Informing The First Time Mother

Mohammed Abdoolcarim, Alonzo Canada, Elizabeth Gordon, Christina Hsiao, Dana Johnson, Ken Rafanan
> Overview

Observations
Insights
Needs
Target as Expert
Matrix: Information & Community
Imperatives
Solutions 1 - Baby Kits
Solutions 2 - The Target Baby Card
Solutions 3 - Value-Added Diapers
Conclusion
Observations

First-time mothers often suffer from an “information deficit” regarding the care of their baby and its impact on their lives.

Leanne, an investment banker, accustomed to challenging and high stress situations told us: “As an I-banker, I thought I was prepared to have a baby… but having a baby is ten times harder than I-banking… I was totally unprepared.”

The first few weeks/months of parenting are utterly exhausting and overwhelming.

Nancy, a travelling salesperson, came home from the hospital with her newborn and felt so overwhelmed, she "just burst into tears." She had "no idea where to start."

New mothers are inexperienced and often feel clueless.

Michelle, a medical device representative, recalled her first experience bathing her baby. “I had no idea how to give Melissa a bath. I followed a three page foldout from Parenting magazine step-by-step..”
> Insights

1. **Having a baby isn’t always as magical as it seems.**
   Even though the media and our society in general tend to glorify parenting, all the moms we met emphasized just how difficult and frightening it really can be. As Leanne said, “Even though I was with this tiny person 24 hours a day, I felt more alone and isolated than ever before”.

2. **Moms think, “I’m supposed to be the expert, but I need someone to be MY expert.”**
   Pregnant women feel considerable pressure to be the perfect mother and therefore spend a lot of time preparing for their new role. They don’t want to seem incapable of handling their newborns. Unfortunately, many mothers have limited knowledge and need someone to help them be an expert without making them feel inadequate.

3. **New mothers are not as emotionally and mentally prepared for a baby.**
   Many mothers do not have a community to help them deal with the emotional aspects of parenting. Despite their efforts to educate themselves by buying every book and magazine available, they still find themselves unprepared.
> Mothers’ Needs:

Despite the myriad difficulties of being a new parent, each mother we interviewed strove to achieve an ideal experience. The comparisons they drew between their realities and their ideals allowed our team to discern a few key needs.

To FEEL SUPPORTED and PREPARED
- To be a part of a community/support network
- To have their parenting fears allayed
- To have sufficient understanding of normal development

To TRUST Herself, Others, and Her Baby Products
- Trust herself and her ability to make the right decisions
- Trust others with her baby
- Trust the baby products and services she uses

To FEEL LIKE and be perceived as a GOOD MOTHER
- Moms want to feel responsible for their child.
- Moms want to feel conscientious of their child’s needs.
- Moms want to feel in control of every situation.
The pervasive image of new parenting as being all smiles, cuteness, and precious moments does not correspond with what often goes on behind-the-scenes: crying, exhaustion, illness, and frustration.

Many new mothers, especially those without a close support network of family and friends, find themselves lost in a sea of uncertainty.

They need a reliable source of information they can trust, who understands them and their needs… in other words, a Baby Expert.

Target should be every mother’s Baby Expert.
This matrix illustrates the breakdown of products and services for mothers. Services rank high on the credible and community axes, while products are isolating and lack credible information. Target should focus on making products more informative. This will help mothers share their tasks with other caregivers and make their mothering experience less isolating.
> Imperatives

Target should help parents to navigate through the difficulties of parenthood while preserving the joys of raising a child.

Target should present holistic solutions to prepare parents for more than just the material experience.

Target should design their experience to be easy and convenient for mothers... they need attention too!
### Solution 1: Baby Kits

Target should take a systems approach to the store’s baby section. Products specific to different daily activities should be organized into single packages so that customers can be sure they are getting everything they need at once.

Each package should have detailed instructions, helpful tips, and guidelines for what parents should expect from their newborn.

System-specific information gives new parents a sense of what is normal for their baby, helping them set reasonable expectations for their own baby’s development.

Finally, systems packaging helps Moms trust others to do her baby shopping, giving her peace of mind.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Package Contains:</th>
<th>Instructions about contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Helpful tips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advice from Doctors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guidelines about what to expect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exhausted Moms have so much to do, it’s no wonder they dread shopping; and yet they continue to shop because it’s hard for them to trust someone else to know exactly which products they need.

The Target BabyCard allows Moms to trust others to shop Target for her baby’s needs while increasing Target brand loyalty. With the BabyCard Moms can send their husbands or friends shopping and know that no item will be forgotten.

Here’s how the Target BabyCard works...
1. Simply scan the package’s UPC barcode with your BabyCard. (Product info is entered onto your Target shopping list.)
2. During your next Target visit, just swipe your BabyCard in the available kiosk to print out a personalized shopping list complete with a store-locator map. In addition to highlighting locations for the items you need, the kiosk holds information such as product reviews, and helpful tips and strategies.
3. A final BabyCard feature is the Personal Shopper Option. For an added fee, mothers can give their list to a Target employee to shop while they relax in a waiting lounge.
Solution 3: Diapers for Dummies

A typical six-month old infant will go through eight diapers a day. In essence, diapers are the way babies mark time. We use these markers then as an opportunity to deliver information; diapers become vehicles for informing caregivers. We foresee two primary uses of Diapers for Dummies:

1) Provide new mothers with information that is targeted at the developmental stage of their baby. For example, "Talk with your baby. Studies have shown that newborns can recognize their mother's voice within the first few weeks of life," or "Even recordings of your voice can soothe your baby."

2) Provide mothers a platform to deliver time-sensitive information to secondary care providers such as fathers or baby-sitters. Mothers can insert messages into a window on the diaper to deliver messages that are sure to be remembered when they are most appropriate. For example, Leanne knows that her baby Kevin regularly takes a nap after his fourth diaper of the day but depending on his activity level, the time of day can vary. Leanne uses an information insert included in every pack of Target Diapers for Dummies to remind her husband that Kevin will likely be sleepy after his fourth diaper change. Before leaving for the day, Leanne slips the insert that reads, "Time for my Nap," into the message window of the fourth diaper in the diaper bag.
Conclusion

Currently mothers overwhelmingly rely on new mother support groups, online communities, family members or books for information on child rearing practices. Sifting through these information sources requires significant time and/or energy, which may not be an option for all mothers.

Target has the opportunity to make reliable and credible information accessible by providing information in a timely manner with relevant products. In other words, Target has the opportunity to lower the investment necessary to master basic care-giving practices. Among these practices, we count procurement of appropriate baby care products, use of these products, and setting realistic expectations for child development. We see two primary benefits to giving care givers a better understanding of products and their associated processes:

1) New mothers can feel more confident in approaching new child-rearing activities
2) By enabling secondary caregivers to assist competently in child-rearing activities, new mothers can feel more comfortable spending time away from their baby.