



Virtual Options for Childbirth Classes

Babies are continuing to be born despite the coronavirus, and it looks like we may not be able to meet in groups for quite a while. Here is a collection of childbirth classes that are available virtually.

Almost all of these resources offer *breastfeeding classes* as well. The list includes local educators whom we know well and recommend. Also included are classes recommended by some of you who have already tried them and have let me know how they went.

The list represents a variety in presentations, lengths, content, and cost. It looks like a few many be reimbursable by some insurance companies – but you should check with your insurance provider for specifics. I know there are other options out there and would love to hear about any you really like!

Local Childbirth Educators:

Emerge: Amy LePage is a local instructor with Emerge. She teaches a variety of movement- and breathing-based classes for labor and pregnancy preparation. Traditionally taught in-person, classes are now being held live and online at <https://emergeyoga.net/>, Montpelier, VT

LifeTree Birth Care: Mary Etna Haac is a local instructor with LifeTree Birth. She teaches evidence-based birth classes based on best evidence, informed decision-making principles, and support skills to help you have the type of birth you want. These classes were originally designed in a hybrid in-person/online format. Currently they are offered completely online with video portions, in-person chats, and group Zoom sessions at: <http://www.lifetreebirth.com/evidence-based-birth-childbirth-class.html>

Other Online-based Programs:

Mama Natural: This class was originally designed as an online class and is self-paced. It is very pro-natural birth and strongly advocates for avoiding any unnecessary interventions. Classes emphasize relaxation, breathing and active support from partners. Online and self-paced. <https://www.mamanatural.com/>

Tinyhood: This website contains a collection of classes about pregnancy and parenting, including online birth preparation classes. The curriculum is fairly middle of the road but has a good outline of what birth is like and a basic toolbox for labor coping. Tinyhood also offers a free breastfeeding class. Online and self-paced. <https://www.tinyhood.com/>

Lamaze: This is not your mother's Lamaze. The organization revamped several years ago and offers an evidence-based program that helps you prepare for any kind of birth. Consistent with evidence, educators discuss pain-coping and relaxation. They also review information you need to help make informed decisions about induction, vaginal birth after cesarean (VBAC), and labor interventions. This program supports unmedicated labor and birth but makes no expectation for you to do that if you choose otherwise. Several different classes are offered, including one free class. You can preview a part of every classes for free. Online and self-paced. <https://www.lamaze.org/Lamaze-classes-online>

Kopa Birth: 12-hours of video-format classes. These are designed to be interactive, with time in the videos to hit pause and practice what the teacher is presenting. They are pro-natural birth and geared toward couples planning a hospital birth in a setting that may not support unmedicated birth as well as Gifford does. Some of the lessons my reflect how to negotiate certain care practices – such as skin-to-skin, delayed cord clamping, intermittent monitoring and no IVs – that are usual practice at Gifford. <https://www.kopabirth.com/>