

hb doulas next antenatal class starts this month. If you would like to be part of this final class for 2006 please call 8778282 to make a booking. If you mention this newsletter you will receive a \$15 discount off the cost of this course.

birth doulas

The birth doula role is to provide physical, emotional and informational support to women and their partners during labour and birth. The doula offers help and advice on comfort measures such as breathing, relaxation, massage and positioning. A birth doula will stay with the labouring woman for the whole birth however long it takes.

The doula's goal is to help the woman have a safe and satisfying childbirth experience, as defined by each individual woman.

Birth doulas also assist father by making practical suggestions so he can better help his partner and can participate in ways in which he is most comfortable without compromising the needs of the labouring woman. Having a birth doula present allows the father to concentrate all his energies on his partner in a positive manner.

Doulas specialise in non-medical skills and do not perform clinical tasks, such as vaginal exams or fetal heart rate monitoring. It must be emphasised that birth doulas are not substitutes for Lead Maternity Carers. Birth doulas are not trained or qualified to diagnose medical conditions, offer second opinions, give medical advice or carry out any procedures.

Statistics and studies show the emotional and physical difference a well-trained doula can make. Birth doulas can help shorten labour by many hours, help reduce the need for pain medication and epidurals and lower the chances of caesarean surgery. Studies have also shown an improvement in neonatal outcomes, breast-feeding, bonding, and greater satisfaction with the birth experience overall.

a doula recognises birth as a key life experience that the mother will remember all her life

antenatal classes in havelock north



topics covered include -
 stretching
 breastfeeding
 prenatal care
 pelvic awareness
 relaxation techniques
 pregnancy information
 infant car seat installation
 labour & birth preparation
 pain relief methods & options
 plus - 2 hr postnatal doula session
 plus - 1 hr infant massage
 plus - 1 hr infant CPR
 plus - hospital tour
 car seat hire

for further details & to enrol telephone hb doulas on **06 8778282** or **027 6775241**

held at 13 Porter Drive Havelock North from 7-9pm Tuesday night

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If we as a society work diligently in every other area of life and neglect the family, it would be analogous to straightening the deckchairs on the Titanic.

Stephen R Covey

Respecting babies

Emmi Pikler and Pennie Brownlee

Successful intimate relationships are a doorway to health and happiness for human beings. Not surprisingly, that first relationship that we make as a new baby on this planet sets the scene for every other relationship which will follow. The quality of the First Relationship actually determines how the brain physically 'wires up' the potential the new infant brings into the world. The First Relationship is the launching pad for the baby as a social being.

Pennie Brownlee

Emmi Pikler a world wide respected paediatrician from Hungary had a revolutionary idea 52 years ago that babies, even newborns, were competent individuals with their own agendas and should be treated with respect.

Pikler set an example that the world is just beginning to wake up to. She believed that in order for babies to develop perfectly in the way that nature had intended, certain things must be heeded.

These included:

- The long-term impact of free movement on a baby's spirit, intelligence and physical being.
- Respect being shown to babies at all times and clarifying what that entailed.
- The importance of a way a baby is touched and supported in the important birth to two years period.
- That no baby needs 'help' to reach their milestones in life. We can however support them with patience.

Pikler said, "As a matter of principle, we refrain from teaching skills and activities which, under suitable conditions, will evolve through the child's own initiative and independent activity."

The key principles of Pikler's work includes -

Full Attention:

Many Mums these days believe that multi-tasking is a great skill and a necessary one. Pikler realised however it does not show respect to our babies when we multi-task, any more than when adults multi-task when we require their attention. 100% full attention focuses us in such a way that babies receive and interpret this as the embodiment of Love. It also brings more stillness to lives, which have become overwhelmed with speed and 'productivity'. It is much wiser for us to divide our time than our attention!

Slow Down:

In today's ever-increasing speed of life it may benefit us and our babies if we slowed down a little more often! As we whisk ourselves and our babies through tasks, and jump from activity to activity a sense of turmoil can be created. Over stimulated babies are often fretful, and their mother's or caregivers stressed. Creating calm around babies is relaxing, as well as peaceful.

Build Trust and your Relationship, during the Caring activity times:

Pikler believed that parents and caregivers need to take the time to make nappy changing, feeding, bathing and dressing, an unhurried and pleasant quality time - *with the baby being an active partner*. With nature's built-in 'choreography for growth', if given security and freedom a baby will then spend their time learning just what they need to be learning at any given stage. When you approach your baby with an attitude of respect, you let him know what you intend to do and give him a chance to respond. You assume he is competent and involve him in his care and let him, as much as possible, solve his own problems. You give him plenty of physical freedom and you don't push development."

