



Help Your Child Succeed Right from the Beginning

5 Key Things You Can Do to
Prepare Them for School.

Dear New Parent:

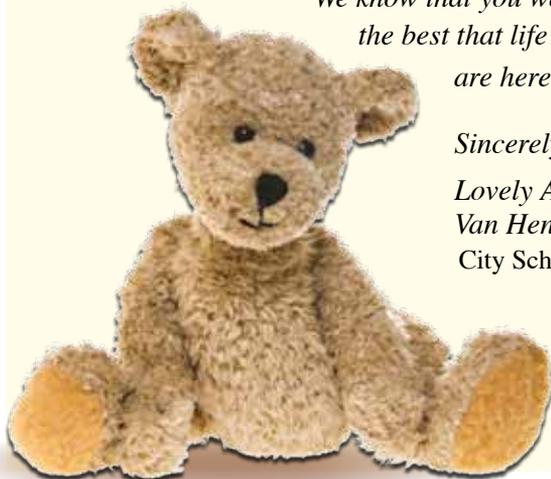
Congratulations! Not that long ago, we were just like you. It seems like yesterday that we were new parents who just witnessed the miracle of child birth. There is nothing more beautiful; a child is God's gift to you. We remember looking at our children the same way that you are looking at your baby now and imagining a world of unlimited possibilities. Just think, your child could be the scientist that discovers a cure for cancer or HIV, an author that writes the next great novel or an athlete who breaks a world record. Yes, your child. Your child can do extraordinary things and his or her success or failure rests on your shoulders. What you do as a parent will shape their future. You are your child's first teacher.

Enclosed in this book are five key things that you can do now to help your baby have a successful and fulfilling life. Life can be hard at times and we understand the many struggles our citizens face on a daily basis. But the baby you are holding has a bright future and the light that you see in them today should shine for all to see for years to come. So we are asking you—as this child's mom and dad, the people that God blessed to bring this child into this world—to do at a minimum these five things to ensure your child's success tomorrow.

We know that you want your baby to have the best that life has to offer and we are here to help.

Sincerely,

*Lovely A. Warren, Mayor
Van Henri White, Rochester
City School Board President*



1

Read to your child

Reading is at the core of everything we do every day.

Reading to your baby is the first step to help your baby learn to read.

If you are a poor reader, please let me know and I will have a literacy coach contact you. The literacy coach is free and your reading level will always be kept confidential. Coaches will be available at City libraries and recreation centers.

*As a way to encourage everyone to read, I started a new program called **Rochester Families Read**. Four times a year, I will give you a book to read to your baby. The book will be available at our libraries and our recreation centers and will be yours for the asking. After reading the book to your baby you can keep it and build your baby's library.*

2

Take your child to the pediatrician

Our babies must grow up healthy and strong.

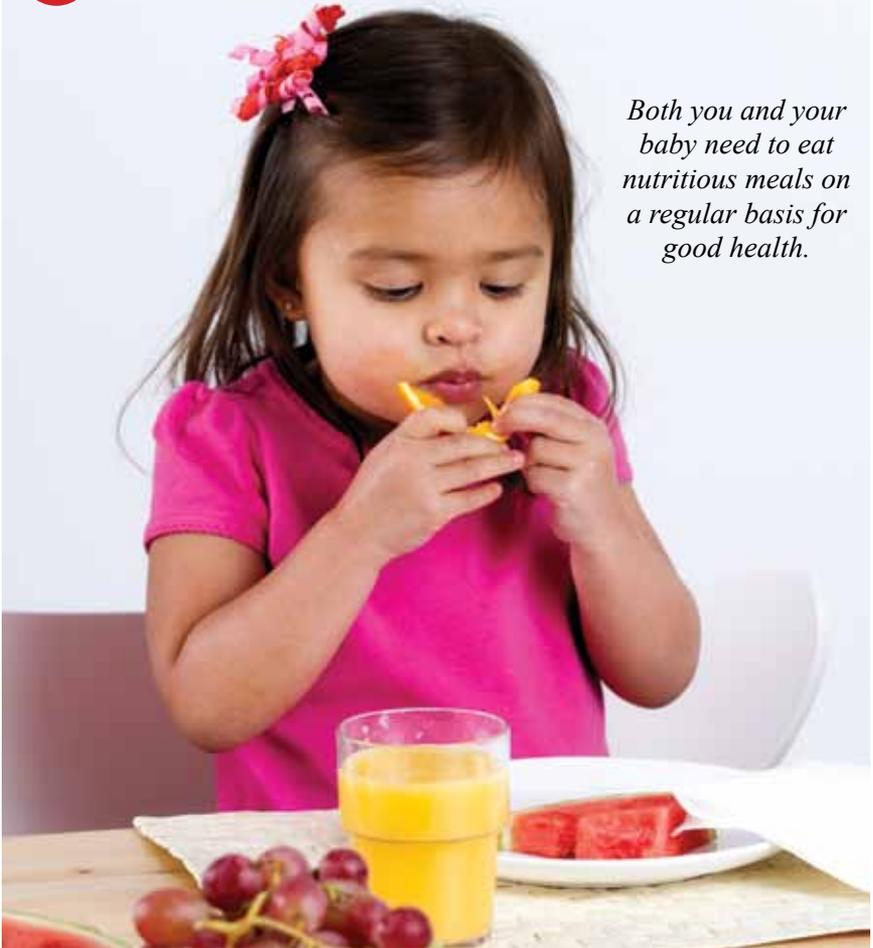
Find a pediatrician or primary care doctor to get to know you and your baby and take your baby to the pediatrician for regular examinations and checkups.

