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beijingkids

July 2017

Feeding Success:

Breastfeeding
advice from
the experts

Prepping for

Preschool:

Baby steps
into academia



Beijing With a Bump

Your up-to-date guide on maternity and beyond



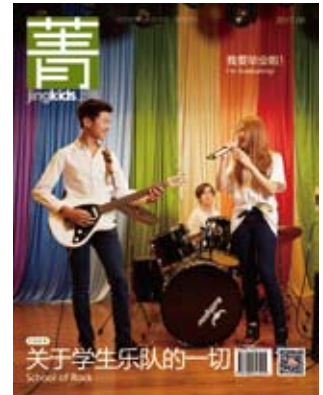
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2017-2018 SCHOOL CHOICE GUIDE

BEIJING'S MOST COMPLETE GUIDE TO INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL CHOICES

WOMEN OF CHINA

《中国妇女》英文刊 2017年7月(下半月)



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AJ Warner

When AJ Warner is not with his two sons, he's coaching Chinese students on how to get admitted to the top 30 US universities. He also guides Chinese families through the process of sending their child to the US for high school and related homestays. Contact him at ajwarner@touchdown.org.cn.



Mike Signorelli

Mike Signorelli arrived in Beijing in 1994 as a student and has called China home ever since. He has held several senior management roles over the past 20+ years, including his last corporate job with NBA China. Mike is the founder of Signature Wine, China's first independent subscription wine club. Contact him at mike@sigwine.com.



Marianne Daquet

In Beijing for 11 years, Marianne Daquet has always been passionate about art and education. She founded Atelier Art School 5 years ago with the mission to pass on her strong belief that creativity can change the world. She and her French husband have two daughters. You can reach her at Marianne@atelier.com.



Eyee Hsu

When former CGTN talk show host and mom-preneur Eyee Hsu is not chasing after her two kids or the family dog, you might catch her at a Pilates studio or on TV. She formerly owned Counting Sheep boutiques and will be returning to the US this year. We'll miss her but wish her well!



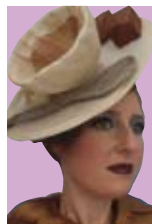
Caroline Nath

Caroline Nath moved to Beijing as a teenager after having grown up in the US, Canada, France, and India. She is a filmmaker, radio host, Parent Effectiveness Training teacher, founder of Bonne Nani Jams, and an organic food promoter. She has two multi-ethnic and multi-lingual children. Contact her at kulfidoll@gmail.com.



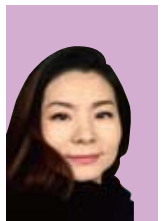
Elisabeth Koch

China's milliner, Elisabeth Koch, arrived in 2007 and hit the ground running with her hats. This TCK has two children who were born in Beijing. While her creations adorn famous heads on the covers of international glossies, Koch gives hat-making workshops in her studio and is kept busy by the kids. Find out more information at www.ElisabethKoch.net



Samantha Zhang

Samantha Zhang spent the past decade working for international corporations but in 2015 she founded JZ-Atelier Jewelry studio. The studio focuses on teaching systematic skills training so students are able to design, select materials, and fabricate their own jewelry. When not working, she enjoys spending time outdoors with her family. Contact her at legendaryzhang@yahoo.com.



Camilla Simoni

Originally from Denmark, Camilla Simoni has lived in Beijing for the last 4 years with her husband and their 3 boys. Before moving to China, she worked as a health visitor, conducting in-house check ups, breastfeeding counseling, and other newborn concerns. After she moved to Beijing, she finished her Master's in Sociology and took part in the startup Challet Baby.



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ON THE COVER:

Welcome Theresa and Mia Rae Parsonage to the *beijingkids* cover. Between teaching yoga classes at The Crib and selling Yoganda bags at pop-up markets around town, Theresa is known as a beacon of positivity in the Beijing community. Her très chic hair and makeup for this photo was done by Leo Tambourine at London Loft. Bring this magazine for a 20 percent discount on your next visit!

Photo by Elephant Kids Photography Studio

New Life

It wasn't long ago that I was on *the Beijinger* beat, covering bars, clubs, and restaurants to help inform the frivolous youth about all the fun that was to be had in this glorious city. I held the position of nightlife editor at our sibling magazine for about three years, and gained a following for my somewhat zany editorial tone. Needless to say, it was a lot of fun while it lasted.

About a year ago my life turned completely around when my wife and I began getting ready for our first child. Ultimately this led to fewer late nights, and a very drastic, though much-desired lifestyle change. Going out night after night undoubtedly takes its toll on a person, and there's nothing more motivating than a rapidly growing embryo and love from your soulmate to help focus your attentions on the future.

When I was asked to join the *beijingkids* team, I was more than ecstatic because I knew that being a respectable parent would now be a major focus of my life. Though my understanding of much of the content covered in *beijingkids* was basic at best, I was also running out of words to describe what a DJ could do to a dance floor. But, if my skills at reporting about Beijing's music and F&B scene are of any indication to my ability and drive to reach a level of expertise at something, then I am certain

the content reported on in *beijingkids* will quickly become a part of my vernacular.

This being my first issue at the helm is a key reason why we chose to bring back the topic of maternity in Beijing, as it had been a while since we last covered this in full, and the entire process was still very fresh in my mind. So, in this issue, you'll find articles including a detailed look at what both expat and mixed couples need to know about giving birth in Beijing (p49), valuable advice from lactation specialists on breastfeeding (p28), and resources on how to cope with common forms of postnatal depression (p54). We even went a little beyond the maternity scope in *Schooled* (p36), where we asked popular institutions for early learning about the best ways to prepare your little ones for their journey into academia. It's never too soon to start thinking about it!

We hope that you find the variety of content here about giving birth and raising an infant in Beijing enlightening but above all helpful. It pleases me beyond words to be joining the *beijingkids* team, and I'm looking forward to contributing and helping families live their lives to the fullest, for however long you decide to call this beautiful city home.

Kipp Whittaker

Kipp Whittaker
Managing Editor



Celebrating 10 Years with *beijingkids*



Imogen Kandel was with *beijingkids* from 2008-2011, working her way up from intern to managing editor. Throughout her tenure she covered a variety of topics in her "My Life in Beijing" column. She was here in Beijing during everything from the melamine scandal to casting calls for the reboot of *Karate Kid*, but putting the pregnancy issue of the magazine to bed each year always felt like her biggest accomplishment, she said. Now that she has a kid of her own, we can only hope that these yearly attempts at informing expats at a time when info was scarce has helped to prepare her and her husband Qiao for the arrival of their little one Kit. Imogen has since shifted professionally from editor to publicist, and now works for the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, back in her native Melbourne, Australia. We'll try to hit her up for a flick and a bucket of popcorn next time we're Down Under.

SCHOOL YEAR IN REVIEW

As class breaks up for the summer, and students and teachers alike take flight for home or adventure, we asked some of Beijing's top international schools to tell us their highlight of the 2016/17 academic year.



BWYA

"This year was BWYA's 15th Anniversary and one of the highlights of the year was getting the whole school together at the Wangjing Campus for a special celebratory photograph. It took a lot of preparation and a lot of shouting down a megaphone to line everyone up but the picture came out great!"



The British School of Beijing, Shunyi

"Students at The British School of Beijing (BSB), Shunyi have taken on the challenge from UNICEF to raise awareness of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and to work with their local communities to create solutions for these global issues. Four students ambassadors Tildie, Helen, Sunny and Sabrina (left to right) will present their ideas about SDG #2 'Zero Hunger' at the UN High Level Political Forum in July at the UN Headquarters in New York."

3e International School

"3e International School culminated another sensational year of Explore Experiment Express! 3e families enjoyed a wide range of engaging events – Families Around the World, Halloween, Christmas Bazaar, Temple Fair, Community Day, Student Led Conferences, March Madness, Science Fair, Water Day, Art Exhibition, Fashion Parade, Authors Celebration, Field Day and more!"





Beijing No. 55 High School

"From September 15 to 18, 2016, international students from Beijing No. 55 High School participated in the first series of 'Green Power' activities; they performed an on-site assembly of their vehicle, then competed in a race using the vehicle. They won high praise from the judges for their effort."



Aidi School

"Aidi School successfully hosted the 'Walking with the Sun' summer charity concert in Beijing Poly Theater, with over 500 students and teachers volunteering in the whole project. More than RMB 200,000 was collected and will be donated to a charity school for the children of migrant workers."



Dulwich College Beijing

"The International Schools Choral Music Society (ISCMS) festival, one of the largest music festivals of its kind in Asia, returned to Dulwich College Beijing this February, the first school to host the festival 10 years ago. 330 students from 20 international schools worked with acclaimed world class musicians for 3 days to perfect a repertoire to be performed in the Forbidden City Concert Hall."



July Events

July 5



Flips & Kicks Plus Summer Camp @ Kerry Sports 2017

Ages 4 to 12. For the first week of July, and the first two weeks of August, Kerry Sports will be hosting a summer camp where children can engage in fun sports, including martial arts, gymnastics, volleyball, and fencing. Expert foreign coaches will be on hand to keep everyone safe, while teaching children the benefits of patient practice. Sign up for a half day (9am-noon, with lunch included) or full day (9am-2:30pm). RMB 3,200-4,500. 9am-noon (half day), 9am-2.30pm (full day). Beijing Kerry Center. (hbkc@thekerryhotels.com, 8565 2460).

July 9



International Restaurant and Hotel Show 2017

All ages. The China International Exhibition Center is hosting the 2017 International Restaurant and Hotel Show. With over 530 businesses set to participate, check out everything from B2B business matching, an Italian coffee latte art competition, a gelato-making class, how to decorate with fondant, tips on making delicious drinks, and countless other seminars and forums. Great for the foodies among us. Free. 9am-4pm. China International Exhibition Center.

July 7



Festival of International Culture

All ages. That's Mandarin presents the Festival of International Cultural Exchange, where participants can bring food from their home countries while at the same time enjoying foods from other cultures. Different activities for participants include three different games in which parents can also participate. There will also be a cosplay party. The event will end with a talk show about participants' cultural specificities. RMB 50. 10-11.50am. That's Mandarin. (info@thatsmandarin.com, 5218 6432).

July 10

1 New Horizons STEM Space Camp



Grades 2 to 6. New Horizons brings together experts in engineering and education to take students on a journey to Mars. From the rockets, to the rovers, and all of the stages in between, the workshop will provide students with a hands-on experience of the science behind what's happening on Mars today. RMB 5,490.



9am-3.30pm. Daystar Academy. (WeChat: NH_consulting, beijingsspacecamp@gmail.com, 135 8192 5537).

2 Art Nouveau Atelier Workshops



Ages 5 to 8 (morning) Ages 9+ (afternoon). This workshop runs from July 10 to July 14. Through sculpture, drawing, painting, engraving, and models students will explore the art nouveau style of art, which is inspired by natural forms and structures, particularly the curved lines of plants and flowers. 10am-noon (morning) 1.30-4pm (afternoon). RMB 1,800 per week. Atelier (Sanlitun). (contact@atelier.cn.com).

3 Survival Camp



Ages 7 to 18. This camp runs from July 10 to July 14. Through making fires, building rafts, crossing rivers, and making traps Survival Camp will show participants what nature has to offer. All classes are taught by BSA-qualified (Bushcraft and Survival Association) guides with many years of experience leading survival camps abroad. RMB 750 RMB per day (normal price, no less than 5 days in a row), RMB 650 per day (sign up two weeks before start), RMB 650 per day (3 kids). 8am-4.45pm. Huairou. (info@imagine-china.com, 5739 4933).





- | | | | |
|---------------|--------|---------|-----------|
| Editor's Pick | Dining | Playing | Learning |
| Community | Living | Health | Parenting |

4 Watersports Camp



Ages 6.5-15. This camp runs from July 10 to July 14. Kids will learn all kinds of soaking wet skills at Imagine's popular Watersports Camp in Shunyi, from sailing and kayaking to rafting and paddling. Students will learn how to balance on a paddle board, play games on rafts, and navigate the boat using knowledge gained about the wind. (No less than 5 days in a row) RMB 1,100 per day, RMB 1,000 per day (3 friends sign up together), RMB 4,500 per student (10 kids together for the whole camp). 8.30am-5.45pm. Imagine. (info@imagine-china.com, 5739 4933).

July 14

Mentor Walks

Adults. Mentor Walks Asia in Beijing will bring together established and emerging women leaders in the community for a morning walk to discuss professional and personal successes, challenges, and aspirations. This event aims to provide women in the workplace a platform to share their experience and help them progress in their careers. Free. 7.45-9am. Ritan Park. (jia.wang@cbbc.org.cn, 8525 1111 ext. 371).

July 15



3



4



Beijing No.55 High School



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Editor's Pick



Dining



Playing



Learning



Community



Living



Health



Parenting

Want your family-friendly event to appear in our August issue?

Upload it at www.beijing-kids.com/events by **July 10**.

Three Musketeers Kids Theatre Camp Late Audition/



5 Enrollment

Ages 6-14. Beijing Playhouse Academy of Performing Arts announces open enrollment for the Three Musketeers Kids Theatre Camp. This is the longest running English theatre camp program in China. Participants will perform *Three Musketeers* through acting, song, and dance. Some English proficiency is required. RMB 9,000 for two weeks. 9am-4pm, Mon-Sat. Beijing Playhouse. (broadway@beijingplayhouse.com, 134 6638 8333).

July 17

Parkour Camp

- 6 Ages 7-16. This camp runs from July 17 to July 21, July 24 to July 28, and July 31 to August 4. Students can experience leaping into foam pits, jumping on trampolines, balancing on a slack line, climbing on a bouldering wall, and more. Kids can build foundation skills for all other freestyle action sports. RMB 700 per day (standard price, no less than 5 days in a row), RMB 600 per student per day (3 kids together price), RMB 500 per student per day (10 kids together price). 8.30am-6pm. Imagine. (info@imagine-china.com, 5739 4933).

Frida Kahlo and Mexico Atelier Workshop



- 7 Ages 5 to 8 (morning) Ages 9+ (afternoon). This workshop runs from July 17 to July 21. Explore Mexican folk art, Kahlo's surrealist oeuvre, and the other Mexican artists of this period. Atelier's workshop will be an journey through the Mexican artistic scene at the beginning of the 20th Century. The techniques to be taught will include painting, *papier mâché*, engraving, drawing, modeling. RMB 1800 per week. 10am-noon (morning) 1.30-4pm (afternoon). Atelier (Sanlitun). (contact@atelier.cn.com).

5



6



7

July 24

8 Marco Polo Atelier Workshop



Ages 5 to 8 (morning) Ages 9+ (afternoon). This workshop runs from July 24-28. Students will embark on a series of adventures with Marco Polo through Asia. Participants will also write their own book of the Marvels of the World to tell about their Asiatic adventures and discoveries. RMB 1800 per week. 10am-noon (morning) 1.30pm-4pm (afternoon). Atelier (Sanlitun). (contact@atelier.cn.com).

PHOTOS: BEIJING PLAYHOUSE, IMAGINE, ATELIER



- Editor's Pick
 Dining
 Playing
 Learning
 Community
 Living
 Health
 Parenting



8

July 29

9 Alice in Wonderland Kids Theatre Camp Late Audition/ Enrollment

Ages 6-14. Beijing Playhouse Academy of Performing Arts announces open enrollment for the Alice in Wonderland Kids Theatre Camp. This is the longest running English theatre camp program in China. Participants will perform this play through acting, song, and dance. Some English proficiency is required. RMB 9,000 for two weeks. 9am-4pm, Mon-Sat. Beijing Playhouse. (broadway@beijingplayhouse.com, 134 6638 8333).



9

PHOTO: ATELIER

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Planning on taking the kids swimming this weekend, anyone have a recommendation for a not so crowded indoor pool?

Check this out!

Take a Splash in the Pool in Hot Summer

<http://www.beijing-kids.com/blog/2016/08/08/avoid-crowds-head-ind...>



Bilingual Bob

Multi-cultural
Molly

Thanks for the share!

Does anyone know if the Charter Shopping Mall has a filtration system? The air pollution has been ridiculous as of late.



Scooter Stache

Health-conscious
Holly

I'm planning to go later this week; I'll bring an AQI monitor and let you know.

