



About API of Peoria:

Welcome to Attachment Parenting International of Peoria. The mission of Attachment Parenting International (API) is to promote parenting practices that create strong, healthy emotional bonds between children and their parents. These practices nurture and fulfill a child's need for trust, empathy, and affection, providing a lifelong foundation for healthy, enduring relationships. In simple words, we strive to emotionally respond to our children! We present a variety of viewpoints about many different parenting topics and options, but we will attempt to primarily present the Attachment Parenting point of view. We encourage you to take what you can use and leave the rest, as not every tactic works for every family.

General Policies and Information:

- API of Peoria uses the UU facility for our events, but we do not maintain a political or religious affiliation.
- Please attend to your children during the meeting – this is of utmost importance, for the children's well being and in consideration for others. Children are welcome to play in the nursery, or to have quiet toys out in the main area to play with next to parents. We ask that any snacks be kept within reach of the parents in order to keep all of our children with food allergies safer! And speaking of illness, our illness policy is posted in several months of our newsletter as well as on our message forums. We ask that you do not hit, spank, or verbally abuse your children during our events.
- If you find that this group can help to support you on your parenting journey, please consider joining. Please see Mary Toel for information and amounts, as memberships are prorated throughout the year, depending on when you join.
- We have a library in the room on the way out of the side door. You may visit the library before, during, or after the meeting. Please see Sharon if you have any questions. Members and contributing donors may check out books.
- Our message forums (www.apipeoria.org) are a great way to supplement the in-person support that you receive at our functions. We ask that you do not gossip about participants and their situations as privacy is of utmost importance. When using others' situations to discuss in your family, please remove names and specific details.
- We sponsor BabyBodyBirth childbirth classes, taught by our very own Hilary Shirven. Please see Hilary for more information and check our website for upcoming class dates.

Today's Announcements:

- As we are sharing information and discussing topics during the meeting time, we ask that you keep personal conversations quiet or feel free to move to the lobby. We also ask that all business (fundraiser, flea market, etc.) be taken care of before and after the meeting.
- If you have time at the end of the meeting, would you please consider helping us clean up the space? We need to put all the toys back, put the chairs and tables the away, and vacuum the floor. Your help would be appreciated. Thanks!
- Fundraiser: We have an ongoing fundraiser through Timbercreek, a company that will deliver organic foods directly to your door. Please see our forums for more details. We also have a monthly WAHM fundraiser at our meetings. This month Gina Beckwith will be offering products from Thirty-one. Fifteen percent of her profit will be going directly to the group!
- Upcoming events (please see our calendar on Meetup.com for more details and to RSVP):
 - Monday, June 16th, Playdate at Columbia Park
 - Wednesday June 18th, Playdate at Chuck E. Cheese
 - Friday, Sign Language Lesson/Playdate/Newsletter Folding at UU Church
 - Monday June 23rd, Holistic Meeting at Fellowship Bible Church
 - Monday June 23rd, Playdate at Harry LaHood Park (Washington)
 - Tuesday June 24th, Playdate at Splashdown
 - Wednesday June 25th, Alvin and the Chipmunks Movie at Rave Theater
 - Friday June 27th, Playdate at Fondulac Farm Park
 - Saturday June 28th, SarahJeanne's Birthday Bash (Canton)
- Please make sure to stop by the welcome table and make sure your name is checked on the attendance sheet, as this record is kept for our records and for the attendance policy on the message forums. If you are new to our meetings, please see Kyle Cain for a welcome folder, sign in sheet, and any questions you might have about our group.



BabyWearing 101

Why do we advocate babywearing?

One of Attachment Parenting International's Eight Principles is to "use nurturing touch." For many families, this means practicing babywearing. As you will see in our fashion show and reading this handout, there are many options and styles for a variety of tastes, comfort and budget. There are many benefits to wearing your baby. Below is a sample from Dr. Sears's website. Please visit the website listed for more in depth information. As always, practice safety when wearing your baby.

<http://www.askdrsears.com/html/5/T051100.asp>

1. Sling babies cry less.
2. Sling babies learn more.
3. Sling babies are more organized.
4. Sling babies get "humanized" earlier.
5. Sling babies are smarter.

Safe Babywearing

- While you are getting used to wearing your baby, support him with your hands. As you go through the learning phase of moving and reacting, the urge to support your baby with your hands is instinctive. After you become a baby wearing veteran, you can safely carry your baby in the sling with one or both hands free.
- Wear baby cautiously in the kitchen. Do not wear baby while cooking or working with sharp or hot objects.
- Do not drink hot beverages when wearing baby, although wearing baby while eating is safe.
- When wearing your baby and stooping over, bend at the knees, not at the waist, and hold baby in the sling with one hand.
- Toddlers, if worn are at your reaching level, can grab dangerous or breakable objects off shelves. Keep an arm's distance away from potential hazards.
- When going through doorways or around corners, be careful that baby's body does not stick out past your arm and strike the wall or doorjamb.
- Do not ride a bicycle or other moving vehicle while wearing your baby. Baby carriers are not substitutes for an approved car seat.

