

# Running errands with a baby? Ha!

By Carolyn Barnard | Photos courtesy of the Barnard family



This time last year, I was sitting down to write an article for this magazine about a lesson learned from my first year of marriage.

Having been a parent now for almost two months, I find it hard to believe that I thought I had a Starbucks addiction then! Now, one year and one baby later, it is literally impossible for me to understand people who can function without caffeine. How any mother can make it through a morning without it (after a night of multiple feedings followed by hours of lying awake listening to their baby to make sure they aren't asphyxiating and to their husband's loud, train-like snoring) is beyond me. More power to the non-addicted, but every mother for herself!

I am also beginning to understand the idea that "a baby changes everything." This is, admittedly, laughably simplistic but I feel strongly that no one ever revealed the paradoxical depth of this cliché to me. While there are obvious meanings, like the fact that you will be more obsessed and in love with your baby than you can imagine, there are other things you may not

have thought of that will inevitably change. So, this article is for those readers who are yet to be welcomed into the world of parenthood. Let me shed some light on the way this manifests itself practically, in everyday situations.

Just yesterday, I needed to run some errands, which used to be something I enjoyed very much. Getting out of the house, going to the store, meandering through Target, Starbucks in hand ... even at my most pregnant and water-retained, this was still something I enjoyed. (Yes, I drank Starbucks when I was pregnant!) It's a little bit of a different experience now. Here's what running an errand looks like when you have an infant: First, you need to feed your baby immediately before you leave your house to give yourself ample time at the store. Second, you will have a difficult time meandering through the store with a baby and a Starbucks in hand because you are going to be in a hurry and have your hands full.

The most difficult part of the shopping experience for me is the trip from the car into the store because the combined weight of Lilly and her car seat must be near 75 pounds. So, after slamming the car seat into the buggy while simultaneously trying to keep your baby asleep, holding a hot beverage and a diaper bag, you will be steering the buggy one-handed. (And someone will text or call you during this time, by the way. Good luck pushing with no hands). Steering a shopping cart with an infant car seat that you can barely see over and overflowing with merchandise while trying to casually jog through the store so you can avoid the screaming baby scenario inevitably brought on when you stop moving is anything but relaxing. By the end of my trip yesterday I was virtually shouting

“Forget the washcloths!” (which obviously needed some sort of price check since there was no tag on the stupid things) and sprinting to the car as Lilly was awakening. You can also kiss driving at a reasonable speed goodbye. Start thinking up your excuses for the kind officer now

because when that baby is hungry and screaming, you will drive like a lunatic to get home and feed her.

So, pregnant women, enjoy those leisurely trips to the store while you can because as soon as the baby comes, it's a much more exciting experience! **NCM**



Aaron and Carolyn Barnard with new daughter Lilly