Those examinations should also include vision and dental screenings. *If you need help finding a primary care doctor for your child, let me know and we will link you with a health care provider that you can talk with.*

3

Eat nutritious foods

Both you and your baby need to eat nutritious meals on a regular basis for good health.

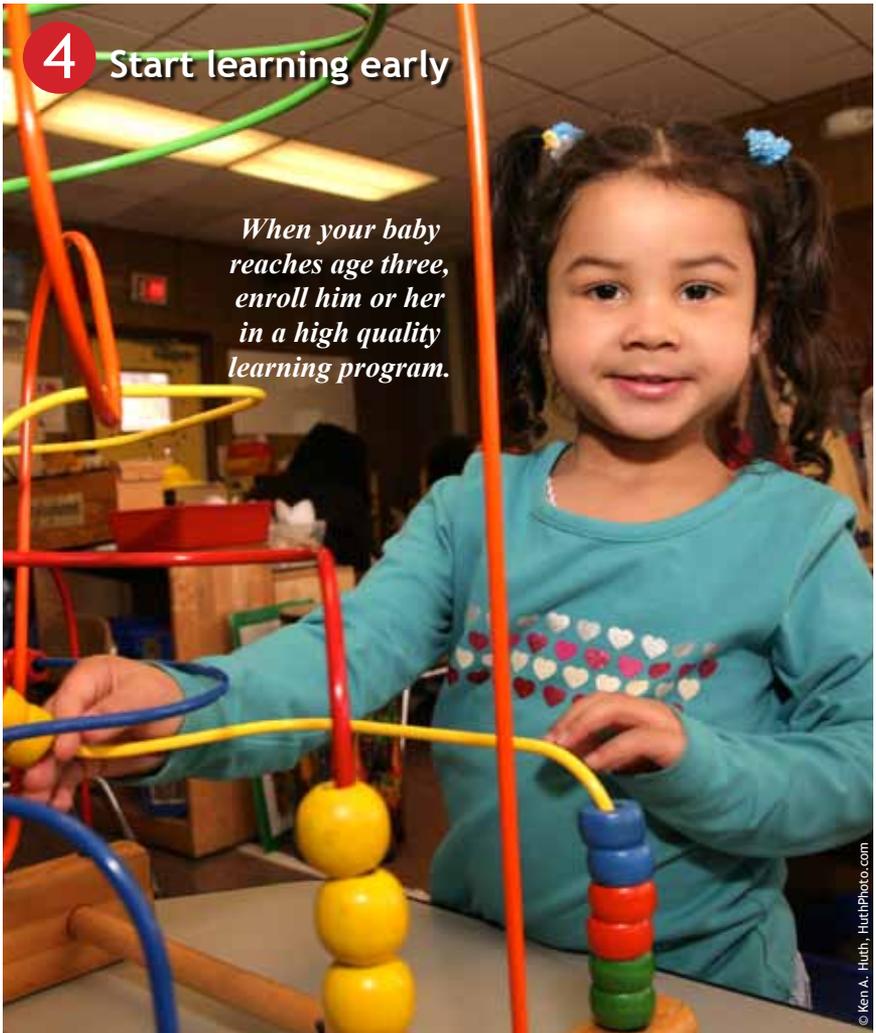


If you are having difficulty preparing meals or making ends meet, we can put you in touch with organizations like FoodLink to help you prepare foods that your baby needs for good growth.

