SHADES of BLUE PROJECT

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Support for fathers and partners



Listen. Believe. Help make care possible.

Fathers, partners, relatives, and chosen family can make support practical. Your own mental health also deserves attention and care.

01 Listen without judgment

- Ask how the parent is feeling beyond questions about the baby. Give them room to answer honestly. [1]
- Avoid comparisons and pressure to feel grateful. Respect their choices about visitors, touch, privacy, and medical appointments. [1]
- When a Black mother describes feeling dismissed, listen and help her ask for clear answers and follow up.

02 Offer specific help

- Suggest a concrete task: bring dinner, wash clothes, arrange transportation, or help protect time for a health appointment.
- Share baby care and household responsibilities instead of expecting one parent to manage every task and request. [1]
- With permission, attend a visit, take notes, and support the parent in asking questions about their own care. [2]

03 Notice when care is needed

- Depression can affect fathers and partners of any gender, including adoptive parents. Seek assessment for persistent changes. [3]
- Sadness, irritability, worry, trouble functioning, or difficulty connecting with the baby deserves professional attention. [3]
- Help someone with an urgent warning sign obtain immediate care. Tell clinicians about pregnancy or birth within the past year. [2]

Ask for your own support when needed. Caring for someone does not mean carrying everything alone.

CARE INCLUDES YOU TOO

Find support shadesofblueproject.org/support **Request services →**

U.S. immediate danger or suspected psychosis: call 911 or go to an emergency department. **Suicidal crisis or emotional distress:** call 988 or text 988.

Maternal support: call or text 1 833 852 6262. Free, confidential, 24/7. HRSA. Not a crisis line.

Sources [1] OWH Tips for Supporting Partners and Family Members with… [2] CDC Providing Support for Pregnant or Postpartum Women [3] AAP Perinatal Depression in Partners

Educational information, not a diagnosis. Updated November 17, 2026.