

What I need

I wish I would have had more information on what the first week would be like with a nursing newborn at home. Feeding on demand meaning (constantly) more than just every two hours. [smiley face] Nursing support/education extremely important early on as well as a call or check in during the first couple of weeks would have been nice.

I think post-partum in home assistance would be amazing- to help with baby care- laundry - just time for a shower or a nap - & postpartum telehealth visits with a physician about help with postpartum anxiety & mild depression (seasonal or situational) may help people.

I would have liked more postpartum care in regard to my mental health. I think moms need to have check-ins with their primary care provider more often in the first 6 months after giving birth.

I wish that childcare was more affordable. I also wish that part-time pre-school was more available in my community, and that pre-school in general is more affordable.

I think places of employment need to support mother's more when coming back from maternity.

Comments from CUBS respondents in 2020

CUBS is a statewide survey of Alaska parents of 3-year-old children. These answers were provided in response to a question about what resources they wish they had to support them in raising their child.

Education about late postpartum depression. I was told I had postpartum depression when my now-3-year-old was 11 months old. I thought postpartum depression only happened the three months following birth. Also, needed more education that postpartum depression can look like rage, anger, low patience, and yelling. My depression mostly felt like anger and being trapped versus sadness.

1. postpartum care & support for mother is so overlooked & not talked about. There should be more information & resources for mothers.
2. Childcare options for mothers hoping to return to work. There is such a void here.

Access to occasional/weekend/ date night childcare.
Developmental assessments/ behavioral study options.
Parenting support resources/tele-mental health. Covid-19 mitigation enforcement within the childcare facilities. Increased options for childcare providers. Pre-school for younger toddlers (age 2-3).

Wish there were more programs that helped single mothers who make too much to qualify for assistance such as SNAP & WIC!

#1 Options of pre-school education that is provided in my community in one location. #2 outdoor play activities for children especially when COVID-19 is out, and a lot of things are closed.

I wish there were easier ways for parents to get mental health help more, I was asked a couple times very early on (in NICU) into motherhood if I needed mental health help, but I was so confused & scared. I had my son at 32 weeks due to [syndrome name] and I wish there was more talk & people reaching out about after birth trauma & PTSD, they check in once or twice at their 6-month apt, but the nurse didn't even look at my paper I filled out, I felt forgotten and was not doing well. It was also very difficult to find a therapist my insurance would cover or that I could afford, I was blessed to find a free counselor through church.

I do struggle with trying to get fresh things in this village. Support for living in the village for better food for children. Also support in [village] for a Parks and Rec program. We have NO social gatherings for kids put on by the state. Please try and promote more programs for positive parent interaction.

Some comments were lightly edited for spelling and grammar.

Childcare assistance. My son went to [school name] from 2 yrs old to 31 months. He stopped due to COVID. He aged up when they re-opened and the price went from 670/mon to 1150! I would love to not have to move him around because of money. You literally have to be so poor to receive assistance.

Free and universal childcare/pre-school! This not only helps children grow and develop normally, but also families to balance work and family life. More community support groups/activities for young children & parents that is not based on the anachronistic perception of a stay-at-home mom (i.e., groups that are for fathers and not mid-week, middle of the day when most working parents are working)!

It would be nice while saving money if more of the "fun" groups like Hike It Baby (a national program) and Music Together (a national music school program) being Free instead of through paid membership. Trying to do a variety of toddler classes, family museum memberships, etc. gets really expensive. [This is a pre-COVID-19 pandemic note. we aren't doing classes right now. But last year, it was a lot of money spent of activities + classes.]

When my oldest 2 children were born, we received books after their birth. [Child's Name] and her twin [Child's name] were born at [hospital name] and never received books from the Read with Me program through [library name] like when the older kids who were born at [second hospital name]. I'm a teacher and many village kids have 0 books at home and I truly appreciated that program.

I feel like the libraries story time would be something I'd take advantage of if there wasn't a pandemic. I also have not taken my son consistently to the pool because they are no indoor facilities.

It would be great to have more indoor playgrounds or play areas for during the winter months. I'm always interested in resources that will support me teaching my kids about "safe touch: and other complex topics in an age-appropriate manner, because unfortunately there are unsafe people in this world and it's important to give kids tools to protect themselves and educate to help with prevention. (and making those educational materials more available/free to parents).

Support with grief, a place for people to go. Need videos modeling different behavior strategies. Example, we watch Super Nanny and have found strategies for helping with outbursts & bedtime routine.

Support/education re: importance of reading to children & impact of excessive screen time for early childhood. Child development milestones & positive behavior strategies for early childhood. ACES

I think subsistence activities/ events/resources are very beneficial & crucial to our lively hood. But if support cannot be provided financially, stories, projects & other creative ideas can be shared. Also, out in rural Alaska, our cost of living is not only high, but we lack fresh produce [especially @ a reasonable price]. In the summer we do our best to harvest what we can but affordable & available healthy food year-round is important & difficult for us to get @ times. Qu yana

I wish I had family support being all the way up in Alaska away from family in UT; But we have made great friends & our church family has been a huge support in raising our children.

I think making sure people feel safe or comfortable to ask for help when they need it but don't know how to ask. I think mental help is a major issue and just helping people who need it, helping them to not feel ashamed to get help, and help for the families and kids who have to live through people who need the help will make a difference.

For more information about CUBS visit dhss.alaska.gov/dph/wcfh/pages/mchept/cubs/default.aspx

