

Using My Mom's Having a Baby
in sibling classes...

By Dori Hillestad Butler

A Note from the Author:

Children are naturally curious about where babies come from. But when Mom's belly is expanding and there's talk of a new baby coming, they may be ready for more information. My Mom's Having a Baby was written to help parents and children talk openly and honestly about where babies come from, what happens during pregnancy, how the baby grows inside the uterus, and labor and delivery.

Pre-reading Activity:

Ask the children to talk about how they feel about having a new baby in their families. Are they happy, excited, scared, worried or mad? What do they think things will be like when the baby is here? Do they have any questions or concerns?

Things to do/talk about after you've read the book:

*Talk about pregnancy. What does it mean to be "pregnant?" Have they noticed any physical changes in their mothers? Have their mothers felt sick or tired like Elizabeth's mother? Talk about ways they can help when Mom doesn't feel good.

* Talk about what a newborn baby looks like and what it can/cannot do. Many children have misconceptions about this. Have the children draw a picture of what they think their baby will look like after it's born.

*Talk about what it's going to be like to have a new baby in the house. Role play some parent, baby, older sibling interactions. Reassure each child that he/she will still be "special" to Mom and Dad, even after the new baby arrives.

* Talk about crying. What does it sound like? What does it mean? Ask the kids to make different kinds of cries to express different needs.

* Talk about ways they can help with the new baby. Have some dolls, diapers and bottles on hand so they can get some "hands on" experience. Show them how to hold, feed and diaper a baby. Talk about "gentle touch." Talk about ways to help keep the baby safe.

* Talk about what's going to happen when Mom goes into labor. Show them where their mothers will be in the hospital. Talk about the people who will help them. Show them some of the equipment that might be used and what it's used for. Show them where the baby will be after it's born. Perhaps take some time to peek inside the nursery at the newborns.

*Talk about each child's plans for the time Mom is in the hospital. Will they be going to a friend's house? Will Grandma be coming to stay with them?

*Help each child write a letter to his/her future brother or sister.