**Editor's Pick****Dining****Playing****Learning****Community****Living****Health****Parenting**

Want your family-friendly event to appear
in our August issue?

Upload it at www.beijing-kids.com/events by **July 10.**

Saturdays

4-Week Beginners Taichi Course



Adults. In the Trident Taichi 4 Week Beginner's program, participants will have the opportunity to train in three fundamental aspects of the exercise, and gain a much deeper understanding of what taichi is. Suitable for men and women of all experience and fitness levels; please note that this is a martial arts course and while there will be no fighting, there will be contact. If you are uncomfortable with that, we strongly advise not signing up for this program. RMB 788 (all 4 sessions). 10.30am-12.30pm. Ms. Uptown.

Sundays

Charity Event I CandleX Rooftop Yoga



Adults. CandleX hosts this yoga session on a hutong rooftop, every Sunday at sunset. This a great opportunity for yoga enthusiasts of all skill levels to get together for a calming session before the hustle and bustle of the workweek hits on Monday. Participants can relax afterwards with a cup of tea and some time to socialize. CandleX is now offering a limited number of free spots to people that are going through depression or severe anxiety. RMB 100. 5pm-7pm. Nanluoguxiang Hutong.

July 8

10 Annual Community Service Day at The Brickyard



All ages. Once a year The Brickyard says thank you to the village of Mutianyu by donating a day of labor courtesy of most of the staff. They also donate the gross proceeds of their lunch service for the day, from noon-3.30pm, to the elderly of the village and township. The amounts will be reported in their newsletter and the donation will be made on Chongyang Jie. Participation is welcome from all and it is a great way to give back to a community that has helped this popular Great Wall located retreat flourish. Free. 12-4pm. The Brickyard Retreat Center at Mutianyu Great Wall. (info@theschoolhouseatmutianyu.com, 6162 6506)

July 7-16

Children's Book Expo & Beijing Science Festival



All ages. Already in its third consecutive year, the China Children's Book Expo is back and this year's event is combined in one space with Beijing Science Festival. Browse and buy children's books from over 40 children's publishers and participate in a wide range of interactive activities themed around children's books and science. Once you've explored children's books until your heart's content, move on to discover a whole world of science fun! RMB 120 per person, free entry for children under 1m tall. 10am-5pm. Beijing Exhibition Center. (5796 0055)

July 10-11

11 ChinaHiking Founder's Great Wall Camping



Ages 5+. An epic two full days Great Wall hike combines the crumbled staircases and strange turns of the ChinaHiking founders' secret Sunset Great Wall and Beijing's highest Great Wall tower. This perfect viewpoint will grant campers stunning pictures of the endless Great Wall built over the surrounding mountain

**10****11**

ridges. RMB 1,700 (regular price), RMB 1,360 (for members), RMB 1,530 (for kids 7-17), RMB 850 (for kids younger than 7). Camp group leaves 9.30am on Day 1 and returns to Beijing at 8pm on Day 2. ChinaHiking. (156 5220 0950, info@chinahiking.cn, www.chinahiking.cn)

July 17

Splash Day at Swiss Embassy Pool



All ages. The Swiss Club Beijing is inviting everyone to celebrate their rich culture of food and drinks through this epic day of fun in the sun. In addition to a massive BBQ and buffet, there will be plenty of opportunities to get wet and wild with pool-friendly horseplay. RMB 350, RMB 200 (members), RMB 100 (children). 11am-4pm. Embassy of the Swiss Confederation. (info@swissclubbeijing.com)

July 21-23

The Magic Flute



All ages. Be prepared to experience Mozart's fairytale opera The Magic Flute as you have never seen it before. British theater group 1927 and Barrie Kosky, Artistic Director of the Komische Oper Berlin, have transformed the show into a whimsical animated and live action production in the style of a silent movie. This should be a great way to introduce your kids to this often neglected style of stage performance as it will be filled with stunning visuals and edgy renditions of classic tunes. RMB 180-2,080. 7.30pm. Beijing Tianqiao Performing Arts Center. (www.tartscenter.com, 400 635 3355)

SAY HELLO TO BEIJING'S SMALLEST

Want to share your new arrival with our readers? Email a photo (at least 1MB in size) of your little one with their full name, nationality, birth date, hospital, and parents' names to editor@beijing-kids.com. Due to space constraints, we will only publish photos of babies born in Beijing after **October 1, 2016**.



Icelyn Hei Lok Wong

Hong Kong/Canadian. Born on December 17, 2016 to Eileen Chu and Eugene Wong at HarMoniCare Beijing Women and Children's Hospital



Bella Vivien Sear

British/Chinese. Born on December 16, 2016 to Vivien Qiao and Kieran Sear at Oasis International Hospital.



Lucas Richter

Filipino/German. Born on November 30, 2016 to Darling Torion and Steffen Richter at Oasis International Hospital.



Sebastian Howard

Australian/Chinese. Born on February 12, 2017 to Lyn Yen and Drew Howard at Sunhe Hospital



Ludwig Trimpl

Chinese/German. Born on November 10, 2016 to Li Xiao and Sebastian Trimpl at American-Sino OB GYN/Pediatrics Services



Placenta Power

How and why I consumed my placenta after giving birth

By Pauline Van Hasselt

The custom of consuming your placenta after birth is a common practice in China. It's considered to help the mother with her recovery. Recipes on the internet show that soups, meatballs, dumplings and so on can be made with the placenta, and can balance energy depleted by labor and birth. Consuming your placenta after birth is believed to not only increase milk production but also balances hormones to help the new mother with a better postpartum period.

There has been a bit of hype about eating your placenta in the Western world. Loads of celebrities have been eating theirs and sharing it on social media. When I gave birth four years ago, I had the idea to do the same. Not wanting to make dumplings out of it, but rather making pills and taking them over the course of six months as I believed the health benefits would be significant. I asked my birthing center in London if they knew somebody who could do this for me. They referred me to placentanetwork.com to find an encapsulation specialist. The specialist would come and pick up my placenta after birth and return it made into pills. But we then realized another option, as my husband and I are both chefs. We could rent a placenta encapsulation kit, and do it ourselves at home. My husband was very excited about this idea as he would be the one doing it.

We rented the kit that included everything we needed to make our placenta pills. I only had to buy a Tupperware that was big enough to transport the placenta home, a cooler, and ice packs. We added these items to my birth plan including an explanation for why we would take the placenta home, and that the doctor had to put the placenta in the Tupperware. I bought the biggest one I could find as I assumed my placenta would be as big as my belly, which was the size of two watermelons. My hospital did not want to keep the placenta in the fridge till we were ready to go home, so my husband had to dash home to store it.

While my daughter and I recovered from my cesarean, my husband got cooking. He rinsed the placenta several times, then he steamed it with some spices, making the house smell like he was cooking chicken liver. He then chopped it into small pieces and put it in the dehydrator, while some of the leftover pieces were made into a smoothie with loads of berries and honey. The placenta was eventually dehydrated like beef jerky.

After cooling down the now dry placenta, my husband ground the dried placenta in a coffee grinder, then stuffed all the powder in medicine capsules. The whole process took around two days and made my husband feel like he was truly helping me to return some of the energy back to my body that I had lost during birth.

I consumed my placenta pills for months after my delivery. I would also use them when I was feeling low, and when my milk supply was dropping (every day). I kept them in the fridge and later in the freezer. My mother also tried them as an experiment, and it made her feel a bit emotional. I am sure we will also make placenta pills the next time I give birth because it was a very unique experience and it did have a noticeable effect on me during this magical time of getting to know my new baby.

Waving that Itch Goodbye

The Green Room surprises with tried and tested pregnancy bump oil

By Pauline van Hasselt

THE GREEN ROOM

This oil is just part of the friendship story between these two female business partners. Astra Holmes and Jess Meider have been friends for 12 years, while they have only been creating The Green Room oils for just over a year now. When Meider became pregnant for the second time, her belly expanded and got itchy as growing bumps tend to do. As a result of this discomfort, Holmes and Meider experimented with a variety of oils to create their own specific blend that would help with this itch caused by the belly growth that occurs during pregnancy.

It's a common problem to have a dry and itchy belly when pregnant as the skin is expanding together with the uterus. When you combine this with hormonal changes, these can all be likely causes to blame. Although The Green Room's oil is created with pregnant bellies in mind, it's also great for severe dry skin. I myself have been using the oil on my elbows and hands and so far it's definitely helped significantly especially in this dry Beijing heat.

Because of the heightened sense of smell of pregnant women, Meider and Holmes decided to leave fragrance out. In the future they will have a separate perfume that can be added to the oil if fragrance is wanted.

Initially, Meider and Holmes first tested several versions of the oils themselves and finally came out with two that they were pleased with and thought ready to put into production. The two women found a group of 16 pregnant women all over Beijing to try out both oils. The testing phase took around three months from beginning to end and resulted in belly oil that is quick absorbing and soothing for itchy bellies. Some of the ingredients include almond to encourage healing of dry irritated skin, jojoba to add a protective layer, coconut to prevent moisture loss and help reduce stretch marks, and wheat germ with its high content of vitamin E to moisturize and maintain suppleness.

It's the combination of these natural items that have not only created an effective product, but that have also solved this common problem of dry scratchy skin since they launched a year ago. (Visit www.thegreenroom.co to order.)



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF GREEN ROOM



Jazz it Up

This mom gets some pampering
after her zuò yuèzi

By Pauline van Hasselt



Jess Meider became a second-time mother last April. Baby Olivia was born at Beijing Family United Hospital, after a fast and uncomplicated birth. Meider's firstborn is now four years old, so she's a seasoned mother who knew what to expect this time around. When she gave birth and experienced her second postpartum period, she knew this time around she wanted to have a more traditional approach to recovery (zuò yuèzi) to make sure her body would heal correctly after pregnancy and birth. Sitting month is a traditional postpartum custom observed in China and several other Asian countries, and Meider had just finished her version of this custom through staying

inside, keeping warm from head to toe, eating soups, and getting a lot of rest.

She is now ready to get a fresh pampering at Blow + Bar. Jess is not only a mother and wife but also a jazz vocalist, teacher, voice over actress, yoga teacher, and skincare entrepreneur. She is a mother of all trades and has been living in Beijing almost half her life. Singing her way to notoriety, she is no stranger to having her hair and makeup done as she takes the stage nearly every week. During her transformation, she was joined by her newborn so they could stay close during mommy's makeover.

Step 1

Salon manager Angie Tan talks with Jess about the style she would like and together they decide on a full head of highlights and a trim.



Step 2

Tan starts the long process of highlighting Meider's full head of hair.



Step 3

Meider takes some time to relax under the drying cap.



Step 4

While the highlights are setting, the makeup gets applied.



Step 5

Meider wants to keep her hair long and only get the dried ends trimmed.



Step 6

The hair gets styled and straightened, so she has a full head of sleek blond locks.



Blow + Bar

3021, 3/F, 3.3 Shopping Mall, 33 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District
朝阳区 三里屯路33号3.3大厦3层3021商铺
Daily 11am-10.30pm
(5136 5432)

Products Used

Elizabeth Arden Eight-Hour Lip Protector Stick
Memebox Pony Eyeshadow
RMK Face Powder
Bleunuit Lip Pallet
Bleunuit Blusher
Maybeline New York Foundation
HR Lash Queen Black Mascara
DIOR Eye Shadow

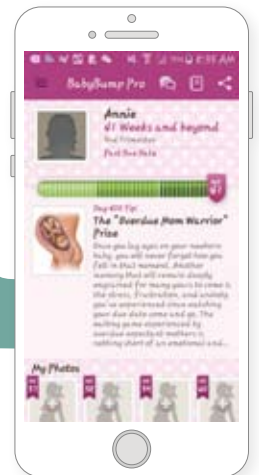
Must-Have Maternity Apps

A direct line of communication between you and your baby

By Annie Wang

For those looking to conceive, track a pregnancy, or plan for the birth of their child, we reviewed some free apps that can help guide you and your partner through this life stage. These apps can be useful for both the pregnant individual and any involved partner to better understand what exactly is going on.

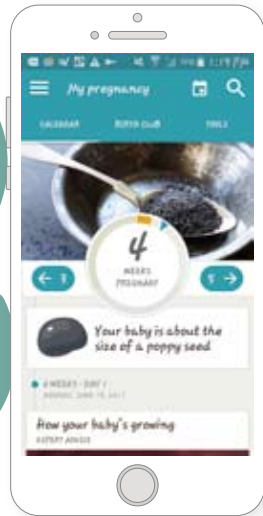
1



Full Term

This app has a stopwatch to track a mother's contractions while she's in labor and also includes a kick counter. Users can also track the intensity of each contraction by simultaneously using the intensity tracker and contraction length tracker. Full Term's "Quick Reference" section also includes information on topics related to prenatal care, labor and delivery, and postnatal care. Free to download on iOS and Android.

2



Ovia Fertility Tracker

After entering basic information on the mother-to-be's health, including age, date and length of the last period, and the length of her period cycle, the Ovia Fertility tracker creates a personalized ovulation cycle calendar. The app also has a space for users to add the dates that they last had intercourse, the consistency of their cervical fluid, the food and liquids consumed, hours slept, and other detailed health information. It helps, that the app is quite comprehensive in functions and information. Free to download on iOS and Android.

Baby Bump

The Baby Bump app allows expecting parents to track important information throughout the pregnancy. Parents-to-be simply begin by inputting their baby's size and weight data. The app also includes general educational materials on the daily and weekly stages of pregnancies. The daily and weekly stages include picture depictions of the baby during particular stages of growth, the mother's bodily reactions, recommended activities to do or shy away from, and health tips. The app also includes forums to meet and engage with other expecting parents, a function to create private groups and send private messages, a journal, potential baby names, and a kick counter. The information that parents input is also made into convenient graphs and charts to track changes over time. Parents can also make a plan for the day of the birth as well as use the app's inbuilt contraction counter. Free to download on iOS and Android.



4

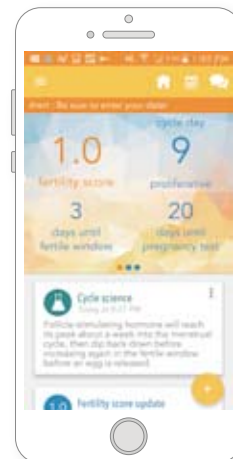


Baby Center: Pregnancy App & Baby Tracker

Baby Center is a comprehensive app that helps track your baby's movements and growth patterns while in the womb. The app includes such functions as a kick tracker, a searchable database that shows which activities are safe or not safe to participate in, a contraction timer, and other educational tools. Users can also plan for their child's arrival by creating a baby registry of necessary items as well as watch the childbirth class videos in the "Tools" section of the app. These classes cover such topics as the signs and stages of labor and steps to a positive birth. When opening the app, users will start on the "Calendar" page which shows what week of pregnancy the user is on, as well as the facts surrounding the baby's development and other important information surrounding that particular stage. Users can also interact with other people on the app through Baby Center's community forums. Free to download on iOS and Android.

Baby Tracker

In addition to attending to your daily necessities, parents will most likely also want to keep track of milestones, activities, and information on their little ones as well. This app aims to make it easy to track important information on your child. The tracker allows parents to record feedings and breastfeeding patterns, diaper changes, sleep, growth, and allows you to keep a photo library of your findings. The app also makes it easy for parents to input and track medical history. This information from the app can be copied to other devices and synced with other phones for easy sharing and access for yourself and others. Free to download on iOS and Android.



5

Bare Essentials

Exactly what your Beijing baby needs

By Kipp Whittaker

Let's face it; you will have to buy a lot of things when you step into the world of becoming a parent. It's one of those simple facts of life. While many of these things will be useful to an extent, others will eventually be collecting dust. That's why we wanted to prepare a simple and very small list of essentials that we thought were necessary to make life post pregnancy more convenient. While some things were omitted from the list like baby clothes, which we recommend not to purchase too much of as your baby will be growing very fast over the first couple of months, others like diapers and baby bottles are way too obvious to be included. Also, keep in mind that there are plenty of online resources in Beijing to pick up these items secondhand like WeChat groups or even *thebeijinger.com* classifieds. Without further ado, here are our favorite essential baby items to get you geared up and ready for your new Beijing baby.

