

Questions to Answer Before Baby

Trying to Conceive

- How many children do we each want?
- How far apart do we ideally want our children to be?
- What happens if one partner desperately wants a second (or third, etc) and the other doesn't?
- What happens if we experience infertility or secondary infertility?
- What will we do to make it happen (adoption, surrogate, IVF, etc) if we experience this?
- When do we ideally want to have our first child? What things are we taking into consideration (work, time of year, family birthdays, holidays, etc.)?
- What issues need to be resolved before we conceive/have the baby?
- What scares us most about having children?
- How can we work to prevent/alleviate those concerns?
- When should we stop taking birth control and switch to other protective measures?
- When should we start trying to get pregnant?

Pregnancy

- How will the non-pregnant partner support the pregnant partner during the pregnancy? What does the pregnant partner need?
- Will the non-pregnant partner drink alcohol during the pregnancy even though the pregnant partner can't?
- Will the non-pregnant partner eat foods the pregnant partner cannot?
- Who do we want to tell about our pregnancy when?
- Do we want to share our exact due date with family and friends?
- Do we want to share pregnancy milestones with family and friends on social media?
- Will we undergo genetic testing during pregnancy?
- What will we do if, during genetic testing, it is shown that the baby has a chromosomal abnormality/disability? Will we terminate the pregnancy?
- How and when will we rearrange our living space to accommodate a baby?
- How will we go about buying everything we'll need for the baby? What's our budget?
- Will we create a registry and share it?

- Do we want to have a baby shower?

Gender and Naming

- Will we find out the sex of our baby during pregnancy?
- If we do, will we share that information with friends and family before the baby's birth?
- How do we feel about gender stereotypes, gender norms? How will we set boundaries with family/friends regarding those?
- How will we choose a name?
- Are there any naming traditions on either side of our family?
- Is it important that the middle name is a family name?
- Will the middle name be something meaningful from partner's side of the family who *didn't* get the last name?
- How do we feel about nicknames?

The Birth Experience

- What is our ideal birth plan?
- Who will be involved in the actual birth/hospital experience?
- How involved will the non-pregnant partner be in the birth?
- If we have a boy, will we circumcise him?

The Fourth Trimester

- What do we want the first week of our child's life to be like?
- When will we allow home visitors and who will we allow?
- What boundaries will we set for home visitors (vaccines, length of visit, touch)?
- Is it important that we are both home together for any length of time?
- How long do we want to make sure at least one of us is home with the baby?
- How will we manage taking our parental leave to make that happen?
- If there's not enough parental leave and we need to take unpaid time off with our baby, who will do it?
- Will we breastfeed our baby, exclusively pump, or formula feed?
- If we formula-feed, do we have a strong stance on the type of formula?
- If we choose to breastfeed, how long are we hoping to do so?
- If we choose to breastfeed, how hard and how far are we willing to try to make breastfeeding work?

- Do we have any plans for or strong stances on feeding baby solid food?
- Do either of us have specific food and nutrition preferences for the baby? (ie no dairy, vegan, gluten free etc)
- Will we sleep train our child? If so, at what age?
- Will we use the cry-it-out method?
- Who will be responsible for what portion of the household work when the baby arrives?
- Is the division of household labor dependent on workload/schedules?
- How important is a clean or tidy home to each of us?
- If our child is sick and needs to be picked up from daycare, preschool, or school, who will usually be responsible for leaving work to do so?

Extended Family

- How are we going to respond to unsolicited advice from important friends and family?
- Will we assign “godparents”? If so, who?
- How important is extended family involvement and proximity?
- What will each grandparent be called?
- Who are we comfortable with our child calling “auntie”, “uncle”, etc?
- What is the role of step parents, spouses or partners of divorced parents, etc?
- Will we post on social media about our children?
- Are we comfortable if other people post photos of our children without our permission?
- If not, how will we handle photos being posted of our children or family without permission?
- How will we divide Christmas and other holidays?
- Who will we let babysit and how soon would we be comfortable with it?
- When will we be comfortable letting our child be away from us overnight?
- Who will we let our children stay with for an extended period of time? If our mother, father, parents in law, sister, brother, etc want to take our child on a trip, or offer to give us a weekend or week away, will we take the opportunity?
- Who will be our child’s guardian if we die?

