

Creating Your Ideal Birth Plan

This is a starting point, use the method of writing your birth plan that suits you and your family. Dreaming is encouraged! Step out of reality a little bit and use your imagination.



“The first step in writing a birth plan is to dream. Let go of all the ‘shoulds’ and pressing realities that circumscribe your choices. Let yourself visualize the perfect, ideal birth for you. Trust that later you can add in reality. Right now, let loose your feelings and your imagination. It’s OK to invoke magic in your dream birth. Think through all the stages of labor: early, active, pushing the baby into the world, and the first hour with your new baby [...]. Get specific about the details.”

Natural Hospital Birth (2011) by Cynthia Gabriel

Write this dream down, be as specific as you can. Have your partner dream too. Talk about your dreams and begin the dialogue of what is a reality.

Next, take a look at one of the “checkbox birth plans”. Check all the boxes! Mark everything you want, or don’t want as the case may be.

Use this tool to start your research. Ask questions, google, read. Find out what procedures are common in your chosen birth location, and which ones are unlikely to happen no matter the situation.

Now take these two very different ideas of a birth plan, both of which may be several pages long, and begin to reconcile the differences. Chat with your care provider or doula, your friend who has had a baby in the location you have chosen, or your mom or sister. Work with someone who is familiar with local birth policies and make your final birth plan. Ideally this plan is one page, uses positive language (“I would like...”, “I prefer...” etc, rather than “I don’t want...”, “Don’t do...”) and expresses your desires in a kind, yet firm way.

CHECK ALL THE BOXES!!!!!!



There is no need to compromise at this point in your birth process, there will be plenty of time for that if a need arises while IN LABOR. If you would like to avoid pitocin, don’t say “I would like to avoid pitocin, unless XYZ...” Instead say “I would like to avoid pitocin, I have other labor enhancing methods I would like to try in the event that there is a need”.

Sit with it for a few days, revisit it and make changes as you need. This is not a document you will necessarily be able to finish in a day, or even a



week. Take your time. Print a few copies, put them in your birth bag. Now forget about it.