Pigeon Baby Lotion

This often overlooked item is essential. During the first couple months, the baby's skin is very sensitive, particularly in the diaper area. Buy a good foreign brand baby lotion like Pigeon, from Japan, and apply liberally after baths on the entire body and even after diaper changes to prevent those unwanted rashes that can make early life miserable for your baby. We recommend foreign brands, especially those from Japan as they are a little bit cheaper, safer, and can be easily found through online platforms like JD.com or Taobao.

Where to buy: Various online stores
Price: Starting from RMB 80

Lansinoh Breast Pump

While you can't always be certain if whether you'll need this right away after giving birth or not, as there's no way to guess how much milk you'll be producing. With this being said, if it isn't extracted immediately through natural means or mechanically then you run the risk of getting mastitis. You can look up the details on what this is, but it can be easily avoided with quick access to a quality pump. Some international hospitals provide one as a parting gift, but this and other brands of a similar quality can be very portable, used with batteries, and fit easily into a bag if you need it on the go.

Where to buy: Baby Land, Mother Care (both in Indigo Mall), various online stores
Average price: RMB 1,000 (includes pump, bottles, and other accessories)

More options on our website!
QR CODE
For a more complete list scan this QR code for even more baby essentials.



Chicco Basinet

These are great for new, recovering mothers because it allows you to sleep next to your child and for the baby to have easy access to momma for late night feeds. Many couples use their basinet for the first six months or until the baby has gained the strength to roll or even crawl out this small containment. When this happens, it's time for an upgrade to an actual crib and maybe even a room change, but until then, this comfy enclosure should get the job done and make those midnight tasks slightly easier.

Where to buy: Mother Care, Chicco website, JD.com

Price: Starting from RMB 1699

Lululemon All Day Tote

We know what you're thinking, and yes you're right; any bag will do. It doesn't have to be Lululemon, but at the same time, it can be hard to find a bag that's suitable for not only bringing the baby out for a little yoga session but also a little romantic dinner when the time comes. We just found this bag very stylish and great for traversing the city or rushing through airports. Though it's an obvious accessory, at the same time you are going to need something that fits not only your own personal items but also the many things that are required to keep your baby fed, clothed, and diapered throughout the day and this All Day Tote does the trick.

Where to buy: Lululemon

Average price: RMB 1,360

Goodbaby Baby Bath with Seat

There's nothing better than that new baby smell, but in order to preserve it over time baths will undoubtedly be needed. That's why we recommend Goodbaby and others that have this very convenient attachable seat that puts baby in a comfortable reclining position. The baby simply hovers over the water as mom and dad take turns cleaning each part with care. Goodbaby is one of those better quality Chinese brands making affordable items for infants and are slowly gaining ground with their lengthy line of products. They are definitely worth checking out for this and other essentials you may need.

Where to buy: Lijia Baby, Taobao, JD.com

Average price: RMB 169

Quinny Moodd

While we recommend purchasing most baby goods at a cheaper price, a good stroller is something that you don't want to skip on. We'll tell you why. First of all, Beijing streets and sidewalks aren't the easiest to navigate, and it often requires the use of bigger wheels if you do a decent amount of walking, along with having the ability to fold down to a pretty decent size so that you can fit it in the back of a cab or Didi. The Quinny Moodd does this and more. The Moodd part of the name indicates that that the stroller is modular. This means that you can fit a variety of baby holding apparatuses to the top of the stroller, the most convenient of which is the car seat. This quickly dismantles allowing you to throw baby into the back of a taxi with ease.

Where to buy: Baby Land, Quinny Moodd website, JD.com

Average price: RMB 6,500



A Mother and Son's Break from Shopping at Tiago

Beijing proves to be a breastfeeding friendly city

Text by Pauline van Hasselt





PHOTOS: COURTESY OF TIAGO

There are loads of occasions where mothers feel ashamed of how they feed their child, breast or bottle. I remember going to a brunch when my daughter was only a few weeks old and I had brought pumped milk as I felt nervous to breastfeed in public. It turned out the pumped milk was not enough and she was still hungry. I left the table to feed her in another area of the restaurant. Why? I have no idea, but most likely because I was a new mother and not feeling confident enough to feed my child in public. This is fairly common for new mothers going out on the town with their infant for the first time.

I met up with Michelle Lori and her six-month-old son Jason Gabriel. Lori tells me how being added to the La Leche League WeChat group made her very confident in breastfeeding her son, whenever and wherever she wanted. She explains "I find China to be a great place to breastfeed, the people are very accommodating and truly make me comfortable." We stop for a quick dessert at Tiago in Indigo Mall, where the environment is comfy and there's even a small play area for kids. Lori agrees "Indigo Mall and Tiago is child friendly with nice staff and clean changing rooms for babies."

Lori hails from Zimbabwe and has lived in China for over 8 years. She owns an events planning and management company, so you can bet she knows a thing or two about delicious food. She ordered a panna cotta dessert and fruit punch, satisfying all of her sweet cravings. The Tiago menu impressed us with its culinary delights featuring an array of Italian fare for both lunch and dinner. Lori is one of many moms who agree that this is a perfect spot to take care of her baby while nurturing herself at the same time.



Tiago

Daily 10am-10pm. L173, 1/F, Indigo Mall,
18 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District
(6348 8772)

酒仙桥路18号颐堤港商场1层L173商铺
(星巴克对面)



TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEETS WESTERN CONVENIENCE

By Pauline van Hasselt

According to Chinese tradition and beliefs, women need to do *zuò yuèzi* (sitting the month). This is when new mothers stay at home and recover from childbirth for a month. Tradition has some very strict rules on how the *zuò yuèzi* should be done: mothers are supposed to rest in bed, avoid water (so no showering or brushing teeth), don't eat salt, stay away from cold wind (no AC), don't climb stairs, and avoid heavy lifting even during breastfeeding. This traditional custom is part of the belief that only rest will help close the body after birth and make sure the woman stays healthy later in life.

Meals during this time are supposed to be "warm." Postpartum women are advised to eat food like liver, kidneys, chicken, ginger, pumpkin, and soups with pigs' feet and vinegar. Warming foods also include black dates, inner organs, brown sugar, and chicken eggs. Chicken is not a water-bound animal, so this especially keeps the body

at the desired temperature, which is how you are supposed to stay during this first month.

I think there's a ring of truth to this tradition; how I wish I stayed inside for the first 30 days of my daughter's life and be taken care of. After one week I was roaming the streets of London with a newborn baby, and definitely not staying warm. This *zuò yuèzi* can be as strict as you would like it to be. Creating your own version of *zuò yuèzi* is the modern way to go, adapting it to your lifestyle and family. The cooking part you don't need to worry about in Beijing, as Tribe Nutrition has a service that delivers tasty meals to your doorstep for a month. Tribe and the mastermind behind this dish, Chef Zhang Ye, invited us to see how they cook one of their more popular chicken dishes featured on the *zuò yuèzi* menu. For more information on how to order, check out www.tribenutrition.com



Ingredients:

- 100 grams boneless chicken
- legs cut into cubes
- 30 grams soaked black fungus
- 30 grams mushrooms
- 1 piece of lotus leaf
- 3 grams ginger
- 10 grams oyster sauce
- 5 grams starch
- 2-3 grams light soy sauce
- 15ml yellow wine
- 2ml olive oil
- 2 grams salt
- 1 gram white pepper powder
- 2 grams spring onion



Step 1

Cut the chicken and the rest of the ingredients.



Step 2

Mix all the ingredients together.



Step 3

Scoop ingredients into lotus leaf.



Step 4

Fold into lotus leaf.



Step 5

Steam in the oven on 120 degrees Celsius for 20 min.



Step 6

Cut open the package and check if chicken is cooked.

A World of Difference

Cultural perspectives and maternity advice for women and men

By Kipp Whittaker & Tina Sang

It's no surprise that if you travel halfway around the world to a country like China, you're going to encounter a few differences, some small, some not so small. This applies to the advice you get during the process of conception, pregnancy, and birth, even though all of us want the same thing, and that is to end up with a happy, healthy baby in your arms when it's all over and done with. We got in touch with Kenn Juliette and Dai Jiru from Oasis International Hospital, and they helped clear up some simple misconceptions, along with explaining why some of these different ideas exist.

What are the biggest differences you've noticed between Eastern and Western pregnancy or childbirth processes?

The diet during pregnancy is the biggest difference. In China, in the past, there were many old sayings about what kinds of food were not allowed to be eaten during the pregnancy period. Eastern society has a diet according to its culture: no cold food, consuming lots of soup, and so on. Western tradition on the other hand has a diet according to the risk associated with the food, for example: listeria infection through raw milk, raw seafood, raw meat, and fish. Now, in the internet era, this is gradually changing in China as people can get more information from websites.

Is Chinese herbal medicine often administered during pregnancy and childbirth? If so, what types?

For Chinese women not often. If during the pregnancy the woman has caught a cold, an OB [obstetrics] doctor will sometimes suggest for them to take a Chinese herbal medicine such as Ganmao Qingre Keli. For western women, Chinese herbal medicine is not usually administered.

Is it true that eating crab or raw seafood, like sushi, during pregnancy may cause miscarriages? What other foods should mothers try to avoid?

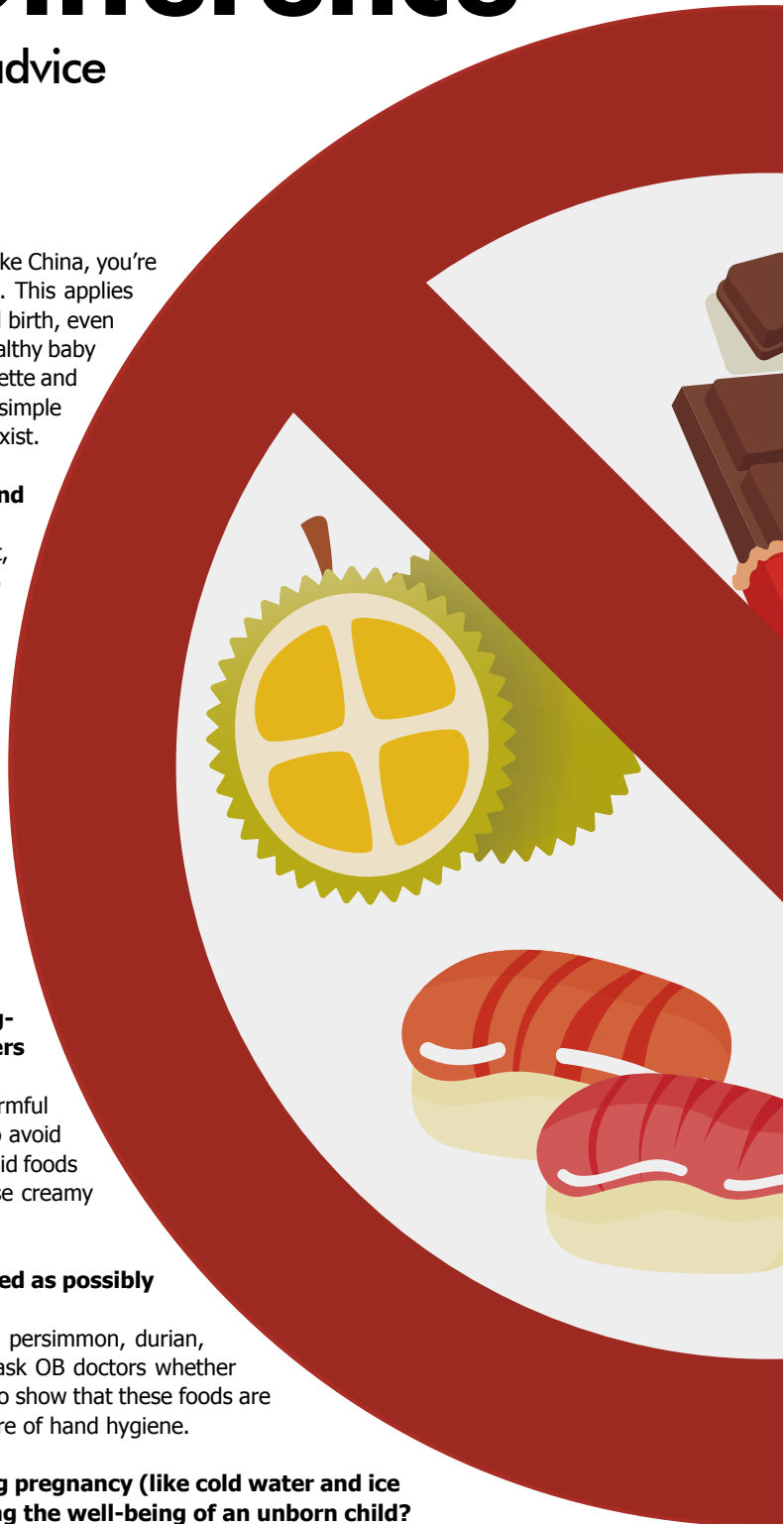
It is not exactly true. Eating raw seafood can cause infections that are harmful to the fetal development. Western OB doctors instruct pregnant women to avoid raw foods (meat, fish, egg), thoroughly wash vegetables and fruits, and avoid foods that stayed outside in the sun for too long, such as mayonnaise and those creamy cakes that have spent too long out of the fridge.

Are there any foods that are deemed okay in the West, but regarded as possibly dangerous in the east or vice versa?

On Chinese websites, many kinds of food (such as hawthorn, longan, persimmon, durian, etc.) are not allowed during pregnancy. Pregnant Chinese women often ask OB doctors whether they can eat these foods or not, even though there isn't enough evidence to show that these foods are dangerous. It is important, however, to eat clean cooked food and take care of hand hygiene.

Are Chinese women often told to stay away from cold foods during pregnancy (like cold water and ice cream)? What is the reasoning behind cold food or drinks affecting the well-being of an unborn child?

Some Chinese pregnant women are told by their parents and elders (not by OB doctors) to stay away from cold foods because according to Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) theory, cold food can cause "cold in the uterus," and this has the potential of causing a spontaneous abortion. It is mainly cultural and has its origins in TCM. From a western point of view, It doesn't affect the well-being of the unborn child, but cold food and drinks can affect the mother. Any infection in the mother can affect the fetus. In the past and even today, in the countryside, there were no heaters, and houses were not well insulated, so it was reasonable to avoid cold as a pregnant woman could catch a cold and get sick. Nowadays, we do have clean and warm houses, but culture changes very slowly.



Do Chinese people follow the rule during pregnancy that intercourse is forbidden for fear of harming the baby?

Yes, they usually do. Not just the woman but also the man is not comfortable having sex during the pregnancy. They think it can be harmful to the baby as it is just right there behind the cervix. Most Chinese women follow the rule that during pregnancy intercourse is forbidden. It is not just Chinese parents that adhere to this, but also western couples think it can be harmful to the baby. Western OB doctors point out that you can have sex unless there is a complication and the doctor tells you not to.

In Western countries, a little exercise is advised for expected mothers. Is it a myth that Chinese women are expected to rest and avoid physical work as much as possible?

Actually, in China, more and more OB doctors and pregnant women are realizing that proper exercise is helpful in controlling both the mother's and baby's weight. So OB doctors now suggest pregnant women do proper exercise and physical work if they don't have contraindications.

How often is the Chinese medical practice of acupuncture used during pregnancies, and for what reasons?

If the baby is a breech birth, moxibustion (Ai Jiu) is used to try to change the fetal position. Sometimes acupuncture is also used in the case of stubborn hyperemesis gravidarum during the early period of pregnancy. It can also be used to help to induce labor by opening up the cervix. However, in the west, acupuncture is seen as an alternative medicine, so it is not often used.

Is there anything in particular Chinese men do to increase the chances of their spouse getting pregnant, like eating particular foods or abstaining from certain activities?

Some Chinese men eat cooked animal's penis and other foods that can increase their sexual desire, along with quitting smoking and drinking alcohol one year ahead of conception, which is very good at increasing fertility in men. They can also protect their testicles, which will help in the production of good sperm, along with eating healthy food, avoiding stress, and participating in regular physical activity.

What are the most common natural methods people choose to increase fertility in Asian society?

In China, couples who are in a better economic situation often see a TCM doctor before pregnancy, and let the doctors help them to do body conditioning in order to get pregnant more easily. Some men also often believe in things like ginseng to boost the sex drive and their capacity to have kids.

