeping the Baby in Mind: Infant Mental Health in Practice* by Jane Barlow & P.O. Svanberg:** This book brings together interventions and ways of working that can be used both universally to support parents during the transition to parenthood, and with high-risk groups of parents. It marks a new and exciting phase in the development of interventions to support infant mental health and will be of interest across a wide range of disciplines from primary and community care to early years and children's centre settings.



***Handbook of Infant Mental Health* by Charles Zenah:** The definitive reference in the field – now significantly revised with 75% new material – this volume examines typical and atypical development from birth to the preschool years and identifies what works in helping children and families at risk. Foremost experts explore neurobiological, family, and sociocultural factors in infant mental health, with a major focus on primary caregiving relationships.