



Centre for
Perinatal Psychology
Helping you towards parenthood



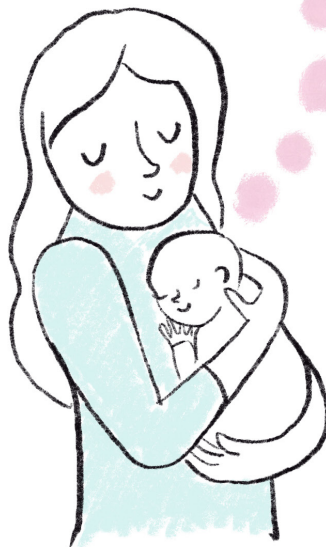
Transitioning From Womb to World: The Fourth Trimester for Infants

Speaking for the Baby Campaign

Just as parents need a period of adjustment to their new life with a newborn, babies too need time to adjust as they transition from the stability of the womb environment towards discovery of a new world. This is the time of the 'fourth trimester': those first three-months after birth when baby is transitioning from womb to world, gradually adapting to life outside the womb.

From Womb to World

My first home was inside you Mummy. I need a slow transition to this new home on the outside. It can be noisy and bright here, with so many new things. Sometimes, I need to rest into your body to feel your heartbeat and your warmth - to be as one with you again.



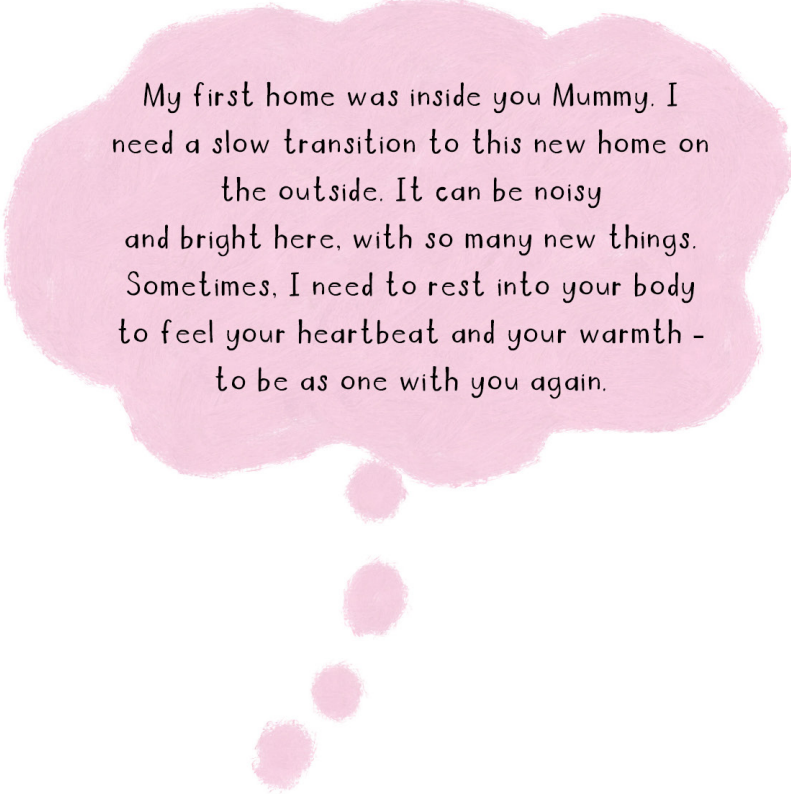
The Importance of a Gentle Transition for Newborns

A newborn is underdeveloped in many ways, and they need a slow transition from womb to world. During the first three-months of a newborn's life the brain and nervous system need to mature; their tiny stomachs call for frequent feeding; their senses and reflexes are developing. By the end of a baby's third month, their physical systems are stabilising, and baby is increasingly responding to the outside world with maturing social abilities.

Early on, babies are comforted by sensations reminiscent of the womb—being close, hearing your heartbeat and voice, taking in your smell, familiar noises, feeling warmth and a sense of 'oneness' with you. They need this a lot in the beginning. Slowly increasing exposure to the world across the fourth trimester supports their development and capacity to interact with their surroundings.

In the voice of the baby: "My first home was inside you Mummy. I need a slow transition to this new home on the outside. It can be noisy and bright here, with so many new things. Sometimes, I need to rest into your body to feel your heartbeat and your warmth – to be as one with you again."

Babies need a slow transition from womb to world.



My first home was inside you Mummy. I need a slow transition to this new home on the outside. It can be noisy and bright here, with so many new things. Sometimes, I need to rest into your body to feel your heartbeat and your warmth – to be as one with you again.



Written and created by **Dr Bronwyn Leigh** with illustrations by **Jess Racklyeft** for the *Centre for Perinatal Psychology*