Did the one-child policy have an impact on the caution women took during their pregnancies? Has it changed now with the two-child policy?

Of course, the one-child policy has had an impact on the caution women and their families use during pregnancies. They had no desire to take any risks whatsoever, and it made couples very nervous. They worried about everything: whether the baby would be healthy, beautiful, clever, etc. Now, if the first baby is good, they will be more relaxed when they have a second baby. All pregnancies are precious, but western people are ready to take some risks, for example, to have a vaginal birth for a breech birth or twins. Eastern women wouldn't consider this. But now with the two-child policy more are willing to try vaginal birth as they may want to have a second child later. This also means that we now have more requests to try VBAC (vaginal birth after C-section).

Answers provided by:

Kinn Juliette, OB GYN, MD, Oasis International Hospital

Dai Jiru, OB GYN, MD, Oasis International Hospital



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Editor's Note: Readers should make sure when talking to any doctor or nurse that they have been trained in lactation specifically. You wouldn't talk to your dentist about heart surgery, or to your heart surgeon about your teeth because they are two different fields of medicine. A lot of women will get misinformation that will make their breastfeeding journey unsuccessful if they are talking to a doctor from another field that isn't well informed on the topic. Please consult our list at the end of the article if you should require the help of an expert in this area.

”

Feeding Success

Breastfeeding advice from the experts

By Rebecca Archer

For most mothers, having a new baby is a joyful, yet completely overwhelming, experience. The reality of the difficulties and doubts that mothers face in those first few months are often unexpected, with most mothers assuming that breastfeeding will come naturally and easily. Unfortunately for many mothers this is not the case, and there is a great feeling of personal failure for mothers who wanted to breastfeed their children but couldn't. Education both before and after baby comes on what to expect and what is normal can help new mothers alleviate fears.

The World Health Organization's recommendations are that babies are exclusively breastfed for the first six months of life, with continued breastfeeding up to the age of two years. The health benefits for mothers and for babies extend into adulthood. Yet, globally, less than 40 percent of infants under six months of age are exclusively breastfed. While breastfeeding is a natural act, it is also a learned behavior.

Research has shown that mothers require active support and breastfeeding counseling for greater success in breastfeeding and in a foreign country, far from your home and the support of your own family or healthcare system, support can be even harder to get. Latest research shows that breastfeeding reduces the risk of post-partum depression (PPD) yet for mothers who desire to breastfeed but can't, the risk of PPD increases, and this is another reason that equipping and educating yourself and a strong support network is crucial for success.

Set yourself up for success

Be informed about birthing practices. While sometimes medically necessary, induction, cesarean section, pain relief medication (including epidurals) and IV fluids put babies at a higher risk of having breastfeeding difficulties – some medication can create sleepy newborns who eat less frequently than normal, and can delay



mothers milk supply. Also, IV fluids can delay the milk “coming in,” creating engorgement in the mother’s breasts making it painful for mum and difficult for baby to latch. This also results in a false birth weight for the baby, leading to a bigger weight loss in the first week which doesn’t necessarily need to be fixed with supplementation. All of these problems can be overcome with the right support.

Jennifer Lecleir, Beijing United Family Hospital’s lactation consultant, says the key to successful breastfeeding relies heavily on a good latch. “A good latch means better milk transfer, better milk supply, and healthy thriving babies.” Educate yourself on how to get a deep latch and seek help from trained professionals or experienced mothers. Nipple pain is a sign that the latch is not as good as it could be. Latching requires practice from mother and baby, so if it hurts, unlatch baby and try again. Lecleir says that with a good latch, the mother should feel a strong pulling at the breast, as opposed to painful pinching on the nipples. When the milk is being transferred successfully, baby’s jaw will move rhythmically with a small pause before each swallow to show the milk is filling up her mouth.

How often should a newborn feed?

All our experts agree that babies should be fed on demand. Lecleir states “there should be no restrictions on length or frequency of breastfeedings in the early days.” Babies feed very often in the early days (10-12 times per day!), this is normal and the best way to establish a healthy milk supply and enhance breastfeeding behavior. Brand new babies who are sleeping more than 3-4 hours (perhaps as a result of mother’s pain relief medication, or insufficient milk intake), can be woken up to ensure they are fed the recommended minimum number of times a day (8, preferably 12).

What are some signs that your baby is not getting enough milk?

Poor weight gain after the 4th day is usually the first indication of inadequate milk intake. All babies lose seven to nine percent of their weight in the first three days (or more if mother has been given IV fluids), and then start to gain weight around day four. Lecleir says other signs include low urine output, decreased stool, or severe jaundice. Mother may have low milk supply or she may be severely engorged due to poor milk transfer (check that latch!).

When should I seek help?

For mother: when struggling in general, severe pain throughout the feedings, damaged cracked nipples, severe engorgement, persistent high fever (greater than 38.4 degrees Celsius). For babies: poor infant weight gain or excessive weight loss.

What are some common misconceptions that are detrimental to breastfeeding and a mother’s milk supply?

Bec Taylor of La Leche League says it is a common misconception that a mother must wait for her breasts to “fill up” in order to provide enough milk for their baby. “Actually, the more a baby is able to fully empty the breast, the more milk is produced. Soft, frequently emptied breasts make milk faster than full breasts!”

Taylor adds that many families fear that the fussiness their baby displays in the evenings is related to a low milk supply, when in

reality, this is actually normal baby behavior. Understanding that babies breastfeed for more reasons than just hunger (such as thirst, a need for physical touch and comfort, immunological boosts, tiredness, overstimulation and more) will help make the very normal “witching hour” fussiness more bearable.

Is there anything mothers need to be aware of after the first few weeks?

A sudden increase of demand for breastfeeding which happens prior to a growth spurt and/or a big developmental leap can unnerve many mothers, leading them to think they have “lost their milk.” Taylor says “milk supply tends to plateau around 6 weeks when the body has figured out how much it needs to make. Breasts lose their fullness and the baby usually feeds more efficiently and for less time.” Taylor explains that both these behaviors are completely normal yet they can cause doubt and confusion for mothers who were unaware of what to expect. She also adds that scheduling feeds, or delaying them until a certain timeframe occurs (3-4 hourly) slows or can stop the production of milk.

Our Experts



Jennifer Lecleir joined Beijing United Family Hospital in 2009 as a lactation counselor, and in 2013 received her certification as an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant. She has a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, and prior to Beijing, spent years as a registered nurse working in obstetrics, antepartum care, labor and delivery, mother/baby postpartum care, and neonatal intensive care. (4008919191)



Bec Taylor, is an international school teacher librarian and volunteer breastfeeding counselor for La Leche League International (LLL) for almost 4 years.

Where to go for help

La Leche League International (LLL) is a volunteer organization run by trained and qualified mothers, offering peer support and guidance through the breastfeeding journey. For regular mother to mother meet-ups and trained breastfeeding counselors, contact 186 1057 1125 or visit www.llli.org/beijing.html

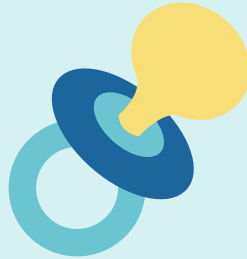
Alessia Chizzoniti, certified birth and postpartum doula (187 0106 2493)

Beijing United Family Hospital Pediatrics (5927 7222)

Leora Martin, lactation consultant at Oasis International Hospital (4008762747)

Natural Childbirth

By Dr. Melissa Rodriguez



As a naturopath, it's only natural (pardon the pun) that I would be a big supporter of natural birth. It's what I wanted for myself and for my babies because I wanted the least amount of interventions possible. I believe there is an innate intelligence in the way nature unfolds, there is a reason for each step of the process, and it's no different in giving birth. In this case I wanted to embrace the pain, because I knew it was part of the natural course of having a baby.

Giving birth naturally has many rewards for both mother and child: The mother feels a high sense of accomplishment, her rate of recovery is often faster and she is quickly able to attend to her baby. At the same time, the baby is alert and ready to begin feeding. Any possible unwanted side effects due to medications have been thwarted. Of course there are instances when medical interventions are necessary in order to have a healthy delivery, so talk to your doctor.

The first step towards having a natural birth is wanting one. Complications aside, you should be convinced of your reasons for wanting to deliver your baby with the least interventions possible. Once you have made the decision, it's important to be well informed about the natural birth process. Knowing what your body is capable of can enhance confidence in your ability to give birth without the use of pain medications.

Having a support person is vital when giving birth, and even more so when giving birth naturally. Studies show that women who have a continuous birth companion

during labor experience fewer Caesarian sections and shorter labors, they require less medication, and fewer induction and augmentation interventions. The benefits for newborns include lower rates of fetal distress and fewer admissions to intensive care units. Women with support report greater self-esteem, less depression, as well as an increased ability to care for their newborns. This support person is not necessarily a husband or partner. Doula's also provide support for birthing women. They do not have a medical role; their job is to be there for the mother before, during, and after labor.

Women are highly sensitive during pregnancy, and being exposed to negative images or information about pregnancy and delivery can cause unnecessary fear and stress. Even books about what to expect during pregnancy can make you focus on all the things that could go wrong. While it is important to be informed, avoid information that is fear-based. Remember, your mind is a powerful force that can easily influence your physical state of wellbeing.

Confidence in your abilities as a woman to birth your baby naturally is of utmost importance. Women have been giving birth without the use of pain medication for millennia. If it is something you want to do, you can most definitely achieve your goal. A few key points to remember: Knowledge is power, every birth is different, and if things don't work out the way you envisioned them, it's okay. Be flexible – a healthy baby (and mama) is the ultimate goal.



Got a question?

Dr. Melissa Rodriguez is a naturopathic doctor and mother of two, who works at Beijing United Family Hospital. To find out more, check out her website at www.drmelissarodriguez.com

Playing About Town

Get busy with some unique baby oriented fun around Beijing

By Kipp Whittaker

There are mixed opinions regarding whether or not our babies benefit from group play before the age of one. Despite these contradictory claims, have you ever asked your baby whether or not he or she prefers being cooped up in the house all day with the same toys, or engaging with a big group of other babies, moms, and dads?

In Beijing, there are many options ranging from organized baby play groups at international schools, sing-song gatherings at local venues, and various exercise-oriented activities to break a sweat while your little one laughs hysterically at the silly things you do to get your body back into shape.

These weekly opportunities will help you meet other parents who are in the same boat as you, and who knows, maybe you'll make a family friend for life. Group play is as much beneficial for moms and dads as it is for kids because it takes you out of the solitude that usually comes along with caring for a newborn and allows you to get out there and connect. After all, if you don't use it, you can definitely lose it.

Safari Song Time

Help develop your baby's ability to vocalize their fun with this entertaining weekly event at The Bookworm. Along with stimulating their brains and encouraging development, Safari Song Time will no doubt be the highlight of your little one's week as it will put them in contact with many other kids their size through the magic of music. So if your child is between the ages of 3-18 months, make sure to drop on by every Friday/Saturday and let them experience songs and nursery rhymes from around the world. Please take note that if the AQI is above 200, the event will be canceled. RMB 60 per child. Friday/Saturday 10.30-11.30am. The Bookworm. (6586 9507)

Postnatal Yoga

Just because you are in the healing stages after your birth doesn't mean that there isn't a yoga class that's geared to your specific needs during recovery. Not only will this class give mothers time to focus on relaxing their bodies through various asanas and breathing exercises, but also re-establish core strength while expanding your baby's (6-weeks to crawling) comfort level in new situations. Participation between mother and infant is integrated throughout the session, promoting interactions with other new moms and babies in attendance. RMB 150 per class. Every Monday 12.30-1.30pm. Yoga Yard. (6413 0774)



BSB, Shunyi Baby & Toddler Group Friday Mornings

Whether you're new to parenthood, or you have a year or two behind the wheel, check out these fun playgroups where they break out all toys and other goodies for a fun morning of free play, singing, and much more. While it's obviously a great chance to check out all of the facilities at the British School of Beijing, Shunyi (BSB, Shunyi) Early Years, with a guided tour of the campus, it will also get you connected with other families, which isn't always an easy task if you are one of the many that are new to town and are unfamiliar with all of the parenting resources that exist in the Shunyi area. Free. 9-10.30am (Sep-Jun). British School of Beijing, Shunyi. (8047 3588)

Mommy & Baby Fitness

Get over to Park Apartments every Wednesday for this infant-friendly fitness class focusing on getting mommy back in the gym while building a stronger connection with this new life through exercise. Expect a variety of low impact techniques ranging from yoga to light Pilates to get your body healthy and back to normal. Classes are informal and relaxed and allow the opportunity to feed, change, or comfort your child whenever necessary. RMB 1,440 (12 class package) to RMB 200 (single class). Wednesdays 9.45-10.45am. Park Apartments. (WeChat: SabinaKirchherr)





Aquatic Squad

AIDI School decorates a baby mobile
with water animals

Text by Andy Penafuerte III, Photos by Dave's Studio

It is known that playful and colorful things bring joy and smiles to little babies. New *jiějiě* (姐姐 or older sister) Rosa thinks that a baby mobile would be a great present for her younger sibling who was born last year. So the first-grader at AIDI School, together with her art teacher Li Yanyan introduced to *beijingkids* her handcrafted gift: a cute aquatic squad of water loving creatures to decorate the baby mobile for her new sibling.



Materials

Felt sheet
Clay
Plastic eyes
Craft scissors
Woolen string
Glue gun and glue stick

Suitable for

Kids 8+ (adult supervision needed)

Estimated time

1 hour



STEP 1

Using a felt sheet of your liking, trace the animal (in this example, a baby croc) and its features like rigid back, belly, and teeth.



STEP 2

Cut out each shape carefully and decorate with eyes. Then stick small circles of clay on the sheet and press them to give the appearance of small scales and a snout.



STEP 3

Our cuddly croc is now ready, but it needs more friends. So, let's trace other animals like a dolphin, a seahorse, and a crab to keep him company!



STEP 4

Twist a woolen string then paste it on the croc with hot glue. Then string all of the other animals together at random.



The newly formed aquatic squad is now ready to drive this baby mobile around in circles for countless hours of fun filled baby entertainment!

Etonkids Pupils Fill July's Blank Canvas



Zhou Zixin, 5 (China) – "Busy Bees"

Summer bees are particularly busy. They like to wear yellow and white clothing to work. They have to work hard to collect honey and then fly home to rest.



Liu Ge, 6 (China) – "Busy Hedgehog"

Hedgehogs are busy today; they need to go on the grass to find their favorite little fruit. The mother takes the little hedgehog to see butterflies and beautiful flowers. That makes the little hedgehog very happy.



Zhang Yaokun, 5 (China) – "Fire Dragon"

I like the dragon because he is red. Chinese dragons are especially powerful. He can fly and spit fire. The dragon I painted is flying in the sky. You see him fly so high!



Han Liuyi, 5 (China) – "Naughty Monkey"

There's a naughty monkey in the forest, and he is particularly funny. He is sitting on the swing of the vine and chatting with me.



Duan Linhao, 5 (China) – "Field"

I like it when my Mum takes me out for little trips, because I can see beautiful mountains and trees and breathe fresh air.



Chen Yiyang, 5 (China) – "A Small Train to the Spring"

My Dad loves trains and this is my painting of a small train in the spring. It is full of gifts. I hope it makes my Dad happy.



Yang Lerong, 5 (China) – "I'm a Leopard"

I painted a beautiful leopard which likes to dress up. He often dresses up very beautifully and then goes out. Many of my good friends like him very much.



Stepping Up

How kindergartens prepare their students for school

By Andrew Killeen





Childhood, more than any other time of life, is filled with rites of passage. Every birthday marks a significant stage, and there are physical changes such as the loss of milk teeth and the onset of puberty, and social markers like the first sleepover or running an errand for the first time.

Perhaps most significant though are the transitions between educational environments. More than any change of job in adulthood, these events mark sudden and drastic changes in a child's lifestyle, friendship groups, and the expectations placed on them.

The move from kindergarten to elementary/primary school is often the first, and in some ways the most challenging, of these educational

earthquakes. What happens in those crucial months has a huge impact on the child's later life. According to a UNICEF report, "School readiness is linked to improved academic outcomes in primary and secondary school and positive social and behavioral competencies in adulthood." Yet all this takes place at a time when the child's ability to understand what is happening is limited, and their world view is still being formed.

