

Introduction

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It's been over 20 years since I've been faced with the scary task of caring for a baby. While some things are the same, other things are so different. You who are dealing with a little one now are a new generation. You've had many opportunities for your own growth. You've probably made choices you were proud of and choices you wished you hadn't made. No difference in generations there.

Today's world, however, is a lot more complex than it was years ago. When I was a new parent, I had Dr. Spock's *Baby and Child Care* book along with the clinic nurse's phone number to help me through the uncertain times of baby-learning and, "What to do? What to DO?" Today, many more books beckon from the parenting shelves for you to buy them, read them, and use the advice therein. Now, there's cyberspace, with parenting websites and 'new mother' blogs. In fact, you have so many choices thrown at you, and advice from so many sources, that it is a wonder that you have any time to even consider doing anything extra—such as Baby's Time Capsule.

We didn't have computers 25 years ago like you do now. In 1985, during my baby's first year, we had our first computer. It was a Leading Edge® XT (an IBM 'clone' by Mitsubishi) that had to use 2 big 5.25" drives to do anything. It cost \$3,000, including the \$500 9-pin Epson® printer. We used it for word processing, mostly, and a few games like Ms Pacman®. We had no Internet at that time.

What a change even five years made! By 1990, computers could do so much more in a shorter period of time. Using memory of my own child's experience, this was the year that you would have been in elementary school. Computers were there in a Learning Lab. Like him, your class was probably allowed a certain period each day to experience them. The computers may have seemed to us parents like self-paced (and over-priced) workbooks, yet you were becoming comfortable with the technology. People were aware of the Internet.

By 1995, there was probably at least one computer in your classroom. You picked up on the Internet before we knew how to keep the bad

guys away properly. Now, some ten years later, you have to deal with a daily deluge of ‘spam’ email as well as instant messages. You must be ever-vigilant about computer viruses, worms, trojan horses, and spyware as well as adware. You probably don’t realize it, but our generation is constantly amazed by how you take this technology in stride.

Here, I’m assuming that you’re between the ages of 20 and 25 (born between 1980 and 1985). You might be older than that, but it hardly matters in this discussion. You, too, have grown up with this technology and are comfortable with it. You, too, were playing Nintendo® in the 1980’s, then Super-Nintendo®, then Playstation® and Gameboy® at the turn of the century. We were shaking our heads at your involvement with such things. Why weren’t you outside playing? And yet, somehow you were confronting something we’d not been able to deal with fully. In fact, there are millions of people in the world today who remain completely unable to cope with its increasing technology. Weekly, for instance, my mother-in-law says, “I’m just not ready for this world!”

Of course, her grandmother probably said something similar when, in the 1900’s, the family bought electricity, a car, and a telephone—within just a few years of each other. For good or bad, times do change, and they sometimes change too fast for people to adapt to them. You and your baby are the ones who will see this age of electrical communication become more and more instantaneous. Your baby may also some day be able to actually say and mean, “Beam me up” as they did in Gene Roddenberry’s Star Trek®. On that day, I may be one of those old folks of the future (as may be your parents) who say, “I’m just not ready for this world.”

Today’s books on baby care and parenting list checklists include hundreds of things for new parents to think about, do, and/or buy during baby’s first year. A time capsule is not usually listed. Who wants one more thing to do? Well, you might want to ‘stop the world’ a few times during this first year of Baby’s growth. To ponder. To remember awhile, and go on. To take the Past with us once again and make it a part of our Now, and therefore part of our Future. Preparing a Baby Treasures Time Capsule is one way to do this.