

New & Expecting Parents

Aboriginal Doula Support Program

This program, offered through the [BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres](#), provides funding for expectant Aboriginal families to access Doula services for prenatal, birthing and postpartum support.

What is a doula and how do I find one?

A doula provides emotional, physical, and spiritual support for women and families during pregnancy and labour and after birth. In the Comox Valley, there is a website with contact information for local doulas: [Comox Valley Doulas](#) or you can call 1-877-365-5588 (toll free).

How do I access this program?

The applications are available at [Wachiay Friendship Centre](#). You and the doula will each need to fill out a section of the form and then return it to Lisa at Wachiay, who will send it on to the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres for processing.

Wachiay Friendship Centre
1625 McPhee Ave
Courtenay BC

Contact: Lisa

Phone: 250-338-7793, ext.261

Email: lisa@wachiay.com

[Visit website](#)

Are You Pregnant in the Comox Valley?

If you have just found out that you're pregnant, you probably have a lot of questions. We have put together links to some resources and information that you might find helpful.

How do I find a doctor or midwife? And what is the difference?

Visit the Maternity Care Pathway divisionsbc.ca/comox/matcarepathway

Every pregnant woman is encouraged to sign up for Right From The Start, a service offered by Island Health. By registering for this universal program, you are linked to:

- prenatal services, prenatal classes, Baby's Best Chance, A Parents' Handbook of Pregnancy and Baby Care
- support to access community resources around nutrition, vitamins, transport, housing, counseling, advocacy
- postpartum services: breastfeeding support, monitoring jaundice, emotional support

To register with Right From the Start, you can:

- go online at rightfromthestart.viha.ca
- pick up a registration form from your doctor or midwife
- stop by the Public Health Nursing office at 961 England Avenue, Courtenay

Other Frequently Asked Questions:

I feel like I could use some extra emotional support during my pregnancy - what is available?

- In addition to the Right From the Start program, there is the [Healthy Babies program](#) which offers a variety of support to pregnant women and their babies in group and

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individual settings

- The [Pacific Post Partum Support Society](#) offers telephone support to women and men who are struggling with emotional adjustments during pregnancy or after the birth or adoption of a baby

When and how do I sign up for prenatal classes?

- The registration for Prenatal Classes is now done through the Right From the Start Program; please see information above.

What is a doula?

- A doula provides emotional, physical, and informational support for women and families during pregnancy and labour and after birth. In the Comox Valley, there is a website with contact information for local doulas: [Comox Valley Doulas](#). (Please note, the cost of a doula is not covered by MSP.)
- If you or your baby has Aboriginal ancestry, there is an [Aboriginal Doula Support program](#) that can help with the cost of a doula

Babies and Babble

This new Mom's group will focus on offering support and friendship to moms with new babies to toddlers ages 0-18 months. There will be informal chat for part of the session, guest speakers as they are available (covering topics such as breastfeeding, dental hygienists for teething, nutritionists for introducing food, behavioural experts and more) and ending with a snack or light lunch for all the participants to help encourage good mama self-care.

Black Creek Community Centre
Black Creek BC

[Visit website](#)
Phone: 250.337.5190

[Visit website](#)

Baby Talk

This is a drop-in group for parents with babies between birth and 6 months.

There are guest speakers, a resource library and lots of room for babies to move around. The doors open at 10 and the group starts at 10:30.

For dates and times of this group, please visit the [event page](#).

There is a \$1 suggested donation for this group.

Lewis Centre
489 Old Island Highway
Courtenay BC

Contact: Andrea Postal

Email: cvbabytalk@shaw.ca

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Breastfeeding Drop-In (Island Health)

This is an opportunity for moms to get breastfeeding support and information from public health nurses & lactation consultants.

For dates and times of the breastfeeding drop-in clinic, please visit the [event page](#).

Public Health Nursing (Island Health)
961 England Avenue
Courtenay BC

Phone: 250-331-8520

Car Seat Information

Are you overwhelmed by the number of car seat choices? Do you wonder if the most expensive car seat is the safest? Are you totally confused by the car seat installation process? You are not alone!

Vancouver Island Car Seat Techs are local child passenger safety advocates. To find a technician or to ask a question about buying, using or installing a seat, visit their [website](#) or [Facebook page](#).

[Visit website](#)

Comox Valley Toy Library Society

The toy library is a place where families and caregivers can borrow toys.

What are the benefits to borrowing toys?

- It saves money!
- It's a good way to see if your child likes a toy before buying it.
- It helps cut down on clutter and storage issues.
- It's good for the environment.
- It's a chance to try different types of toys as your child grows.
- It's an excellent rainy day strategy (bringing out something "new" to play with!)

Does it cost anything to join the toy library?

Memberships to the Comox Library Toy Library Society are \$20/year. That fee can be waived, though, if your income is low. You can ask about this when you register. (You may be asked to produce your most recent Canada Revenue Agency Notice of Assessment to verify eligibility or if your family has PLAY booklets from the Comox Valley Regional District Sports and Aquatic Centres, you can show these, instead.)

Where is the toy library? When is it open?

The toy library is located at St. George's United Church (at the corner of 6th & Fitzgerald). It is open every Tuesday from 10-11 and the 1st Saturday of the month from 10-11.

St. George's United Church
505-6th Street
Courtenay BC

Contact: Andrea

Phone: 250-218-6764

Email: cvtoylibrary@gmail.com

[Visit website](#)

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HealthLink BC Nurses Line

Call 8-1-1 from anywhere in British Columbia to speak with a nurse any time of the day or night. The Physical Activity Line has joined the HealthLink BC Team to expand access to health, nutrition and physical activity services by phone and online. The new name of the department is "Dietitian and Physical Activity Services."