To find out how the young minds of Beijing's international community are prepared for this pivotal stage in their lives, we talked to educators from two very different kindergartens, about their philosophies and practices in this critical area.

Eduwings offers trilingual education, in German, English, and Chinese, to 165 children aged from 1-6 over two campuses, in Shunyi and Haidian. Principal Stephanie Janusch explained their underlying principles to us.

"We always say we try to give the kids 'roots and wings,'" she told us, "a safe, home-like environment, and at the same time abilities and tools and social skills which can help them to be thinking individuals, to go out there and make a way for themselves."

"The biggest thing kids have to deal with is being socially developed, being able to get on with peers, understand how to listen," added Jade Sackett, Lead Teacher for the Experts Group. "Our job is to make sure they're having fun, enjoying themselves while learning. If the communication is good, and children are comfortable, it's easier to get them to focus."

"One of biggest challenges is that in school they will meet disappointments, quite regularly. This is a demographic who mostly haven't met many in their life up to that point."

3e International School has students aged from 2 to 12, and Kindergarten Principal Amy Loveday-Hu agreed that academic achievement is, at this stage, secondary to developing social skills and a passion for learning.

"The focus on 21st century schools and learning for both international and Chinese families means recognizing the importance of collaboration, emotional understanding, and respect for differences," she told us. "We teach them to question respectfully, to be able to move between different cultures. This also means different cultures of school and areas of learning. We want them to ask questions, to be passionate learners, influencing their own learning."

Xu Hong is a kindergarten teacher at 3e who worked for twenty years in Chinese public schools, and she sees a real difference in the international school's ethos. "The difference is that at 3e you hear kids asking why, not being annoying but inquisitive. That's not heard a lot in local schools. The desire to learn things is really important. Teachers don't know everything; sometimes students will learn new things at the same time as their teacher. If a decision has been made and they don't think it's fair, we encourage them to ask in an appropriate way why that decision was made, and have a conversation about it."

She sees resilience as a key trait in making a successful transition.

"One of the biggest challenges is that in school they will meet disappointments, quite regularly. This is a demographic who mostly haven't met many in their life up to that point."

"Kindergarten is still a play-based level," Loveday-Hu explained, "but first grade and above move away from that quite quickly. Their



days become lesson-focused, their free time significantly less. In kindergarten they can naturally bounce from thing to thing, but at school the teacher is generally deciding what they're doing. It can be a shock, quite tough for some children."

Discipline is also a new challenge, Xu told us.

"At kindergarten there's more flexibility for helping children to understand boundaries; at elementary school there's an expectation of them already being on board. There's less of a 'buffer zone'."

Janusch also talked about the social aspects of transition as being critical.

"One of the biggest challenges," she said, "is the move from a small, familiar, family-like environment to a bigger class, more students, a lower teacher-student ratio, and usually less individual care being given. They'll have a new peer group, new friends, new teachers. Some of our students came to us when they were still really babies: aged 1, or 18 months. By the time of the transition to primary they have been with their friends for four years."

The work of preparing for transition does not just take place in the final year, Loveday-Hu said.

"It begins right from when they come into school. Even nursery is part of the process. Throughout school we're scaffolding the children's understanding."

Janusch talked about the importance of developing good habits early.

"We have routine activities every day, themed activities where all the kids sit in one classroom and do an activity together, so they already have the habit of sitting down, focusing on an activity."

"They do activities to gain early literacy skills," she continued, "and work on phonics, easy maths concepts, and small maths opera-

tions. But the groundstone for that is already set, because even in the younger age groups, at 2.5 to 3.5, in a playful way we raise their phonic awareness, introduce concepts like nouns and numbers, so that by the time they reach preschool, they have already formed the ideas in their head. It's not so much about academic knowledge, more about making kids ready for school."

"Some kids enter 1st grade without having learned anything apart from writing their name maybe, but the most important thing is that kids are self-confident, feel they can do things on their own without being scared of making mistakes," Sackett said. "We give them a safe environment where they can try things out, make experiences, be independent. We start that at the youngest age group. They learn that there are different languages, different ways to pronounce words. The kids have fun without learning pressure, and get introduced to daily routines."

At 3e preparation for transition begins in earnest in the second semester.

"Round about April or May," Loveday-Hu said, "we have a child-led conference, where the children demonstrate to the parents what they've learned. Then we start to talk in earnest about what happens next. We do it with all age groups, but for older children it might mean writing homework about the next step, what might happen, what they're anxious about."

However she emphasizes that kindergarten has its own value, and is not merely about preparing for school.

"It's important for the preparation to be the long term responsibility of the teacher, and that there's no pressure on children. Each stage is valuable in its own right. We're developing them as kindergarteners but also having a conversation about what happens next."

This conversation includes being introduced to their new environment.

"We have a Transition Day," Loveday-Hu said, "where we split the children into two groups. Those who are staying, we take them to the new campus, and give them an opportunity to discuss, and ask questions.



Amy Loveday-Hu

"We try to have them involved in a way that suits them. The kindergarten children want to touch everything, to find out what every button does, where every door goes, and you have to open it and show them. I took them to the running track, and we had a race, because that's what it's for. When we came to the astroturf, they were lying down on it. That's how children at that age experience things, very directly.

"For those who are not staying, we had their teachers talk to them, give them a chance to

ask questions too without feeling left out."

Eduwings also arrange classroom visits, Janusch said.

"Usually in Spring we take the children to the schools which they might go to, while the parents are still deciding."

"We try to arrange it so that they can sit down with students and participate in activities," Sackett added, "so they can really get the feel of being in a 1st grade class."

Children from Eduwings move on to a variety of different settings. Many 3e students, on the other hand, will stay on there for 1st grade, though not all, as Loveday-Hu told us.

"It depends on the parents' path. We have a mixture: some families who know they're going to stay on in China, and for them English and Chinese will both be important. They'll often stay at 3e because we teach 50:50 in both languages. Families who know that they're going back home will often choose to go to an international school which supports an easier transition to the home country. Sometimes one more year of Chinese isn't the best thing for them. Respecting what is happening next in families' lives is important; it's not all about the bottom line."

Whether students are staying or moving on, their new teachers are given extensive information about their progress at kindergarten.

"If they're moving internally," Loveday-Hu said, "we have a detailed portfolio system, which includes not only report cards, but work samples, and individualized plans. If children choose to leave us that goes with them, and their new teachers will see a really good set of examples from all areas of the school day. We give our contact details, so teachers can always call us, but they already have access to a lot of information."

Perhaps because many of the students will be staying with their current peer group, graduation from 3e's kindergarten is relatively low key.

"We don't tend to do a formal ceremony, but we do small things," Loveday-Hu told us. "The students get work that's not in their portfolio, they take their family pictures home, and get a yearbook, with pictures of everything that's happened during the year. They get a different backpack for the next school year, which acknowledges they're moving to a different stage in their lives.

"On the last day we have a sports day, but it's quite informal. It's not competitive, because we have children aged from 2 to 12! The

idea is that their parents come and pick them up, and we collectively engage in sports outside and just have a good time as we close this year and move onto next one."

At Eduwings, on the other hand, the end of students' time there is marked with traditions which reflect both the school's German heritage and its international setting.

"We have an end of year party and performance, where the children moving on have a graduation ceremony. They also do traditional German cone-making."

(Schultüten – literally "school bags" – have been popular throughout the German-speaking world since the early nineteenth century. They're cones made of paper or card and filled with things to help the child start at their new school. In the past this usually meant candies, but these days the emphasis is more on stationery, pens, books and so on.)

"At the summer party the parents and kids watch the children perform and we always end with oldest kids. The teachers will say some nice words about the students who are leaving. In another tradition, each class says their goodbyes to students with a small party in the classroom. The kids also have a small goodbye present for each other. For example, one class made a shirt for each child, on which they all put their fingerprints with paint, and wrote their names. Another group made a recipe book with hand drawn pictures of the children. Different years have different gifts, but they're all special."

All the educators agreed that ultimately, the skills which will enable children to thrive at school are the same which will enable them to succeed in life.

"The main goal is to get them socially developed, comfortable learning, getting on with their peers, and ready for a new environment," Sackett told us.

For Loveday-Hu allowing each child to develop at their own pace is critical:

"There's no competition. Do your best and be the best you can be is all we expect, then you can confidently move through the system."



Becoming a Good Parent

Ganeinu students say experience and knowledge are key

By Andy Penafuerte III

It's easy to become a parent, but not so easy to be a good one. But how do we define good parenting? Parenting styles differ and are highly dependent on personality, culture, and environment. So when a new parent asks, "How can I be a good mother/father?" should we tell them to learn it their way, or get advice from relatives and other professionals? We asked Chava and Mushka, ninth-graders at Ganeinu International School, to explain their insights into this topic.



PHOTOS : OULICHEL VIA PIXABAY



For 14-year-old Mushka Raskin, good parenting can be taught.

Can parenting be taught? This is one of the main controversial questions in parenting. Some parents feel the need to learn and get guidance and ideas. Maybe this is because they need more support or want to be guided, and that is fine. Knowledge is power. Parents need to use this power, learn, feel confident, and use their skills to best educate, lead, and pave their children's way.

Parents should always feel satisfied with their accomplishments and never feel down if something did not work out. In addition, parents should always remember that each child is different, which means that if one way works with one child, it will not necessarily work with another. This is one of the main reasons that good parenting can be taught.

Parents can go to parental guidance classes and share their feelings and thoughts. They can get advice and work on parenting skills and, of course, bring all that learning into action. This can be an example for other parents as well, when a parent goes and learns. It gives the chance to other parents to open up, be confident, and get the help that they need. Just adopt at least one skill that you learned, and then, at the next class, bring it up for discussion to make sure that you understand it. These skills that you have learned are very important and after you have tried them, you can move on from it to letting others know.

Learning how to parent is not necessarily only about going to classes or hearing a lecturer speak. It's the inside of you that wants the best for your children and that is why you learn. Learning can be from anything; something you learned at another point in your life can definitely guide you as a parent.

We are all people and we can always learn and gain more, including from experience of course. We all can always learn from our mistakes and move on in the giving cycle. If you want to learn, then think of it as an opportunity to teach. Based on what you know, based on what you have learned, you can change someone else's life. If you do not learn, then someone else loses the chance to learn from you. It's a never ending cycle. You learn. You teach. You get, and then you give.



Chana Feinreich, 14, says good parenting must be learned by doing.

Experienced parenting is educating your children based on past mistakes and successes, and raising them based on what you feel is right or wrong for them.

The way you were raised as a child is beneficial when it comes to raising your own. All the things you loved and admired about the way your parents raised you and the things you didn't like about it pave the way your children will grow up and be raised in.

Looking back at past mistakes that you have made as a person and as a parent is critical for future growth and progress. As you grow older, and hopefully more mature, the way you choose to bring up and raise your children in this crazy journey called life changes. This is because you have learned based on past experience, such as what is appropriate or inappropriate for your children's growth and the environment you want him or her to be raised in.

Experience of parenting plays a key role in raising children. Going to your own parents for advice and guidance can help direct you to what they felt was right in raising you. And based on their experience you can get a better idea of how you want your own children to be raised. Hearing about the mistakes your parents have made can help you avoid repeating them. In addition, going to any other family member for advice on their experience can benefit you as a person and parent in many ways – learning from their mistakes and successes.

Every child is different and has a unique personality. Therefore, there is not only one way to educate all. The way you educate one is not necessarily the way you would with the other. As one of six children in my family, I see this all the time. Of course rules and guidelines are the same, but a parent's approach and interaction with every child is different because every child needs their own special attention.

Think of it as a soccer game. The coaches guide the soccer players to the goal based on past experience as a player. It is the same as being a parent – you guide and direct your children to the "goal" – guiding your children to live life and conquer it.

I think experienced parenting is the correct way to raise your children because you learn and develop from your own faults and successes. Your experience as a person is what determines the way your children or future children will be raised and guided. Balancing experienced and taught parenting is important to establish a happy, healthy, and sturdy household.



Dealing with Divorce

How to help students cope with separation

By Kipp Whittaker, Vanessa Jencks

When parents separate or divorce, it's usually a traumatic event which causes a lot of emotional stress and could have an adverse impact on their lives in and outside of school. Whether it is acting out in the classroom, playing the blame game with your parents or siblings, or having to experience your parents badmouth each other, these actions can continue to affect you well beyond childhood and into your adult years. This is why it can be helpful to seek out counseling at school when it is needed, in hopes of minimizing the complications that arise during this difficult time. We talked to Wang Anmin, a full-time psychological counselor at Beijing Royal School, about some of these issues, and ways that teachers and classmates can help students living through a divorce.

How is a student's emotional well-being affected when parents get divorced?

A student's emotional health varies from person to person, but all are forced to adapt to the process, which will produce many negative emotions. The most common of these emotions being low self-esteem from the feeling that their family is no longer complete, loneliness as their sense of security is reduced, irritability as hostility begins to grow between the child and people around him or her, anxiety from their concern toward the future, and depression as they refuse to accept the separation of their family.

How are their academics affected?

For students of divorced parents, the degree of impact may also vary. The majority of students of divorced parents will see a decline in academic performance. Their emotions are affected, so that they simply can't focus in the classroom. They'll lack spirit in their classroom performance, won't listen, their homework might be sloppy, or even incomplete or plagiarized, along with a high degree of distraction, and other issues that will inevitably lead to a decline. The students may also choose to use bad behavior to escape from the damage of their parent's divorce, such as coming home late, truancy, and other misbehavior to gain the attention of parents, while avoiding their own trauma.

What are some ways teachers can support students during a difficult time such as this?

This stage of the student's life is generally more lonely, and the teacher can make up for this as they are an authority figure. Teachers can give these students more comfort and care, while at the same time paying attention to the dynamics of students in the class, so as to not let them be discriminated against or neglected by their peers. In addition to doubling the care of divorced students, you can also organize a variety of class activities to strengthen the interaction between students, and guide students with divorced parents to participate in collective activities, to get collective warmth, and eliminate their loneliness. These are opportunities for students to develop positive emotions in their collective activities, minimize depression, and eliminate their sense of inferiority, so that students return to normal learning faster.

How can peers, friends, and neighbors support these students?

Peers and friends should give these students more company, and pay attention. Do not say "I can understand how you feel," as this time he or she is more sensitive, and hearing too much about his parents being divorced will make him or her distressed. Neighbors should also try to pay attention to the dynamics of the family and whether the parents are present or concerned about the psychological state of the child.

How much time will a student need to feel "normal" or "stable" again after parental divorce?

This problem is different from person to person, mainly because of the student's environment, personality, and family are not the same. All students who face the problem of divorce are forced to gradually adapt. If the parents going through the divorce are very democratic, care for their child's heart, and respect the child's choice, while school teachers and friends also remain concerned so that he is not lonely, the student will soon adapt to this change. On the contrary, if there is fighting over custody or other reasons to make the environment at home difficult, the child's own character may become sensitive or suspicious, requiring a longer time. Under normal circumstances, when the parents are about to divorce, a lot of attention should be placed on the child's mental health.

How would a school counselor help in this situation?

Children of divorced families are more likely to have psychological problems and behavioral problems than children who grow up in normal families. But for divorced families that have access to good education and effective psychological counseling, the probability of psychological problems will be greatly reduced. The school psychologist for the child of a divorced family can play a very important role. Though parents are the best teacher in this sort of situation, sometimes using the more scientific approach of a therapist can help you avoid bad examples and help return the child back to the right track of healthy development. Many parents are guilty of competing for custody, forcing the child to pick a side by saying "if someone asks if you want to be with me or your father you must say mother." This form of forcing your child to make a mandatory decision, or not letting one parent see the child is likely to cause some damage. You must remember that it is very

important that the child be allowed to love both parents equally, as neither parent's love for the child has changed, only the relationship between the mother and father. In these situations, the counselor can help explain the situation more, to prevent irrational behavior, physical or emotional self-harm, and accept the situation to move forward.