Babywearing in emergency situations

The MamaToto Project (www.wearyourbaby.com) shows how you can carry a child using common household items such as a towel, pair of sweatpants, or a button down shirt.

What are my baby wearing options?

Each of these types of carriers and many of the different brands available can be viewed, researched and reviewed on www.TheBabyWearer.com. There are also articles that help you decide which is right for you.

The information listed here is a compilation from several sources. When possible, the links for more info on each carrier send you directly to the manufacturer's website. Costs are approximate for new carriers.



Ease of use rating

Each carrier has an **Ease of Use** rating which is an indication of the learning curve to use the carrier or how complicated it is to use and adjust. This is determined by several reviews and sources, both on line and in real life.

Four ☺☺☺☺ indicates easiest to learn to use/fewest adjustments to make. One ☺ indicates a higher learning curve. Even carriers with a higher learning curve can become second nature with practice. Often the carrier with a higher learning curve is the most versatile.

Pouches

Ease of use: ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

A Pouch carrier is essentially a long "ring" of fabric, folded in half lengthwise to create a pocket for the baby. It is worn over one shoulder like a ring sling and can be used for the same carries. They are typically made of woven or slightly stretchy fabrics. Some have a certain amount of adjustability allowing two people of different sizes to use the pouch; this is usually achieved by zippers or rows of snaps.

Hot sling – (www.hotslings.com) \$48 – 64

New Native baby carrier (www.newnativebaby.com) \$44 – \$160

Peanut Shell (www.goo-ga.com) \$48-\$65

Kangaroo Korner Adjustable Pouch (www.kangarookorner.com) \$62

- Carries infant to toddler. Once again, limitation on weight is based on the comfort of the wearer, not limitation on the fabric.
- Many sizes for a precise fit (but, can be tricky to size properly)
- Front, hip and back carry positions
- Non-adjustable pouches have no rings, buckles, snaps or fasteners. Adjustable pouches have minimal fasteners (usually snaps or a zipper)
- Machine washable
- Sometimes need to secure baby with your hand (when bending, for example)
- Very compact
- Wide selection of beautiful fabric patterns
- Regarding non-adjustable pouch, some wearers find they need 2 different sizes for different stages of development (for example, a 5 month old that likes to be tucked up inside the pouch needs more room than a baby using the hip carry.)
- Mom and dad probably won't be able to wear the same carrier.
- Weight not distributed over both shoulders, which can cause back strain carrying heavy children or carrying for long periods of time.
- Considered the easiest sling to use, excellent for beginners, once sized properly.

Ring Slings

Ease of use: ☺ ☺ ☺

A Padded ring sling is a shaped piece of fabric (something like a pea-pod shape), narrower than an Unpadded Sling. The shoulder end has rings and the opposite end is the "tail". To be considered a padded sling, either the shoulder or the sides of the fabric (rails) are padded. Padding varies in amount from "lightly padded" to "heavily padded." Padded slings usually come in different sizes.

An unpadded ring sling is a rectangular piece of fabric around 2 ½ yds + long and 30" to 45" wide, gathered or joined onto 2 rings at one end. Usually has an open tail. They are sometimes offered in various sizes but usually one-size-fits-all.

Ellaroo Sling (www.ellaroo.com)

Over The Shoulder Baby Holder (www.babyholder.com) \$45

Kangaroo Korner Sling (www.kangarookorner.com) \$46 – \$160

Maya Wrap Sling (www.mayawrap.com) \$56

The benefits of ring slings are similar, whether they are padded or unpadded. Unpadded slings are usually more adjustable, since there is no padding to interfere with adjustments. Padded slings are sometimes more comfortable to



wear in certain situations since the padding helps with the weight of the baby. Padded slings are bulkier than unpadded, and can be hotter in the summer (but warmer in the winter).

- Carries infant to toddler (up to approx. 35 lbs – limitation based on the wearer, not usually the sling)
- Padded slings are usually sized S, M, L or XL, and parents with a big size difference will probably not be able to wear the same sling
- Unpadded slings are more adaptable to different size parents.
- Front and hip carries, and short term back carry
- Does distribute weight some through the back, but only on one shoulder. This limits the comfort carrying a child for a long period of time, or carrying an older/heavier child
- Sometimes a parent feels they need to secure the child with their hand in some carrying positions
- Some sling tails have pockets, or tails can be used as weather protection
- Very low learning curve. Only a pouch is easier to use for most parents
- Beautiful wide variety of fabric choices, including 'choose your own fabric' from many different makers, especially WAHM made slings!

Wrap-style carriers

Ease of use: ☺

A Wrap carrier is simply a long piece of fabric (3.5-6yds by 18"-36" wide) that is wrapped many times around the wearer's body (usually over both shoulders), creating a pocket for a baby to sit. For some carries the fabric is doubled lengthwise before being wrapped. It can be used for the same carries as a sling, as well as the sumo carry. There is usually more than one way to wrap the carrier to achieve a particular carry.