On weekdays, you can speak to a dietitian about nutrition and healthy eating. At night there are pharmacists available to answer medication questions.

Phone: 811

[Visit website](#)

Healthy Babies Prenatal Nutrition Program

This group is for pregnant women and new mothers with their babies (up to the age of 6 months) who are looking for extra support during pregnancy and with breastfeeding.

There are guest speakers and a Public Health Nurse at each group. Other resources include:

- sharing shelves
- prenatal vitamins
- emergency food hampers
- \$10 gift cards
- individual and group support

Transportation is available and a healthy lunch is always provided.

For dates and times of this group, please visit the [event page](#).

Comox Valley Family Services
Association
1415 Cliffe Ave
Courtenay BC

Phone: 250-871-7577 or 250-871-7575

[Visit website](#)

Drop-ins are most welcome!

Mamacentric Group

For mothers and babies, this group focuses on self-care, postpartum adjustment and life after baby.

Siblings up to the age of 3 are also welcome. Tea and snack provided.

To find upcoming dates and times, please visit the group's [event page](#) on Valley Child.

Cumberland Community School
2674 Windermere
Cumberland BC

Email: ccss.coordinator@gmail.com

[Visit website](#)

The group meets in the StrongStart room of the school.

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New Discoveries (Drop-In)

This drop-in group is for parents with children between the ages of birth to 5 years.

New Discoveries has several programs during the week:

- Mondays: drop in and bake or paint with your kids.
- Thursdays: Home with a Heart program (registration required)
- Fridays: lunch & drop in.

All of the programs are free, however space is sometimes limited.

Salvation Army Community Church
1580 Fitzgerald
Courtenay BC

[Visit website](#)

Contact: Brandi

Phone: 250-338-8221

Email: brandi@cvsalarmy.ca

[Visit website](#)

Pacific Post Partum Support Society

Pacific Post Partum Support Society supports women and men who are struggling during pregnancy or after the birth or adoption of a child.

Some of these difficult adjustments may include:

- crying for no apparent reason
- numbness or feelings of helplessness
- frightening or intrusive thoughts
- depression ranging from sadness to suicidal thoughts
- anxiety or panic attacks
- anger and aggression
- feelings of resentment toward the baby

The Pacific Post Partum Support Society is based in the Lower Mainland but supports parents throughout British Columbia by offering:

1. Telephone support: experienced postpartum counsellors offer telephone support, information and referrals five days a week. The toll free number is: 855-255-7999.

2. Information in print: information packages are available to individuals and professionals at no cost. There is also a Self-Help Guide published by the Society that is available for purchase.

Please note: women may seek support at any time from pregnancy until their child is 3 years old.

Phone: 855-255-7999

Email: admin@postpartum.org

[Visit website](#)

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Right from the Start (Island Health)

The Right from the Start program offers support for pregnant women and new mothers, their babies, children and families.

A public health nurse works in partnership with you and your care team, offering services that include:

- free health and pregnancy information
- education and support
- referrals to community resources specific to your individual needs

For more information or to register online, visit the Island Health Right from the Start [registration page](#). You can also contact Public Health Nursing to get more information about the program.

Public Health Nursing (Island Health)
961 England Avenue
Courtenay BC

Phone: 250-331-8520

Stay N' Play

This interactive parent-child support group is for families with children between 4 - 12 months of age. It is an opportunity for parents to:

- connect with other parents and caregivers in a supportive, learning environment
- learn more about children's health, safety, nutrition, growth and development
- access clothing sharing shelves & emergency food hampers
- talk with community guest speakers while the children enjoy a variety of early learning activities

Transportation is available and a healthy lunch is always provided.

For contact information, as well as dates and times for this group, please visit the [event page](#) or our [online calendar](#).

Comox Valley Family Services
Association
1415 Cliffe Ave
Courtenay BC

Phone: 250-871-7577

[Visit website](#)

Trousse Bébé Francophone

[Bébé Francophone](#) is a welcome package for parents for expecting parents or who have a child under 12 months old, and have French as one of the languages spoken in their home. The package contains lots of information, as well as some "goodies" (including a CD of French songs and a baby book in French). Some of the resources included are geared specifically to families where only one parent is a Francophone.

Phone: 1-800-905-5056

Email: info@fpfcb.bc.ca

[Visit website](#)

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Public Health Nursing (Island Health)

Public Health Nursing has a number of different health services that are provided in homes, schools and various community settings.

The services include:

- [Immunizations](#)
- [Right from the Start](#) prenatal registration program
- [Prenatal classes](#)
- new baby visits
- breastfeeding support, including a [drop-in group](#) on Thursday mornings
- universal bilirubin screening program

Information for families about newborn and young children's health, nutrition, growth and development, baby blues and postpartum depression, is also available.

Public Health Nursing (Island Health)
961 England Avenue
Courtenay BC

Phone: 250-331-8520

[Visit website](#)

Prenatal Classes (Island Health)

Prenatal classes are taught by childbirth educators and cover topics such as labour, delivery and breastfeeding.

As classes can fill up quickly, it is important to register as soon as you can, even if you are early on in your pregnancy.

Registration is done through the Right From the Start program and can be completed [online](#). If you would like to speak to someone about the program, please contact Public Health Nursing.

Public Health Nursing (Island Health)
961 England Avenue
Courtenay BC

Phone: 250-331-8520

Email: rfts@viha.ca

Young Parents Program

Today 'N' Tomorrow Learning Society
4830 Headquarters Rd
Courtenay BC