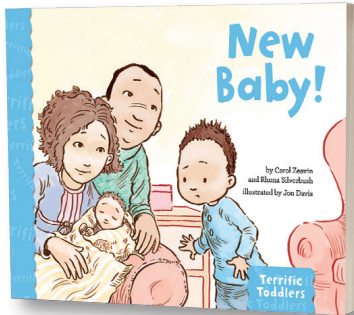




Five Ways to Reassure Your Toddler About the Arrival of a New Baby



For toddlers, having a new baby is a real shock. They are confused about the little intruder—angry sometimes, genuinely in love other times. It's a complicated time.

Magination Press's Terrific Toddlers series, written by Carol Zeavin and Rhona Silverbush, covers the day-to-day dramas most experienced by toddlers and the adults who care for them. This revolutionary and unique series is the first ever to handle the topics in carefully researched, developmentally appropriate ways for toddlers.

Here's an excerpt from the Note to Parents and Caregivers in Terrific Toddlers' *New Baby!*, providing tips to reassure your toddler about your new arrival.

Keep it Simple

Answer their questions briefly and matter-of-factly. Try not to tell them too early that the baby is coming. Instead wait until they notice Mommy's belly growing, simply tell them that a baby is growing inside. Use "toddler time" such as "when the leaves turn pretty colors" or "after Grandma visits" to describe when the baby will arrive. Wait until just a couple of weeks before the baby is due to give logistical details about what will happen around the birth—where they will be, and who will take care of them during the birth.

Let Them Help

Toddlers love being helpful! Give them simple jobs, like fetching a blanket or a diaper. Including them in baby-related activities will help them feel like they are an important part of their newly-structured family.

Expect Aggression

Attempts at hitting, biting, and grabbing things are normal. While protecting the baby, it's important to respect and validate your toddler's anger by giving it an outlet. Encouraging your child stomp their feet or make other appropriate expressions of anger have been shown to healthily reduce the upset and show your toddler that you don't think their feelings are "bad." Labeling their feelings also helps: "It's okay to be angry" or "You're really mad."

Expect Regression

Toddlers with a new baby may wish to be a baby again, too, and they need to know that it's okay with you. If they regress a bit—lose ground on potty training or want to be cuddled like a baby—indulge them for as long as they need. This reassurance will calm their fears of losing both you and their baby self, and it shows you understand them.

Give Them Some One-on-One Time

They used to have you all to themselves. They still need your whole-hearted and whole-bodied attention. Find games you can play together, an outing, a story time—just Mommy and/or Daddy and toddler.

The most important thing you can do is recognize and validate your toddler's fears and mixed feelings. Reassure them as often as they show you they need, that they are still your baby and you will always be their Mommy and Daddy.

To learn more about the books in the Terrific Toddler's series, [click here](#).

This Article's Authors

Carol Zeavin holds master's degrees in education and special education from Bank Street College, worked with infants and toddlers for nearly a decade as head teacher at Rockefeller University's Child and Family Center and Barnard's Toddler Development Center, and worked at Y.A.I. and Theracare. She lives in New York, NY.

Rhona Silverbush studied psychology and theater at Brandeis University and law at Boston College Law School. She represented refugees and has written and co-written several books, including a guide to acting Shakespeare. She currently coaches actors, writes, tutors, and consults for families of children and teens with learning differences and special needs. She lives in New York, NY.