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Advice on Preparing for Parenthood When You Have a Disability

No matter how excited you are to welcome a baby into your life, the thought of parenthood can be overwhelming-- and even frightening when you have a disability. Raising a child is hard enough as it is. Fortunately, you're not alone. There are at least [4.1 million](#) other parents with disabilities in the United States who have found great ways to make parenthood a little more manageable. Here are some tips to get you started with your own parenting preparations.

Modifying Your Home for Greater Accessibility

You've probably already made some changes to your home to make your daily tasks easier. Now that a baby is on the way, there are some additional modifications you may want to consider. These will help you keep up with an energetic child and their non-stop care requirements. Redfin recommends starting with some simple but effective [home fixes](#), like replacing stairs with a ramp so you can more easily navigate your entranceway with your hands full or a stroller in tow. Likewise, installing expandable hinges in your doorways can give you more freedom as you move around the house with your baby. Skid-resistant floors are often recommended to help prevent falls when you're rushing around or carrying your child. In the bathtub, a water level and temperature indicator can ensure the water is safe for bathing your child. Keeping a rolling cart of supplies within arm's reach will also prove helpful at bath time.

Finding the Perfect Baby Products

It's important to seek out high-quality baby products, for everything from cribs to toys, so you can ensure the safety and durability of these items. Check out [online reviews](#) before making a purchase and pay attention to product features that may be particularly useful for you, like a stroller with an easy one-hand folding mechanism. Other adapted [baby products](#)—like chest harnesses, swiveling car seats, nursing pillows, and Velcro baby bibs—can be especially useful for people with limited mobility or those confined to a wheelchair. You can even modify some products, like [your crib](#), to make it more accessible for you. Just ensure it's still safe and secure once you're done making changes.

Learning Parenting Skills

Taking time to learn about child behavior and parenting skills can help relieve a lot of the anxiety first-time parents often experience. Forbes has compiled a helpful list of [parenting books](#) if you need somewhere to start. [Parenting classes](#) can also be extremely helpful, teaching you the basics of caring for a newborn and how to find the parenting style that works best for you. Taking the time to learn these things before your baby arrives can help settle some of your worries and provide an uplifting confidence boost.

Preparing for Change in Your Life

No matter how much you prepare for your baby, your life is certain to change once baby arrives. This is why it's important to set up healthy plans for coping with stress and supporting your mental health every day. Developing a [self-care routine](#) can keep you from experiencing burnout and ensure you have enough energy and patience to share with your growing family. This may include journaling, meditation, scheduling time with friends or family, and savoring the rare, quiet moment you get to yourself.

It's also important to set up a solid [support network](#) of people who can step in if you need assistance. Simply having people in close contact is also a good way to stave off loneliness. To find additional support, the [Disabled Parenting Project](#) is a great place to connect with other parents who are facing and overcoming the same challenges as you. You can get tons of great advice online, such as where to find accessible cribs, which baby carriers are ideal for parents in wheelchairs, and how to bathe a baby when you have limited mobility.

Having a disability doesn't prevent you from being an amazing parent. Although you may have to make some adaptations and extra preparations in your life, you can have the same fulfilling and enjoyable time raising your child as anyone. Begin preparing today so you can alleviate any worries and uncertainties as soon as possible, and start getting excited about your growing family!