



# WHAT TO DO...

## if mom or dad are struggling

**Listen!** Firstly, listen to mom or dad. Being able to listen attentively whilst someone pours their heart out is a gift. Have a cup of tea and affirm “I am here to listen”. Practice active listening with good open-ended questions. Importantly, be careful to avoid fixing or jumping into rescue mode and trying to solve the problem for mom or dad. Rather, allow mom or dad to talk through the problem and find their own solution.

**Refer!** It is important if mom or dad are struggling to encourage them to seek help from their health care provider or to seek professional help. You can also suggest getting help from other organisations working in their area.

### for emotional needs:

- **The South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG)** is a useful website and you can send mom's name and telephone number for a counsellor to call mom for free. Please be sure that mom agrees for you to do this, before you give her number to SADAG or anyone else
  - If you are concerned that mom (or dad) may have postnatal depression, please encourage mom (or dad) to go to her doctor or health care provider to be diagnosed and supported through treatment and counselling. Dad can also have postnatal depression so look out for this.
- **Useful contacts** is a resource with a range of agencies to refer mom or dad to, should you be concerned about her/him or baby
- **The Perinatal Mental Health Project** has many resources to support and inform mom and dad
- You may also have a range of specialists in your congregation that you could reach out to and ask to provide free services to support families (e.g. counsellors, psychiatrists, lawyers, breastfeeding specialists, midwives etc.) Do an audit of your



congregation to see who can provide support to families needing extra care. Be sure to speak to your pastor to have someone come around the family to pastorally care for them

## for financial or practical support:

- **Child Support Grant:** This grant is aimed at lower-income households to assist parents with the costs of the basic needs of their child. The grant is not meant to replace other income but is intended to bridge the gap in the cost of living. See if mom meets the criteria to apply for this grant
- **Ideas to practically support** mom and dad

## other ways to support:

- **Problem solve with mom or dad** – don't take the problem away from mom or dad but rather be a sounding board for them to problem solve. Ask good questions and listen. Click here for **5 steps to problem solve**
- Assist mom or dad to **find out more information** about the relevant topic from trusted sources. Look at the Sikunye website for reliable resources [www.sikunye.org.za](http://www.sikunye.org.za)
- **Check-in regularly** with mom or dad via phone or text. You may need to connect daily or every second day if needed. Click **here** for ideas on how regularly you can check-in with mom or dad
- **Pray** with and for mom or dad
- **Remind them of who they are in Christ.** Click **here** for scriptures to share

**importantly:** If you feel out of your depth or overwhelmed by the problem that mom or dad are facing; or you are worried about their or baby's safety; or you are worried about your own wellbeing – **ask for help!** Speak to your church pastor, ministry leader or Sikunye for guidance of what to do. Remember to care for yourself first before helping others; to keep your boundaries; and that you are not the professional – **refer** to a professional for help.