'With' the child, not 'To':

Building a Cooperative relationship with a baby requires that you work together on things. We tend to radically underestimate a baby's willingness and capability in this area. Pikler saw babies as active participants rather than passive recipients in their care. All of this requires us to talk to our babies a lot more about what we would like to work with them on - and being patient, giving them time to respond.

To be in the presence of a baby who is given the chance to work cooperatively is a beautiful thing!

Babies are never put into a position, which they cannot get into, by themselves:

The reason for this is that they become trapped and are no longer free in their movement. In essence a baby becomes a prisoner of his/her own body. Pikler understood the myriad of positive outcomes of Free Movement when she said "Whilst learning to turn on the belly, to roll, creep, sit, stand and walk, (the baby) is not only learning those movements but also how to learn. He learns to do something on his own, to be interested, to try out, to experiment. He learns to overcome difficulties. He comes to know the joy and satisfaction which is derived from this success, the result of his patience and persistence."

Take a look at all the 'parent bling-bling' on the market today, which restricts a baby's movement. Prams; walkers; high-chairs; swings; baby propping apparatus; baby hammocks; 'safety' sleeping equipment and car seats are commonly used items. Whilst some of these have valid uses (e.g. Car Seat whilst travelling in a car) many are used for extended periods of time allowing a baby no freedom of movement. These items are usually more about convenience for the parent and not about what is good for a baby's development.

Allow babies uninterrupted time for play:

Given a nurturing environment and freedom to explore, babies are quite capable of entertaining themselves. Not only that, but what if our 'help and support' that we give (with love and good intentions), was actually *interference with a sacred process*? The unfolding of who they truly are meant to be.

As they play uninterrupted by our interaction, they are experiencing independence, and mastery of their world. It is here that the early beginning of self-esteem and confidence building is taking place. Parents believe they treat their babies with respect. Parents however often interrupt baby's play without a thought, and treat them in other ways that could hardly be called respectful."

Babies send us cues all the time. Tune in respectfully:

When a baby turns her head away when you offer her another mouthful of veggies - she is saying quite clearly, "I've had enough". Why then do perfectly sensible grown-ups offer another spoonful and say, "Just one more for Mummy" or "Open the tunnel for aeroplane, here it comes!" The message we are sending to our baby is "I know you have a message that you are communicating to me but I'm ignoring it". Since children eventually boomerang everything back to parents that they have received from them, you can imagine where this might lead a baby in four or fourteen years time!

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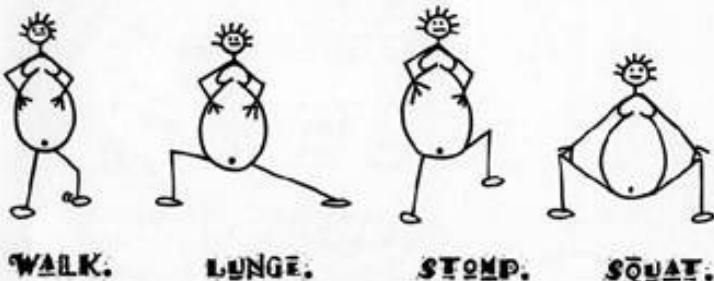
Babies are born wise. The same wisdom that 'grows the baby in the womb' keeps on working after the baby is born, but now baby needs our active support. Babywise workshops explore the ways to support babies so that they keep that wisdom intact, and so that they develop as designed.

Penny Brownlee runs Babywise workshops throughout New Zealand based on the principles of the Pikler Institute in Budapest, Hungary.

GET UP AND GIVE BIRTH

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from "The guy's guide to surviving pregnancy, childbirth and the first year of Fatherhood" by Michael Crider

'Welcome to the world'. Then she kissed Ryan for the very first time. My memory of the next period is a little blurry (remember, I'd had very little sleep and emotions were running high). I know Julie and I studied the little creature that had been plopped down on her chest for about twenty minutes. We counted his fingers and toes, looked at his perfectly sculpted little fingernails, ran our fingers through the little hair that he had and just tried to absorb him. He had the whole alien-shaped head that most new borns have and that area from his eyebrows to his chin was only about two inches long! He was just a tiny, scrunched-up looking person. He looked like an angry raisin. It's not that I thought he was ugly, by any means. He was absolutely adorable. The entire situation was just surreal. I defy you to describe it otherwise when your turn comes. I was in love.