4

Start learning early

When your baby reaches age three, enroll him or her in a high quality learning program.



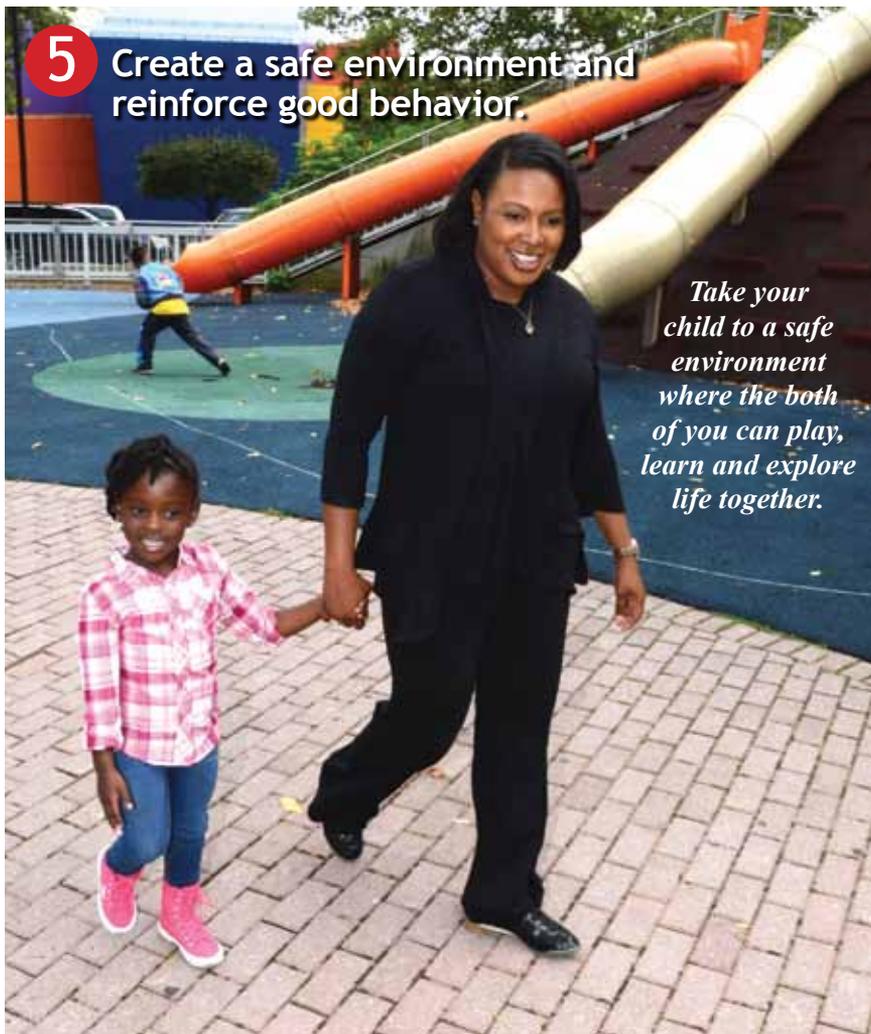
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Studies show that 3-year-old children are better off in a high quality learning program than they are staying at home. Subsidies for 3-year-olds have declined over the years. My staff is looking at alternative ways to provide this funding and I am working with the County Executive to ask Albany to restore the subsidies.

5

Create a safe environment and reinforce good behavior.

Take your child to a safe environment where the both of you can play, learn and explore life together.



I am looking to our libraries and recreation centers to create safe places where you and your baby can have fun, learn and grow together. I am also looking for you, the parent, to model and reinforce good behavior.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call my office at 585-428-7045.



For more information call 311.
Outside the city call (585) 428-5990.
www.cityofrochester.gov