

## *A New Year...A New Mother*

Mothers need  
just as  
much attention as  
a newborn,  
because they too  
have just been born.

PSVa recently shared the image at left on social media and it went viral with over **30,000** views.

So it looks like we hit a nerve, or a sweet spot, or at least we got people's attention.

Becoming a mother is likely the most significant physical, emotional, and psychological change in a woman's life. One of the focuses during this time is on the baby, rather than the mother.

Dr. Alison Steube of the University of North Carolina said: "The baby is the candy; the mom is the wrapper. When the candy is out of the wrapper, the wrapper is cast aside."

Or as the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recently reported, the postpartum period is "**devoid of formal maternal support.**"

Then we posted the quote below, which was viewed over **30,000** times in 12 hours...

*"For the next two weeks you're going to feel like you're literally recovering from a car accident. But instead of nursing you back to health, we're sending you home to be the primary caregiver for someone you just met 5 seconds ago who is also recovering from a car accident. Here are some mesh panties and a squirt bottle. Good luck." -- said the hospital to a new mother.*

## *New mothers deserve better!*

### *Here are 3 ways to help and support new mothers*

#### 1. SHARE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS TRANSITION

Anthropologists use the term "matrescence" to describe the process of becoming a mother. Akin to adolescence, matrescence is a period marked by drastic changes in hormones, body changes, and relationships. Dr. Alexandra Sachs is a psychiatrist specializing in reproductive mental health who has been writing ([article](#) in *The New York Times*) and speaking (check out her [Ted Talk](#)) about matrescence to raise awareness



about the many physical and emotional changes women experience as they become mothers. Dr. Sacks, along with Dr. Catherine Birndorf, will soon release a book entitled *What No One Tells You: A Guide To Your Emotions From Pregnancy To Motherhood*.



## 2. ENCOURAGE SELF CARE

New mothers need to recover from the emotional and physical aspects of pregnancy, labor, and delivery. Being pregnant, delivering a baby, caring for a newborn, maintaining home and family can be **HARD!** New mothers need 5-6 hours of uninterrupted sleep, adequate nutrition, light exercise, and 15 minutes of alone time each day. A new mother can't care for a demanding newborn if she doesn't first care for herself. Self-care for new mothers is not a **NECESSITY**. [Read more](#) tips for self-care for new mothers.

## 3. HELP MOMS GET CONNECTED

Here's an interesting [blog post](#) that reiterates the need for social support for new mothers. However, lots of young mothers do not live near their own mothers, aunts, cousins, or sisters -- women who traditionally helped a new mother gain her footing. And many women work until just before baby is born, then find themselves at home without a support network. So who can help in this transition?



- *Postpartum doulas* are trained professionals who provide physical, emotional, and informational support to women in the first few weeks after having a baby. This can include caring for baby, doing light housework, watching older children, preparing meals, doing laundry, and educating and supporting the new mother.
- *Lactation consultants* can provide support to women who are breastfeeding through one-on-one appointments or support groups.
- *New mothers' groups* can be found online as well as through hospitals, churches, and community centers. PSVa has a starting list of mothers' groups [HERE](#).



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Thank you to everyone who donated to PSVa during our year campaign. Your donations helped PSVa provide hope and women and families in 2018, and to expand our reach via

- a "home office" with an Operations Director, Social Media C bookkeeper, and grantwriter
- 13,000 unique visitors to our website
- 51 volunteers leading 23 support groups
- 611 generous donors
- 4 local paid coordinators

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