

Get rid of expectations

Dear Mum,

Congrats on creating & caring for another little human! My pregnancy, birth and experience of loving my kids might be really different to yours. I know I found the journey overwhelming - sometimes from fear and joy all at once but your world might be really different to mine. I hope something in here might be helpful in some way.

I know I was lucky enough to have decent health, a safe home, enough money to keep a roof over my head and pay my bills and I know what a difference that made to me. I was lucky enough to be able to focus on learning how to care for my babies without worrying about how to survive. I hope you are lucky enough to have those resources too but I know lots of mums don't because the world isn't equally fair to all us mums so parenting our kids is harder than it should be. If you don't have a safe home yet I hope you can reach out to a social worker at hospital, midwife, child and family nurse, GP, family support service, friends or family to get that help if you need it.

I remember waking up every 40 minutes at night and at times finding it helpful to focus on how grateful I was to have a home where I could find a blanket when I was cold, water when I was thirsty, food when I was hungry & a supportive partner who understood it was normal to need to breastfeed our little one ALL the time. Changing my expectations of life in those early months (and years to be honest!) made the biggest difference to me. Sometimes that meant it felt like we did nothing.

Slowing down to the pace my kids needed saved all our sanity! Another thing that helped me in my early parenting journey was finding a supportive breastfeeding friendly GP and Child and Family Nurse. This helped me in those early months as I learnt what was normal or not - especially in the early days when I panicked about every little thing! The thing that helped me most of all in my parenting ride so far was finding my community. I became a member of the Australian Breastfeeding Association and found my local Australian Breastfeeding Association group which was a bunch of welcoming mums who gave me judgement free connection at local meetings as well as linked me with resources/information about baby sleep, breastfeeding, weight gain, what was normal baby behaviour, general parenting and how to survive all the crazy ups and downs. Connecting with other mums who want to support each other also empowered me to learn to trust my instincts to get to know my kids and raise them in the way that felt right for me. Good luck on this crazy journey. We all do the best we can with what we have and I hope you get the love and support you need to love and support your little one.

from another Mum.