Biography Information:

Wang Anmin is a full-time psychological counselor at Beijing Royal School, and graduated from Heilongjiang University with a Master's of Educational Psychology. She has been engaged in student mental health work for more than six years, helping students adapt to school life and avoid psychological problems that can arise during these developmental years. If she hadn't become a counselor it is very likely that she would have become a teacher, as she came from a family of educators.



From Here to Maternity

Moms in mixed culture marriages talk about birth and beyond

by Andrew Killeen

This month we asked parents from different cultures about their experience of pregnancy and childbirth – and in a twist to our usual format, we talked to a Chinese mom with a western husband, and a western mom with a Chinese husband!

Wu Jian is a stay-at-home mom. Her husband Matthew Lowish teaches at Dulwich College Beijing (DCB), and they have three children: daughters Kaili (age 6) and Tiesha (4), who are students at DCB, and son Jiesun who is a year old. The girls were born in the UK, but the family moved to Beijing in 2014, and had Jiesun here.

Were you told the gender of your baby/ babies at a scan? Did you want to know? Did you tell others?

I gave birth twice in the UK, to my 6 year old and 4 year old girls. When I was pregnant with my girls, I did want to know the gender of my baby, only because I wanted to know what to prepare. As far as I remember at about 14 or maybe 16 weeks I had a check up. When I was given the scan I asked the midwife at the hospital and they happily told me that I was having a baby girl, and I told my family about this.

What sort of birth did you want to have?

I have always wanted to have a natural birth, but all my children were big babies – my first girl was 8.2 pounds, my second girl was almost 9 pounds and my boy was also over 8 pounds even though he was born at only 37 weeks, so I have had a Caesarian section 3 times.

To what extent were you able to have the birth you wanted?

I have always enjoyed the moment when I gave birth, even though it was hard, but I enjoyed the moment when I saw my babies were born beautiful and healthy.



From left to right: Tiesha, Wu Jian, Kaili, Matthew Lowish, and Jiesun

How were the medical professionals at your birth?

In the UK, with my two previous pregnancies, I really enjoyed seeing midwives. I had a lot of professional support and encouragement and I never worried about anything, as the midwives were always helpful, patient and happy to give suggestions, and I felt more personally attached to them. My last birth was in Beijing, but the experience was different, as it was my third pregnancy, and I was so nervous and always being told different things by different people.

Was your husband present at the birth? What part did he play?

With my birth in the UK, when I had a C-section, my husband was right beside me and he literally saw the baby came out from my tummy. The baby was handed over to him straight away and I had skin touch with my baby once she was out.

What support did your parents give you, before and after the birth?

In the UK, mainly the support was just my husband and myself.

What support did your husband's parents give you, before and after the birth?

My in-laws did a lot with my children. When I gave birth to my second daughter they helped to look after my big girl and took her out for meals or to play in the park. Before the birth we would always help the kids to prepare and be aware that somebody would be joining our family soon, and they would learn how to share and look after each other.

Did you "zuò yuèzi" (坐月子)? If not, what did you do immediately after the birth?

I did not zuò yuèzi in the UK as this seems not their culture; also we really needed to move on and keep our daily life going as usual, but I did zuò yuèzi after my third birth in Beijing as I have got my family here to look after me and my children. We also had a full-time Ayi who took on the full responsibility of my housework.

Did you breastfeed? If so for how long?

My oldest girl and my son are both allergic to dairy milk products — so I breastfed my first till she was 3 years old, and my second girl was breastfed till 2 and a half. I am also planning to breastfeed my boy until at least the age of 2 I think.

Tyra Florence Johl, originally from the UK, came to Beijing with the intention of traveling the world but instead she met her soulmate, software engineer Wentao Du (Alex). They married in 2014 and had their son Micah Beilu Du in 2016. Florence is now a stay-at-home mom, and also studying for a Bsc (Hons) in Business and Management.

Were you told the gender of your baby/babies at a scan? Did you want to know? Did you tell others?

We found a really exciting gender reveal activity that we wanted to try at our baby shower, which consisted of a friend knowing the gender and painting my husband's hands either blue or pink, which he would print on my belly while our eyes were closed. Therefore at one of the scan checkups, we asked the sonographer if we were able to have her write the gender on a piece of paper, fold it and hand it back. It was super exciting when we found out the gender of the baby!

What sort of birth did you want to have?

I wanted a home water birth, which is another reason why we wanted to go home as it is illegal in China. Health care in England is free to its citizens, which is another bonus reason to go home. I really wanted my Mum to be there too. My parents-in-law were of course sad that they were not going to be there but they thought it was the better plan.

To what extent were you able to have the birth you wanted?

I attended hypnobirthing classes in preparation for my home water birth and also hired the birthing tub. But what actually happened crushed me as I did not get the birth of my dreams (literally, I dreamt about a water birth almost every night). At 34 weeks pregnant, my water broke spontaneously and I was to be hospitalized for at least 3 weeks so that I could try to keep the baby put until he was full term (37 weeks). My baby just couldn't wait and really wanted to celebrate Christmas with us – he was born 6 weeks early.

How were the medical professionals at your birth?

They always explained everything to me when I did not understand and always reassured me when I was worried. A complete opposite to my China experience when I was told at one of my ultrasound appointments that my baby was too small, yet I was getting too fat. Very blunt and insensitive. When I asked questions about things I did not quite understand, the doctor and sonographer refused to explain it to me. Both experiences were very different indeed.

Was your husband present at the birth? What part did he play?

My husband was present at my emergency C-section. I was terrified and he held my hand the whole way! Through contractions he would rub my back, adjust the lighting and turn up my hypnobirth audio. I couldn't have asked for a better partner. My hero!

What support did your parents give you, before and after the birth?

My parents were incredible, especially as labor was unexpectedly 6 weeks early. They ran around like crazy buying baby clothes, toiletries, nappies, and made a chest of drawers in my dad's workshop. My mum knitted blankets and deep cleaned the whole house while visiting me as much as possible bringing my favorite food, clothes that I needed.

What support did your husband's parents give you, before and after the birth?

My parents-in-law were of course willing to do anything including flying over to England for the birth. My husband thought it wouldn't be ideal as we wanted to focus on the birth rather than be worried about what guests were doing. However, they constantly video called us and always wanted to buy loads of things for the baby. We told them to wait but we understood they just wanted to help somehow as they were so

far away. When I was hospitalized, we decided not to tell them as we didn't want them to worry so we waited until I was in active labor. Of course they mentioned some strange things to me like not letting the cold or wind touch my skin, but it was winter, it was too cold anyway so I just agreed. After the birth they would send us messages about pulling my son's nipples to let the liquid out... They mean well and as much as I would have liked them there for the birth, it was really nice for my husband and me to just get to know our baby and figure out our family dynamics for the first four months. Don't get me wrong, my parents-in-law are wonderful people, it's just cultural differences that get in the way sometimes.

Did you "zuò yuèzi" (坐月子)? If not, what did you do immediately after the birth?

I actually liked the concept of zuò yuèzi but not so much the traditional rules of not showering, not watching TV or looking at phones, being unable to leave the house, and so on. So we created our own. Due to having such a tough labor, we didn't really start our zuò yuèzi until I was home. So my husband prepared all of my meals which included lots of soup. My appetite wasn't quite there but boy was I thirsty! I didn't know how thirsty breastfeeding made you. So soup was perfect. I then stayed in bed for the first week with my tiny (1.84kg) baby boy. I couldn't move much anyway due to the C-section. The second week, I started moving around the house and my appetite was coming back. By the third week we went outdoors for the first time. It was the first time away from our baby and we only managed it for 20 minutes! The doctors recommended not to take him outdoors at least until he was 4 kg and an official newborn (38 weeks), as it was winter and he couldn't regulate his own body temperature. So from there we tried to go out everyday making each time longer until I finally recovered. (There's still slight pain, after five months.)

Did you breastfeed? If so for how long?

Yes, we are still breastfeeding at five months. At first we breastfed and formula fed as advised by the doctor, the main reason being because of his low body weight, jaundice and the lack of ability to regulate heat. At that moment I would have done whatever to ensure his health. He is a healthy breastfed 7kg 5 month old now!



From left to right: Wentao Du, Florence Johl, and Micah Beilu Du



Cai (left) holding Helen and Wu (right) holding Harry

Reclaiming Family Values

A family that requires no explanation

By Annie Wang

Her voice came through the phone light, yet purposeful. We had rescheduled our call from earlier that day as Rui Cai had been enjoying the summer sun with her twin babies, Helen and Harry, and needed to find a calm place to sit. Cai and her partner, Cleo Wu, were one of the first same-sex couples in China to have used in vitro fertilization (IVF) to conceive their children. The couple's fraternal twins, were born in one of Beijing's private hospitals in April 2016.

In a country where only in 2001 was homosexuality removed from the list of mental illnesses, Cai and Wu's marriage and their children to many stands as a unique and hopeful partnership. During our conversation Cai made it clear that in raising her children, she and her wife will focus on giving her kids the agency to decide how they will tell the story of their lives. "I will not teach my children about how to explain our family. I won't tell them how to respond to others. Rather I will focus on giving them a happy worldview and state of mind."

Marriage Across the Pond

Cai and Wu married in England in July 2014, only a few months after the country formally implemented its new law permitting same-sex marriage. After marrying, the couple attempted IVF treatment twice in England before finding success in Portland, Oregon in the United States. The couple used Wu's egg and a donor sperm to conceive their children while Cai carried and later gave birth to the couple's twins.

China does not recognize same-sex marriage, and also does not permit single women access to sperm banks or IVF treatment. Therefore, when it came time to have children, Cai and Wu knew they had to leave the country. Cai admits that they were fortunate to be able to afford

IVF treatment abroad. "Couples that aren't able to afford IVF treatment usually find alternative methods to conceive such as coordinating with a friend or acquaintance in conceiving their children," Cai said.

"I will not teach my children about how to explain our family. I won't tell them how to respond to others. Rather, I will focus on giving them a happy worldview and state of mind."

Previously a staff member at Oxfam, Cai now balances her role as a stay-at-home mom with running the couple's social enterprise, Rainbow Babies, an official WeChat group that provides support and resources to same-sex couples and single parents either seeking IVF treatment abroad or simply searching for a community of parents going through similar experiences. Rainbow Babies plans on releasing an illustrated children's book in September with stories from its audience sharing the makeup of their families and also hopes to speak to those outside of the LGBT community to broaden the understanding of LGBT issues in China.

Family Values of Confidence, Honesty, and Safety

While others may find their family structure unusual, Cai says that at the moment the twins find having two mothers quite natural. However,

PHOTO: RUI CAI



Cai recognizes that as they grow older, make friends, and meet other families, the twins will have to face the fact that they are growing up in what is now considered a unique family structure. "I don't know what their [the twins'] methods for explaining our family to other people will be," Cai chuckled into the phone, "right now I am only speculating about what they will experience."

Often those around the world opposed to same-sex partnerships will cite family values for not accepting same-sex partnerships. But the foundation of family values are built upon such principles as honesty and loyalty, just two traits that Cai and her wife plan to make the building blocks of their family. "What us as parents have to do for [our kids] is to make sure they have confidence in our family," Cai stated. "We believe that our children's sense of safety comes from our love and honesty." In addition to building a safe and loving environment for her kids to thrive, Cai believes that as a parent, she must take

responsibility for supplying her children with the emotional capacity and reasoning to come to their own conclusions organically. "We will train them to have the confidence and introspection that will allow them to be forgiving and powerful."

During our conversation, Cai recalled the story of a single-mother and her five-year old son who are a part of the Rainbow Babies community. When asked about his father, the child simply replies that his father is out climbing mountains, a response that Cai says draws inspiration from the hiking trips he and his mother take together. When asked if Cai might be concerned that the child is hiding negative feelings, Cai pushed back, focusing on the foundation of the question.

"We don't think families need a father figure. These traditional points of view create a divide between men and women and attribute the [roles of bravery, providing for the family, and courage] solely to men." Cai believes that, both men and women can provide well-rounded and nurturing households for their children, regardless of the gender of their parents.

An International Marriage, A Domestic Birth

Often same-sex couples will choose to adopt, but when asked why the couple sought IVF treatment rather than adopting, Cai cited her and Wu's parents. "We have always wanted, and even still want, to adopt," Cai explained, "the reason we didn't adopt before was because of our parents. Our parents wanted very much for us to have our own [biological] kids." When discussing their parents' reactions, Cai laughed and said she was surprised, not realizing how much her dad valued these traditional norms. "Now he even talks a lot about the type of house we will need," Cai giggled. While part of the reason they had their children was for their parents, the couple says they may consider adoption once the twins are older and life is more settled.

Cai said that in the future, the couple would support their children no matter who they choose as their partners. Though the couple may not stay in Beijing forever, Cai said barring a few awkward occurrences, she has found the community in the city welcoming to her family. When asked if there was anything she would want her kids to know Cai responded, "Mama and Mommy love you."

For more information on Rainbow Babies, you can follow their WeChat account (lgbtbabies).



Harry (left) and Helen (right) happily sitting on two pillows

Writing it Down to Remember

Using journals to connect with your children's future selves

by Ember Swift



When I was a kid, I was always a bit sore about the absence of a baby book for me. I'm the second child. My sister had her first steps and first haircut recorded. There's even a swath of baby hair under some scotch tape. My mother seemed so careful about archiving my sister's history that she even kept the greeting cards sent by friends and family for my sister's first birthday.

Then I came along. There are some pictures, yes. But that's it. (Cue the violins.)

It took until I had my own children to realize that two babies truly are "ten times the work." When my son arrived, there was just no time to get pictures of him printed and organized into a photo album like I had done for my daughter after she turned one. In fact, I still haven't done it and he's three and a half.

But, I am proud of one thing that qualifies me as an archivist for my kids. When my daughter was born, I cracked the spine of a book with blank pages—about the size of a small dictionary—and began the process of recording my thoughts alongside her many milestones for her future self to read. This journaling became a habit. Writing in my native language to my child (who would one day read it fluently) felt like I was making a stronger connection to her that would transcend time. One day, I know, she will read about my perceptions of her little self, and some details about our lives at the time of the entries, and I picture the older version of my child relating to the younger version of me.

So, when my son was born, I bought him a book too. Now, with the two of them still small, I struggle to find enough time. Sometimes months go by between entries. Sometimes I write in one book and not the other because the story I wish to record focuses on one child and only features the other as a supporting character.

This makes me wonder, too, if it won't be weird for them not to read their books in tandem with each other, considering I often tell the story of a family issue in one book and then resist repeating it in the other. I just simply write, 'I wrote about this in your brother's book in detail, but here are some additional thoughts about you lately.'

"A physical keepsake feels safer than a digital cloud will ever be."

I picture them as adults sitting together and pouring over these entries, patching together our family history, sharing each other's content. But, I can't decide how old they should be when I present them with these chronicles. Maybe eighteen? Maybe when they have their own children, if they decide to become parents? Maybe at around age thirty when their identities and worldviews are more established? I'm not sure yet, but there's lots of time to decide.

Ironically, I keep a digital notes on my iPhone to remind me of "what not to forget to write about" in their analog journals, when I take pen to paper. Going backwards in time technologically when I'm creating something for their future selves seems counter-intuitive, I know, but I continue. A physical keepsake feels safer than a digital cloud will ever be. These will be books they can actually hold.

In the end, may the existence of these journals distract them from the absence of a true baby book for either child. And, for my second child, may he one day forgive me for not putting photos of him into an album like I did for his sister!



About the Writer

Ember Swift is a Canadian who has been living in Beijing since 2008. She has a daughter, Echo (5), and a son Paz (3). She spends a lot of time on stages making original music, writing blogs and columns, doing voice over work, and advocating for vegetarianism, LBGTQ rights, and multilingualism. (www.emberswift.com).



BEIJING WITH A BUMP

What to Expect
When Expecting
in Beijing

FROM THE BEGINNING

We can imagine what you must be going through upon finding out that you are pregnant for the first time as an expat in a foreign land like Beijing. Even though you aren't the first, and definitely not the last couple to go through this magical but challenging ordeal, we all know how hard it is doing quite basic things in China like paying your electricity bill or setting up a bank account. So having a baby is on an entirely different level. But what we can tell you is that, with a little bit of help and support from your Beijing community, producing your offspring here is totally doable, and we hope this will provide you with some of the basic knowledge of what to expect throughout the coming months.

