

# Practical guidebooks to dadding for the uninitiated

By JENNIFER COSTLEY

Nineteen months ago, a little light bulb went off in my head. Perhaps my newfound desire for orange juice, excessive nausea and lack of period were signs of things to come ... small ... cuddly ... messy things. Eighteen dollars later my theory was confirmed. The big question wasn't "How will I raise a baby?" it was "How do I tell my partner he's going to be a dad?"

In the age of gender reveal parties and Facebook pregnancy announcements I decided to be cute and tell him in a "fun" way. So being the modern woman I am, I Googled "How to tell your boyfriend you're pregnant" and quickly found the easiest method for dropping the bomb. I drew a picture of a big smiling sperm, scrawled the phrase "We have a winner" across the bottom, tucked it into an oversized envelope with the pregnancy test and headed to his work.

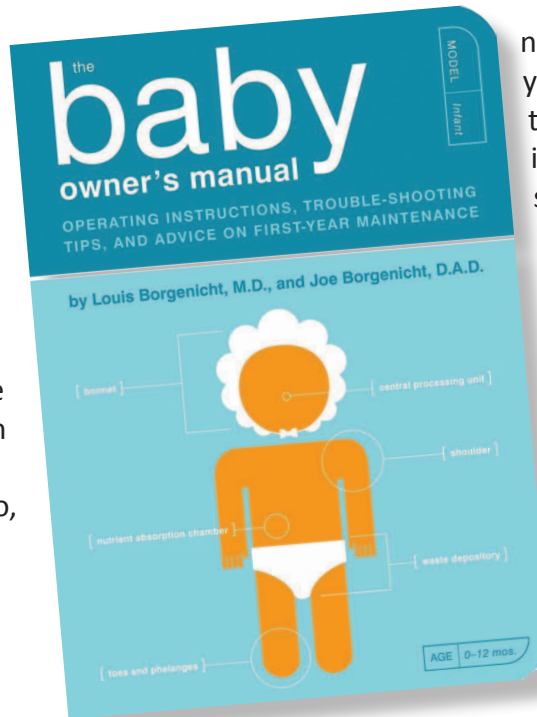
Let's just say he did not find my method cute. I'm not sure he smiled once. First, there was confusion, then realization and then a stricken look, that stayed permanently fixed to his face for roughly the next three months. Was he ready to be a dad? Absolutely not. Did he spend the next eight months

getting ready? You better believe it.

Fortunately, for every future dad-to-be there is an extensive collection of great books out there waiting to teach you the basics of parenting. No, I'm not talking about "What to Expect When You're Expecting." These are real books for real dads who may or may not have a clue.

I recommend the following:

- **The Baby Owner's Manual: Operating Instructions, Trouble-Shooting Tips, and Advice on First-Year Maintenance** by Louis Borgenicht M.D. and Joe Borgenicht. "Congratulations on the arrival of your new baby. This baby is surprisingly similar to other appliances you may already own." Written like a user manual for operating your DVR, "The Baby Owner's Manual" is



non-stop hilarity, yet still manages to cover all of the important bases, such as, how to swaddle a baby, sleep training, and navigating the pediatrician's office.

- **Show Dad How: The Brand-New Dad's Guide to Baby's First Year** by Shawn Bean. From the editors of

*Parenting Magazine*, this fully illustrated guidebook takes you from preparing to impregnate to baby's first birthday in ways that will have you cracking up and taking notes at the same time. Plus, bonus feature, this book includes crafts!

- **Toddlers are A\*\*holes: It's Not Your Fault** by Bunmi Laditan. Confession: I read this cover-to-cover even though my child is nowhere near the toddler years. This book is full of relatable parenting anecdotes that will have you busting at the seams and



## Parenting Tip

then crying a little as you look toward the future with fear. No worries though; when you reach that point, just turn to Chapter 9, aptly titled "How Not to Die Inside."

So after nine months of new dadding, how's my partner doing? Well, he's a better swaddler, bottler, and middle-of-the-night comforter than I. He's got her trained to watch the morning sports shows. She already owns a pair of Jordan's and Kyrie's and the kid's favorite toy is the Xbox controller he gave her (minus batteries) so she could play alongside him. I'm not an expert but I think he's killing it.

And, three weeks ago when I told him (using words not illustrations) he was about to be a Dad again, he didn't cry. Thank you Chapter 9!

*Jennifer Costley is Assistant Director and Youth Services Librarian at the Pendleton Public Library. She and her partner Ben are expecting their second child in November.*

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