There are many different brands and kinds of wrap style carriers, or you can make your own. The Wrap can be intimidating, but practice, practice, practice makes perfect when wearing your baby in a wrap. Most parents get comfortable with a couple of different ties, perhaps a front carry and a back carry. It takes only a couple of tries to figure out what works for you. This is THE most versatile babywearing item!!

EllaRoo Wrap (www.ellaroo.com) \$54 - 79
Moby Wrap (www.mobywrap.com) \$40 - 70
DIDYMOS (www.didymos.com) \$85 – 195
Ultimate Baby Wrap (www.babiesrus.com) \$40

- Carries infant to toddler (to approx 35 to 45 lbs – generally, weight max is based on comfort of the wearer, not restrictions on the wrap itself)
- One wrap can fit both parents
- Most versatile positions: several different ways to carry on front, back or hip.
- Different sizes can be used for different positions (www.didymos.com has good sizing information)
- Keeps wearer's body in alignment
- Distributes weight across entire back and shoulders (the wider the fabric is spread, the better the weight distribution)
- No rings, buckles, straps or other fasteners
- Truly hands free
- Machine washable
- Nursing friendly
- Higher learning curve than other carriers
- Fabric can be cumbersome to handle at times
- Wide selection of beautiful fabric patterns
- Easy to make yourself (little or no sew)



Hip Carriers

Ease of use: ☺ ☺ ☺

A single shouldered carrier specifically designed for the hip carry, though some can also be used on the wearer's front or back. Some carriers have buckles, some tie.

Ellaroo Mei Hip (www.ellaroo.com) \$56 – \$60

Playtex Hip Hammock (www.playtexbaby.com) \$40

- For use only after baby has good head control (approx 5 months to 35 lbs)
- Most are easy on/easy off, making it convenient for several small errands, or for a child that wants up then down, then up then down.
- Sizing - usually 1 size fits most
- Most only do the hip carry
- Weight is not distributed evenly throughout the shoulders and back, since this is only over the shoulder, and around the waist on some brands.
- Relatively easy to use when straps are adjusted properly
- Cloth ones are usually machine wash. Canvas or other materials may be machine washable. Some are spot clean only.

Traditional Asian Baby Carriers (Also known as ABCs)

Asian [style] Baby Carriers are carriers with a square or rectangular body and straps for the shoulders and waist. This type of carrier has been used for centuries in many Asian cultures. Today it is available in the traditional, unstructured style and with some modern variations, such as padded shoulder and waist straps, buckles and clips. They can be customized by adjusting the size and shape of the body & the length and/or width or padding of the straps. Mei Tais, Podegis and Onbuhimos are all examples of ABCs with different strap configurations.

Mei Tai

Ease of use: ☺ ☺ ☺

A Mei Tai is a type of Asian Baby Carrier with a rectangular body and straps at the top for shoulder straps and the bottom for waist straps. Baby can be worn on front or back.

Ellaroo Mei Tai (www.ellaroo.com) \$70 - 150

Baby Hawk (www.babyhawk.com) \$80 - 105

FreeHand Mei Tai (www.togetherbe.com) \$50 – 125

KozyKarrier (kozycarrier.homestead.com) \$79 - \$85

Sachi (www.sachicarriers.com) \$75 - \$85

- Carries infant (with some head control to preschooler)
- Weight distributed over both shoulders - good for heavier babies/toddlers
- Easy to use
- One size fits most – (some may need XL straps)
- Great for back carries. Many can be used for front carries as well.
- Nursing friendly w/ front carries
- Most are machine washable
- Compact
- Not easy-on, easy-off. Carrier must be untied to let child up and down.
- Beautiful fabric selections, especially the Chinese embroidered creations!!



Soft-Structured Carriers

Ease of use: 😊 😊

Ergo Baby carrier (www.ergobabycarrier.com) \$92 + 25 for infant insert
beco baby carrier (www.becobabycarrier.com) \$140
AngelPack LX carriers (www.angelpack.com) \$118

- Carries infant (with infant insert) to over 40 lbs (see product FAQs for more info)
- Fits parents from 5' to 6'4"-Highly adjustable for size with waist, shoulder & chest straps/buckles
- Front, back or hip carry
- Keeps wearer's body in alignment
- Distributes weight using both shoulder straps and supportive waist belt
- Truly hands-free... don't need to use a hand to support baby while carrying
- Has additional accessories, such as a pouch or backpack that attach easily onto the carrier

Commonly Available Carriers

Ease of use: 😊 😊

Baby Bjorn (www.babybjorn.com) \$50 – 100
Evenflo Snuggli (www.evenflo.com) \$15 - \$30

- Carries infants 8 to 25 lbs
- Adjustable to fit most wearers
- Front carry only (baby forward facing or tummy to tummy)
- Straps over both shoulders and lumbar support around waist
- Reviews on www.thebabywearer.com say chunkier babies can't be carried as long as thinner babies
- Baby's legs dangle in this carrier in both positions.
- Not nursing friendly

Do It Yourself:

Want to make your own baby carrier? There are a variety of sources online for those interested. Some of the most useful & inclusive are:

www.sleepingbaby.net
www.wearyourbaby.com
www.thebabywearer.com