First of all, we would like to go through some of the advantages of having a baby in Beijing. If there is one thing we've learned by going through this, it's that there are definite benefits in the maternity process that you won't find in other countries (ahem... the US) along with a massive amount of support and courtesy that goes far beyond just the relinquishing of a seat on public transportation. For instance, you can usually expect at least three months of paid maternity leave during your recovery, most of the time at least one week of paternity leave, and even multiple lactation breaks at work to collect milk for your baby. This, along with affordable help after the baby comes, makes that transition after your child's arrival much more manageable. But we are getting ahead of ourselves. Let's start from the beginning.

MOVING FORWARD

Chances are if you are reading this with a bun in the oven, or a dumpling in your basket, or whatever metaphor best suits your situation, you have already made an initial consultation to find out if your pregnancy test was indeed accurate. This is the essential first step and can be done easily at a local or international hospital, depending on the amount you wish to pay or the command you have over the Mandarin language. Most foreign couples opt for the international option, because it's just much more familiar and a less foreboding experience, but keep in mind that these familiarities come at a price.

After you receive this verification, it is time start looking for the hospital which is best suited for your needs. The first factor you need to take into consideration is what you can afford, as this determines whether or not you should be looking at international or local care. We're not going to sugarcoat this for you by claiming that local hospitals are easy, but it can be done and because having a baby is a very common procedure, these hospitals are more than capable. Despite this, they operate very differently from what we are accustomed to in the west. Often at the more popular hospitals, rooms and delivery dates have been booked very far in advance, especially in auspicious zodiac years (monkey, dragon, or snake) so it might also not be possible to go through with your delivery at a convenient hospital. This, combined with the fact that it isn't very often that you have the luxury of a doctor or staff that speaks English, results in many foreigners going with a more costly international hospital.

That being said these hospitals are pricey for a reason, as many have very comfortable accommodations, decent food, English-speaking staff, and the necessary amount of privacy you would want during your labor and recovery. In fact, these places are almost designed to look like furnished hotel rooms, with private bathrooms and showers.



POPULAR INTERNATIONAL OB/GYNs IN BEIJING

Usually, before you decide on which hospital you would like to continue at, there will be a comprehensive tour of the facilities so that you will see exactly what you are paying for. If you want the big day to be at one of these international hospitals but the monthly checkups at a local hospital, to save some money, this is also an option. Below you will find a list of popular hospitals and their current going rate for prenatal consultations, exams, and delivery packages. Please note if you are reading this in the future, that prices are subject to change and these current prices are almost double what they were a decade ago; one of the perks of the two-child policy and a thriving economy we suppose.

Beijing United Family Hospital

This is likely the most luxurious option in Beijing's birthing scene. With 20 years of service in Beijing and six other locations in China, they also have Joint Commission International (JCI) accreditation, which is a fancy way of saying that they are as good as it gets.

Prenatal Care: RMB 20,800
Delivery Price: RMB 66,000 (natural birth); RMB 88,000 (C-section)
Address: 2 Jiangtai Road, Chaoyang District. 朝阳区将台路2号 (5927 7000)

GlobalCare Women and Children's Hospital

Offering a full range of medical services this hospital has been servicing Chaoyang District for 12 years. This hospital can also provide free health insurance consultations, as they feature direct billing relationships with many popular health insurance providers.

Prenatal Care: RMB 14,900
Delivery Price: RMB 36,800 (natural); RMB 49,800 (C-section)
Address: 24 Dawang Xilu, Chaoyang District. 朝阳区望路西大24号, 朝阳区 (8777 9299)

Amcare Women's and Children's Specialized Health

Operating in Beijing for 11 years, this hospital chain focused on women's and children's health currently has branches in four cities and offers excellent, modern facilities. This is a popular option due to the sheer convenience of their services, with three locations in Beijing alone.

Prenatal Care: RMB 18,977 (12 percent off if you book 4 months in advance)
Delivery Price: RMB 49,730; RMB 69,650 (C-section)
Lido Address: 9 Fangyuan Xilu, Chaoyang District. 朝阳区芳园西路9号 (6434 2399)
Yayuncun Address: Bldg 5 Anhui Beili Yiyuan Chaoyang District. 朝阳区朝阳区安慧北里逸园5号楼 (400 100 0016)
Wanliu Address: 7 Wanliu Zhonglu, Haidian District. 海淀区万柳中路7号 (400 100 0016)

Antai Hospital

Founded in 2003, Beijing Antai Maternity Hospital is the first hospital in Beijing with a water birth center to allow natural births. The hospital also researches male and female infertility, recurrent miscarriage, endometriosis, and more.

Prenatal Care: RMB 11,800
Delivery Price: RMB 29,800; RMB 37,800 (C-section)
Address: Building 18, Court 1, Xingheyuan, Jiayuan Road, Fengtai District. 丰台区北京丰台嘉园路星河城1号院18号楼 (6773 5551)

Oasis International Hospital

First opened in 2012, and located near 798, this is a convenient medical center for families in the Wangjing or Shunyi areas. Also with JCI accreditation, you can expect top-notch modern facilities, with homelike private rooms and delivery suites that offer comfort, safety, and privacy for patients and their guests.

Prenatal Care: RMB 17,800
Delivery Price: RMB 42,800; RMB 68,800 (C-section)
Address: 9 Jiuxianqiao North Road, Chaoyang District. 朝阳区酒仙桥北路9号 (400 876 2747)



GYNECOLOGY

WHAT'S IN A PACKAGE

The package usually adds up to a total of 13 visits including all of the necessary laboratory tests, consultations, and physical examinations. If you can't afford the full 13, there are also cheaper options consisting of five or ten visits. These consultations and exams usually begin after week 14 and continue in varying degrees of frequency throughout the term. From weeks 12-28 you can expect to visit about once every month. After week 30, you will begin to visit every two weeks, then at week 36, it will be every week until your due date. This all seems standard in comparison to other hospitals of an international standard around the globe.

On every visit, you will receive a series of tests including but not limited to urine and blood analysis, a 15-minute fetal doppler monitoring session of your baby's heartbeat, and a check up from a physician, who usually explains some of the findings from your tests. The doctor will also provide prenatal counseling and general healthcare knowledge to make sure that you are making healthy decisions while your baby comes to term. Finally, the climax of your visit will no doubt be the obstetric ultrasound. These will usually take place at every other visit.

One of the most exciting parts of the prenatal process is the discovery of the baby's sex. This is important for many families as it determines everything from the name to the color scheme of the bedroom or wardrobe. This being said, it isn't always possible to gain this knowledge at a public Chinese hospital as it is technically against the law. More often than not for foreign couples at international hospitals, they will make a sly exception, so you can ask a little question like "should we buy pants or dresses," and they will likely let you know. It's kind of fun and sneaky, so we like it. However, at a public hospital they make you sign a waiver that doesn't allow you to know the sex.

Around the 34th week, you will also go through a mandatory birth rehearsal so that you are aware of the process of admitting yourself to the room and making sure that the hospital is ready for your arrival. It is also when they give you one last tour of the facilities so that you aren't freaking out when the time comes to provide the right environment for your loved one in labor and you'll know how and who to call for assistance if needed.

DON'T FORGET THE PAPER WORK

If you or your partner is not a Chinese national then you can skip this section, as all you need is your passport when you pay the hospital bills to get your baby's birth certificate. For mixed or Chinese couples this was honestly one of the most frustrating parts of the process. It required a lot of running around to various community offices, all of which needed to be checked off a list to get final approval so that you can make sure your baby is legal under the various laws and restrictions of the People's Republic of China. Also, while you could start prenatal care at an international hospital without these documents, the same can't be said if you want to do so at a public hospital.

The main things you need to get your baby's birth certificate are the IDs of both parents and Mother Child Health Brochure (母子健康档案 *Mǔzǐ Jiànkāng Dǎng'àn*), the latter being a nightmare to obtain. Getting married is an essential first step in making your half-Chinese, half-foreign baby legal. Following the marriage certificate, which by the way has its own lengthy list of requirements, you'll need register at a couple of places in your neighborhood in order to receive this Mother Child Health Brochure. This requires an ID from both parents, a *hukou* from your Chinese spouse's hometown, the marriage license, residence certificate, and finally proof from your hospital that you are with child.

You'll find that the residence certificate is the most challenging of these tasks. To get this, you first go to the community center (居委会 *jūwēihuì*) nearest to your apartment. Here you will get an introduction letter (证明 *zhèngmíng*) to prove you are living in your apartment, and to get this, you'll need your ID, contract for your apartment, and landlord's ID. You will then bring this proof of residence to your local police station to get your residence certificate (居住证 *jūzhù zhèng*). Here you will fill out the "Residence Certificate Application Form" and hand it to the officer on duty with your ID, spouse's *hukou*, proof of six months valid residence, your housing contract, and a passport photo. This will take a couple days to process, and then when you return they will give you a card that you can then bring to the community health center (社区卫生服务中心 *shèqū wèishēng fúwù zhōngxīn*) to finally get your Mother Child Health Brochure. Please take note that this is different from the community center that you first had to visit. If this all sounds very complicated, that's because it is and leaves many couples in a constant state of frustration until completed. But after you have this brochure you can be certain that your child will be legal when entering the world. What a relief!



OH MY!



BIRTH PLAN

The birth plan that you are given from the hospital doesn't differ much from that of your native country, but there are a couple of things that must be taken into consideration due to the fact that you are having a child in Beijing. The first and sometimes most unpredictable can be Beijing's notorious traffic. If you are one of many expats without access to your own means of transportation then it is essential to have this planned, as standing in the middle of the street hailing a taxi wouldn't be ideal. We recommend car services like Didi, which now has an English interface, or Shòuqì (首汽), which we like because every car has an air purifier installed. Since the latter is a government-owned company they maintain a certain level of cleanliness to every car, and usually the drivers are very polite. These are super convenient and you can find information on how to use them by going to our website (beijing-kids.com) and searching for Shòuqì or Didi.

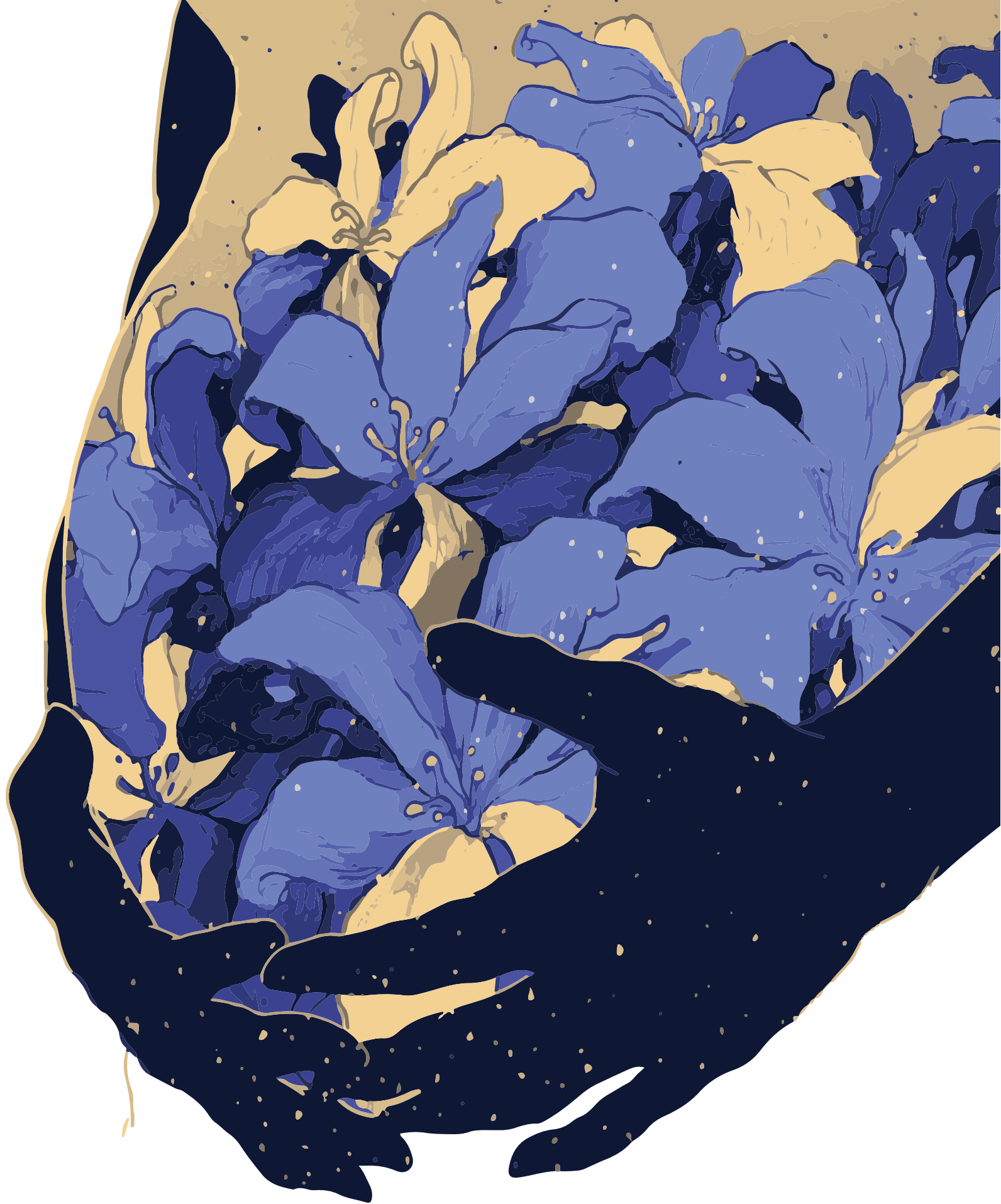
Other things that must be confirmed in your birth plan are your preferences when it comes to pain management and C-sections. You might not know this, but China has a higher rate of Caesarean births than any other country in the world. Over 50 percent of all babies are removed from the womb surgically. Not all of these were necessary, and possibly it's more out of convenience from what we understand. Some say that it is administered liberally because it is the easiest method to get that little person out with minimal complications, and others think it's just another billable service to be added when things get tallied up at the end. If anything this information should provide a little bit of comfort that if a C-section is needed, you have no need to worry.

The final thing to take into consideration is that if your due date happens to end up on a public holiday, you will encounter extra charges for the delivery or C-section. This is the case in many countries, but it might help to occasionally whisper to your baby to come out at an appropriate date so that you don't need to worry about rustling up a doctor at an inconvenient time, and pay more than is necessary.

NOT SO LABORIOUS MATERNITY VOCAB

Finally, while being able to speak Chinese would definitely be a major help to couples having children in China for the first time, it is a challenging language to tackle especially when you have so many other preparations that need to be made when expecting. This is why we've compiled a list of necessary terms, that will hopefully make things a tad easier in days leading up to and on the big day itself.

- Birth – 出生 [chūshēng]
- – canal – 产道 [chǎndào]
- – plan – 分娩计划 [fēnjiǎn jìhuà]
- Breastfeed – 喂奶 [wèinǎi]
- Breast milk – 母乳 [mǔrǔ]
- Breast pump – 吸奶器 [xīnǎiqì]
- Caesarean/C-section – 剖腹产 [pōufùchǎn] / 剖腹产术 [pōufùchǎn shù]
- Circumcision – 割礼 [gēlǐ] / 包皮环切 [bāopí huánqiē]
- Crowning – 儿头初露 [értóu chūlù]
- Deliver vaginally – 顺产 [shùnrǎn] / 自己生 [zìjǐ shēng] (common language)
- Doctor – 医生 [yīshēng] / 大夫 [dàifu]
- Due date – 预产期 [yùchǎnqī]
- Emergency – 急诊 [jízhěn]
- Epidural – 硬膜外麻醉 [yìng mó wài má zuì]
- Exam/check-up – 检查 [jiǎnchá]
- Fetus (8 weeks to 40+ weeks) – 胎儿 [tāi'ér]
- Formula (milk supplement for babies) – 配方奶粉 [pèifāngnǎifěn]
- Give birth (to a child) – 生孩子 [shēng hái] [shēng hái] [shēng hái]
- Hospital – 医院 [yīyuàn]
- Morning sickness – 晨吐 [chén tǔ]
- Movement (of baby) – 胎动 [tāidòng]
- Natural delivery; no complications – 顺产 [shùnrǎn]
- Normal (test result, etc...) – 正常 [zhèngcháng]
- Nurse – 护士 [hùshì]
- Obstetrical ward/maternity ward – 产科病房 [chǎnkē bìngfáng]
- Pregnancy test (noun) – 试孕纸 [shìyùnzhi]
- Pregnancy test (verb) – 怀孕试验 [huáiyùn shìyàn]
- Pregnant – 怀孕 [huáiyùn]
- Premature labor – 早产 [zǎochǎn]
- Ultrasound – B超 [Bchāo] (common) / 超声波 [chāoshēngbō] (formal)
- Water broke; amniotic fluid/water (to naturally break) – 羊水破了 [yángshuǐ pòle]



Bearing It Out

How one Beijing family beat the baby blues

By Andrew Killeen

The birth of a child is supposed to be a happy time. The new parents are expected to look tired but elated, and to want to share their joy with friends and relatives, who crowd round offering gifts and advice.

