



Nichola Bedos' guide to peace for IVF parents



Each parent needs to find someone they can confide in. IVF and parenting after IVF can bring up large and sometimes unexpected feelings, which is why having a confidante is helpful.



Find regular time to be out of the house together and away from the kids to talk, swap experiences and keep in touch with each other.



Find a really good GP you trust and feel comfortable with. Going through IVF can increase stress and anxiety, and a reassuring GP for parents and baby alike makes a huge difference.



Have a stress-management plan – each parent will benefit from adopting a few techniques used regularly such as regular gym visits, an exercise class, a shopping trip, yoga or meditation.



Try to keep parenting expectations realistic. Stress and anxiety can often make you expect too much of yourself. If you feel you aren't doing a good job, talk it over with someone you trust.



Aim for a spontaneous family fun day out once a month where you let go of time, expectations and the busyness of everyday life and simply enjoy being mum or dad.





Don't hope that relationship conflict will "go away". If you're arguing more than you'd like, seek relationship counselling. Thriving as a family after IVF often requires some professional input.



Be upfront with your child about his or her origins once they're old enough to understand.



Smile whenever you can. Enjoy the little moments – that first smile, the cuddles, the first words mispronounced. Try not to be so stressed that these moments of joy pass you by.



Don't be afraid to ask for help. Many IVF parents can feel so blessed with their longed-for baby that they become unwilling or unable to stop pretending all is well and they can do it alone. Remember: it takes a whole community to raise a child.



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