Finances

- If not both of us, who will assume a leadership role in the family finances?
- How will our spending habits change with a baby?

- Do we have life insurance? Is this important?
- Will we make a will for our family before the baby is born?
- If one partner earns less than the other (either because of staying home with children or otherwise), how will the finances be managed and divided?
- How will stay-at-home parents or lower-earners be protected financially in the case that our relationship doesn't work out?
- What is our stance on giving children an allowance?
- How much do we want to share with our children about finances?
- If we have the financial means, will we pay for college for our children?

Family Lifestyle

- How will we make time for “family time”, and how important is it?
- What family traditions do we hope to establish?
- Are mealtimes together important?
- How will we each approach baby and child interaction (ie are we always playing with him or her, or do we expect self entertainment at least a portion of the time?)
- What are non-negotiables for us each as far as lifestyle goes?
- Are we homebodies, or would we like to be able to travel with our children?
- What type of hobbies do we want to engage in on our own, as a family, with kids?
- Do we plan to move from where we live now? When?
- How will we decide on where we want to raise our kids?
- How important is it to have our children grow up in one constant town?

Our Relationship

- How will we make time for our relationship after the child is born?
- What is each of our love languages?
- How will we show each other appreciation?
- How when we will manage the period of time in which mom is not cleared for sex?
- If we're both working, how will we manage our schedules to allow not only for family time but also for couple time?
- How will we resolve conflicting parenting styles arguments?
- What actions will we take if we come against a point of friction that can't be resolved?

Parenting

- What do we envision being each of our parenting styles?
- What aspects of our own upbringing would we want to replicate/avoid as a parent?
- How would the class identity of our kid compare to the one we had growing up?
How do we feel about meeting the expectations or disappointments that come with that?
- How do we plan on engaging with our children's biracial identities?
- What are our core family values (ie feminist values, religious values, etc)?
- Will we raise our children to practice any specific religion? If so, which?
- Will we allow religious influence from people outside of our immediate family, such as grandparents, aunts or uncles?
- Will we raise kids to believe in Santa, Easter Bunny, Tooth Fairy, Elf on the Shelf?
- Is children watching television okay?
- Is children watching Youtube okay?
- Will we restrict screen time?
- How many hours per week are we comfortable allowing children to watch?
- Will we allow children to be on social media?
- If so, at what ages?
- Will we monitor their social accounts if we do allow them?
- Will we monitor children's overall computer usage?
- When our child is old enough, will we expect him or her to contribute to the household chores?
- Swearing around kids – a no go or okay?
- Do we expect our teenage children to work at part-time jobs?
- Do we expect certain grades in school? Do we *pay* for those grades?
- What are the expectations for our child to contribute to the household?
- Are smoking, drugs, alcohol (parental usage) okay around children?
- How will we react if our child is gay? Transgendered?
- Are sleepovers okay?
- Are extracurricular activities important?
- How many is too many?
- Do we make our kid stick with something even if they don't seem into it, or is it important that they follow through and don't quit?
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- What is our stance on health precautions? (ie is it okay for our child to eat dirt, put something in their mouth that's been on the floor?)
- How do we feel about medication for our baby and child?
- Will we vaccinate our children?
- What do we imagine is our discipline style with children?
- Is physical discipline (ie hitting and spanking) okay?
- Is raising our voice and yelling okay?
- What is our stance on time outs?
- How would we handle a child who:
 - Bullies?
 - Is failing a grade?
 - Swears?
 - Hits another kid?
 - Is hit by another kid?
 - Bites someone?
 - Runs from us?
 - Won't share?
 - Drinks underage?
 - Does drugs?
 - Gets pregnant in high school?
- What parenting choices are a hard line for us, where you absolutely will not budge and where are you willing to be flexible?