But for many parents it just isn't like that. Childbirth can bring with it depression, anxiety, and fear about what lies ahead. This is compounded by lack of sleep, and the social pressure to conform to expectations, to appear cheerful however they feel inside. Finally, the unhappiness itself becomes a source of guilt: "What's wrong with me? Do I not love my child?"

Well-Meaning Advice

All this creates a perfect storm of negative feelings, which can lead to serious consequences. The first stage of escaping from this cycle is to acknowledge what you're experiencing, and begin to talk about it.

One Beijing couple who have been on this long and difficult journey are Tim Coghlan and Enoch Li. We spoke to them about the challenges they faced, and how they have met them through therapy and honesty.

"The first few months were horrible," Li told us frankly of the birth of her first child.

"I did not enjoy being pregnant. I didn't like breast feeding, but felt that I had to. I tried different methods, but I would physically vomit after pumping."

As many mothers have found, well-meaning advice from other moms was actually unhelpful. "I interpreted it as pressure when it was meant as support. In the end, I thought 'If it's getting in the way of me bonding with my child, then it's not worth it.' I stopped after four months."

For Coghlan too it was a difficult time.

"I was torn between what I thought was best for the baby, and what was best for Enoch. I was not necessarily being supportive. These were complex emotions and a difficult decision."

A video being shared on social media summed up the issue for Li.

"The video showed a mother kicking a toddler. Of course everyone was condemning her. I'm not usually vocal on social media, but I felt compelled to say something. Because by the time she gets to hurt-

ing the child, it must have built up for years. It's easy to criticize the behavior but when she first needed help there was none. We don't go beyond the question of how can anyone do such a thing... I was touched that a few people responded agreeing with me."

The Turning Point

Li and Coghlan were able to find a way through their own crisis because they had previous experience of dealing with depression. When they first came to Beijing, Li was a high-flying executive at an international bank.

"After we arrived I had severe migraines, and took time off work," she told us. "I thought maybe it was pollution, heat, environmental factors... But the headaches kept coming. I saw every single specialist, I even went to Hong Kong to see a brain specialist."

"In the end my GP said I should see a psychologist. I said I'm 28, I can sort this out, I'm not stressed. I didn't like the psychologist, did not click with her. I felt I was being pigeonholed into culture shock as an explanation."

Nothing helped though.

"I was crying on the way to work, and made the driver turn around. It was only when I went to the hospital that there was space for everything to come out. At the end of 2009 I was finally diagnosed with clinical depression."

The diagnosis was a start, but the road ahead was still long and hard.

"I started taking anti-depressants," Li said. "I was still in complete denial. I kept asking 'When do I go back to work?' I went to see a psychologist every week, and had to promise him not to kill myself."

"Tim was trying to be supportive, saying 'She'll be alright in a month,' and so on. When you're depressed people say things like 'It's a sunny day, let's go for a walk in the park,' but all these things are counter-productive."

The turning point came not in the sunshine, but on a chilly winter's day.

"He was somehow able to drag me out to Solana," Li told us, "even though it was freaking cold in the middle of winter. The toilet was by a toy shop, and he saw me smiling at a teddy bear which I thought was smiling at me, so he bought it for me."

Using the bear gave them a way of externalizing and talking about Li's depression.

"He said let's give it a name: Floppie, because it flops around like I



did when I was low. He started to say things like 'Why don't we take Floppie out to see the snow?' I engaged on a different level, a level of creativity, and it distracted me from musing on how meaningless my life was! We bought more bears, all different colors, and gave each bear a personality."

The road to recovery involved some significant life changes. "I decided to leave the bank. It took a long time to work through; I did a Masters degree, I needed to reinvent myself. My identity was tied up in my career – if I was leaving this career, what does that say about my identity?"

For Coghlan there was more to this question. "It's also about why she went into banking, about the pressures of growing up in Hong Kong. I grew up in Australia, and my parents supported me. In Hong Kong, if you get 98 percent, it's not a 'good job,' it's 'what happened to the other two points?' Youth suicides due to pressure are an issue of real concern in Hong Kong. We read an article in a Chinese paper about a woman who said to a kid of about 9 or 10, 'Even if you die I'm going to burn these exercise books and send teachers down to hell, so you can carry on your education.'"

Recognizing the Mixed Emotions

Li now runs Bearapy (<http://bearapy.me>), a consultancy that helps companies from multinationals to SMEs and start-ups with change management, understanding employees' wellbeing and preventing stress. The ideas which underpin her work come from both her academic studies and her own experience.

"I had suppressed my emotions," she said. "My vocabulary was, I was happy or not happy. If you fail you're unhappy, but you get up and go again. People would say, 'You've got a good job, a nice apartment- you don't have a reason to be unhappy.' 'It's the mask you put on, only presenting the best side. You look at rainbows and forget storms. The crux of the issue is to say:

'Can we talk about this instead of pretending everything's OK?' Not being able to own up to your emotions means it builds up inside."

Therapy helped her with opening up, she told us.

"When we first met I wasn't able to articulate my emotions. Tim's a gem, he's able to talk about what he feels. Some sessions he would sit in on, and we did a lot of couple therapy, but I also saw the therapist on my own. We had therapy pre-marriage, post-marriage, pre-baby... A lot of things we traced back to my childhood.

"At first I was embarrassed and ashamed, to have to see a psychologist. Then we thought, now we know what the problem is, we can work on it."

"If you were an actor in Hollywood," Coghlan added, "having therapy would mean you'd finally have made it!"

What they have learned through therapy influences the choices they make as parents too.

"I try to do it with my daughter," Li told us. "When she cries, it's not 'stop crying,' it's 'I can see you're crying, what are you upset about?' When we talk about her day, we put the emotions in: what was frustrating, what was disappointing. She's turning three in August, and now she's more vocal, we can see how the work we've done is coming out."

Part of this involves consciously making changes to the way she herself was brought up.

"It's not easy when I see her in mud. When I was a child everything had to be clean. But we let her be messy, try things on her own.

"My mom had many good intentions," Li continued, "but the way she brought me up has affected my mindset. Because we've been through that experience Tim steps up and says, 'That's not the way we want to do it.' To hold my mom back or the ayi back, takes courage. You've got to be self-aware and go up against conflict."

We asked her what advice she had for parents facing difficulties with depression and anxiety.

"Don't feel that the emotions, whatever you are feeling, are wrong, there is no right or wrong," she said. "Recognize that many around us might be feeling the same, and there is no shame in it. Try to identify the feeling and communicate it to your other half. Don't dismiss each other's feelings, or brush them off; when your spouse is trying to share their feelings, sit and LISTEN, and ask them why they feel that way. And seek professional help if possible, especially to identify whether it is depression, anxiety, or anything else, because how you cope with it would be different."

Life is rarely easy, and the challenges of parenthood never end. However, this couple's story shows that even when things seem darkest, there is always a way back to happiness.



SCHOOL NEWS

International schools in Beijing announce new people in their community



WAB Names New ES Principal

Western Academy of Beijing (WAB) introduces its new elementary school principal, Angela Steinmann, who has 33 years of experience in education from around the world. Her expertise includes the IB Primary Years Programme as a coordinator and, most recently, as principal at Istanbul International Community School.



New ISB Head of School

International School of Beijing (ISB) welcomes Patrick Hurworth as its new Head of School, starting August 2017. He joins ISB with over 20 years of experience in international education in the UK, the US, and Europe – most recently as high school principal at Hong Kong International School.



HIS Appoints New Headmaster

Hope International School (HIS) welcomes its new headmaster, Stephen Meier who has served in education for 15 years in 3 different countries. He holds Master's Degrees in Education, Educational Administration and Religion from Liberty University. He is ACSI certified as a Secondary Principal and Superintendent.



MSB Welcomes New Principal

The International Montessori School of Beijing (MSB) announces the appointment of principal Laura King, who joins the school bringing a rich and diverse expertise in educational leadership, curriculum development, and administration. With 21 years of educational administration experience and over 13 years teaching practice, she has been warmly welcomed by the entire MSB community.



Keystone Head of School Stays on

Head of School Malcolm McKenzie is set to stay on at Keystone Academy from the end of the coming academic year (2017/2018) for at least another three years, renewing his current contract through June 2021. "This dream of a new world school is taking shape and each year Keystone, as a school and as a community, is growing and evolving beautifully," McKenzie said. He was head of three schools before Keystone: Maru-a-Pula School in Botswana, The United World College of the Atlantic in Wales, and The Hotchkiss School in Connecticut, US.

New Partners in Health Education



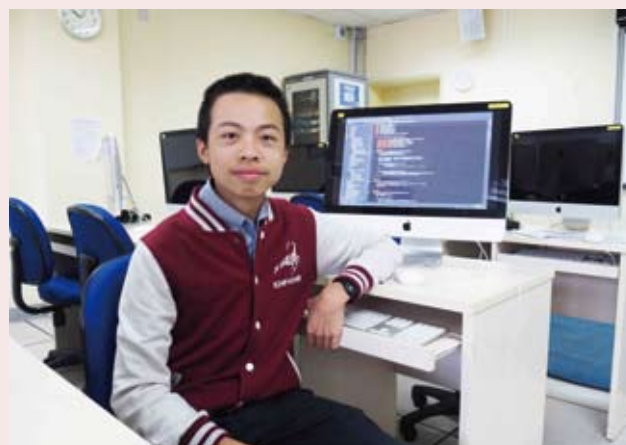
3e and Dr. Cuiyutao Pediatric Clinic Establish Ties

Representatives from 3e International School and Dr. Cuiyutao Pediatric Clinics have signed a strategic cooperation agreement to mark the start of their partnership that commits to preventive health education. The event was held at the clinic on June 7.



AnRic Moves to New Location

AnRic Little Montessori Room has announced that it has moved to Guanghua Road in Chaoyang. Visitors will see facilities such as a large indoor gym, a library, and a children's kitchen. The new location offers Early Childhood (up to 6 years old), Toddler (up to 2.5 years old) and afternoon Parent's Lab (for babies up to 24 months old) programs.



YCIS Beijing IBDP Computer Science Stimulates Technological Creativity

Yew Chung International School of Beijing (YCIS Beijing) Year 13 student Rock Siu created an Android app from scratch to track volleyball scoring and rotations. The app is part of his IBDP Computer Science studies at the school. Rock will be attending the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology this fall, where he will be studying engineering.

The Circuit is a chance to check out what's happening in the Beijing community. Want to see your event on these pages?



3e Students' Charity Fashion Show

3e International School teachers organized the first charity fashion show to raise funds for the Little Flower Orphanage on June 9. The kindergarten students raised RMB 6,200 for medical checks of 10 children in the orphanage.



ISB Celebrates its Class of 2017

On May 27, the International School of Beijing (ISB) celebrated their 137 graduates in its class of 2017.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF 3E, ISB

Send an email with the date of your event, a brief description, and high-resolution photos (at least 1MB each) to webeditor@beijing-kids.com by **July 10**



DCB Junior School Musical – Singin' in the Rain

Dulwich College Beijing (DCB) congratulates all children and staff involved with this production. The Junior School were very proud of the excellent show, from the set, the props, the acting, dancing, singing, and excellent live music to top it all off.



YCIS Beijing's Global Community Day Raises RMB 100,000 for Charity

Over 2,000 guests from the greater YCIS Beijing community visited the campus on May 13 for a day of delicious food, fun games, and fantastic performances, raising nearly RMB 100,000 for charity in the process.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF DCB, YCIS BEIJING



Capstone Projects Celebrate Chinese Heritage

In early June, Keystone Academy Grade 10 students presented their capstone projects, a culminating piece of independent research on Chinese civilization as part of Keystone's signature Chinese thread. Capstone prepares students for their transition to the IB Diploma Programme where similar skills of critical thinking, research, communication, time management and independent study form the foundation of a successful Keystone and IB student.



BSB, Shunyi Summer Fayre

More than 2,500 parents and friends from the community came for some summer fun at The British School of Beijing (BSB) Shunyi in June, while also enjoying their students' musical performances.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF KEYSTONE ACADEMY; BSB, SHUNYI



Harrow Beijing Students Spring Charity Trees Planting Event

Eco Sprouting Guardian, founded by three Harrow Beijing students — Selina, Leo, Kevin, and 7 students from other schools, formally opened the "Eco Sprouting Guardian 2017 spring charity trees planting event" in Miyun District on April 23. Nearly 200 supporters attended the event.



First Graduating Class of BIBA

June 9 marked a milestone celebration for Beijing International Bilingual Academy (BIBA) as diplomas were conferred to its first graduating class. BIBA offers the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme for Grades 11 and 12.





Fun After Five at MSB

The International Montessori School of Beijing (MSB) enjoyed a wonderful summer evening of delicious food, charity fundraising, fun and games, and musical performances by students, parents, and staff on May 12.



Nursery - Pre-Kindergarten Summer Concert at CISB

Nursery and pre-kindergarten pupils of Canadian International School of Beijing (CISB) presented their year-end concert on June 2. The students showcased their wonderful performances to their families, friends, and teachers.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF MSB, CISB



WAB Graduates Honored at Confucius Temple

The Western Academy of Beijing (WAB) community celebrated its Class of 2017 at Beijing's Confucius Temple, one of the most historic and symbolic institutions of learning in the world. The graduates are set to attend top universities around the world.



The Glorious Graduation Ceremony of BCIS Class of 2017

Students, families, and staff members set foot in one of the spectacular halls of the Diaoyutai State Guest House for the Beijing City International School's (BCIS) Class of 2017 Graduation Ceremony.



A full-page photograph of a smiling couple holding their baby up in the air. The baby is wearing a pink headband and a white tutu. The couple is looking up at the baby with joy. The background is a bright, sunlit room with large windows.

Favorite Weekend Activity

Summer braai (South African BBQ) outside Pinotage restaurant.

Best Kid's Clothes Shop

The Gap, Old Navy, and the kid's clothing swap in Shunyi.

Family Rituals

Friday nights we love to stay in with good food, our favorite wine, and sing while Gary plays guitar.

Favorite new activities with the baby

That would be afternoon garden strolls with baby and dad.

Where did you give birth?

We did it at New Century Women's and Children's Hospital, Wangjing.

Adapted Chinese Culture

During Chinese New Year we get together with friends and make dumplings as well as a traditional dishes from each of our countries.

What is a Chinese cultural thing you have adapted to as a new mother?

After giving birth, I kept my feet warm at all times and started giving Ella her daily body massage after bath time.

Favorite Non-Chinese Restaurant

The Swan with Two Necks always has great pub grub, drinks, and a friendly homely atmosphere

Favorite Website

Taobao, where you can find almost anything your heart desires

Favorite Dessert Spot

Baskin Robbins Euro Plaza

The Jennings Family

Text by Pauline van Hasselt, Photos by Dave's Studio

Gary and Kirsten Jennings welcomed their firstborn Ella Daisy in March this year. The Jennings hail from sunny South Africa and before moving to Asia they lived in Wales and London. They sold all their belongings in 2013 and decided to backpack through Southeast Asia, settling in Saigon for a year and a half before moving to Beijing. Gary is a psychology teacher, and Kirsten is a proud stay-at-home mom who has the hardest job ever, taking care of baby Ella Daisy and making sure she is always happy and healthy.

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