

Homework 2.3. Preparing For Birth

Part 1: Matters to consider in advance about giving birth

It is a good idea **to go through your expectations** in advance with your spouse or another person who will be present at the birth. Often all you need is to think about these matters and discuss them, but you may also write down things that are important to you. Here are some things you may consider:

- What is childbirth like in your culture? Are there some special traditions? Who participate to the delivery (doctor/midwife, father of the baby, relatives of the mother etc.) in your culture? How does the delivery in your culture differ from the Finnish way?
- What do you expect from giving birth? What kind of thoughts does childbirth raise in you?
- Who would you like to be with you in the delivery room? Who can support you best during labour?
- What kind of pain have you experienced previously in your life? How do you approach pain?
- What kind of labour pain relief would you like? What could you do to relieve pain yourself?
- What kind of things help you to relax? What makes you feel safe?
- What does your support person expect from childbirth? What kind of thoughts does childbirth raise in the support person?
- How can your support person help you? What do you expect of your support person during labour? How does the support person respond to your pain?
- What kind of support do you expect from your midwife?
- How would you like the first moments with your baby to be?
- Do you have experience of little babies? What kind of guidance and support would you like to receive in the maternity ward?

(Source: Baby Journey – Guide to a pregnant mother)

Part 2: Taking care of a newborn baby

Discuss with your partner

- How should an infant be handled? Should your baby sleep on its side or on a pile of pillows? Should the windows be kept open or should they be closed? Can the baby sleep outside? Should your baby sleep in its own room, in your room or in your bed?
- Should your baby be bottle-fed or breast fed, and if so, for how long?
- Should your baby's every cry be answered or should it be trained to control itself?
- Should it be the mother or father or both who wakes up at night to feed the baby?