

moms at work

Kasie Savage, founder of WOMBaby Slings

Upon the arrival of her first son, Wyatt, Kasie Savage became frustrated by the lack of fashionable baby slings available to parents. "I wanted it to be functional *and* look good," she explains. Taking matters into her own hands, Savage created a version that measured up to her standards. And when other moms began asking for one, Savage saw a business opportunity and introduced WOMBaby Slings.

Though the stylish prints are what first attract moms to Savage's slings, they also appreciate the comfort and functionality. Cargo zip pockets keep wallets and other on-the-go must-haves close by. Padded shoulder straps help Mom stay comfortable, and less bulk allows her to move with ease. Best of all, the slings are fully adjustable, so dads can wear them, too!

And whether they make it easier to breast-feed, calm down a fussy baby, run errands or care for older siblings while having the baby nestled close, moms tell Savage that they're finding the support they need from the slings. "I know how a rough start with a new baby can wear you thin and sap you emotionally," says Savage. "When moms call me up and say 'She's not crying in the sling!' it fuels me and fills me with satisfaction and pride." Check out the current collection at wombaby.com.

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a course worth taking

Ever considered a parenting course? Not likely. Most of us believe that parenting is an inherent ability. But in reality, we could all use a little help.

Though touted as natural, parenting is anything but. In fact, says Betsy Mann, a certified Canadian Family Educator in Ottawa, what might be more natural are the feelings aroused in us when we become parents. "We want to protect our children – it's hard-wired into us," she says. While we're instinctively driven to keep our kids out of harm's way, the methods we're most familiar with are based on learned behaviour from our own upbringing.

Since new information may change your mind about old approaches, a parenting course might be worth considering. "Today, we know a lot more about how children's brains develop, what is appropriate at different ages and how much of an influence parents can have," says Mann.

So why aren't courses more popular? Because most parents tend to be reactive instead of proactive when it comes to child rearing. We tend to wait until something goes wrong before seeking a solution. Instead, Mann suggests that you think of a parenting course as you would a prenatal one. "You're not going to wait until you're in labour to learn how to breath." It makes sense, then, to find out what parenting is going to be like right from the get-go, she says.

From one-night workshops to a series of group meetings, there's a course and a schedule to fit your needs. For information on local courses, check with your prenatal coordinator, your faith community, Family Service Canada, or the Family Resource Program (frp.ca). "Think of a course as enriching your experience as a parent, broadening your views on your role, giving yourself more tools and learning more about your child," says Mann.

we asked at glow.ca

Have you ever taken a parenting course?

you answered

Yes.....31%

No.....69%