

MIDTOWN RALEIGH NEWS

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**5 MINUTES
WITH...PAM
DIAMOND**

She helps tired new parents

Expectant parents have many options for prenatal activities, ranging from labor coaching to yoga. But Pamela Diamond aims to offer support when parents face the changes associated with those early months of living with a newborn.



**SARAH
RUBENOFF**

Diamond, a postpartum doula, sleep coach and owner of First Daze & Nightzzz, tries to help parents in the Triangle make that transition as calm and special as possible.

"My job is to empower new parents by providing them with the skills they need to take care of and bond with their babies," Diamond said.

After Diamond had her first child, Zach, in 1994, she used a postpartum doula – someone who provides support to women during and after childbirth – and was amazed at the results.

"She was like an angel dropped into my life," Diamond said. "I was so vulnerable and ill prepared for caring for a newborn and she gave me wonderful guidance and support and calmed me right down."

After the experience, Diamond was eager to get involved in the profession.

After six years of volunteering at La Leche League, an organization that helps mothers with breastfeeding questions and concerns, Diamond took

Midtown Raleigh News
Sunday March 20, 2011

HELP

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1M

a class through the Childbirth and Postpartum Professionals Association and became certified as a postpartum doula and started her business in 2002.

A postpartum doula and sleep coach's duties change based on the client's needs, Diamond said. These duties can range from lots of hands-on help and guidance with things such as breastfeeding, or simply giving parents time to sleep, eat or shower.

"I pride myself in being an excellent resource for my clients," Diamond said.

"Pam's services were crucial to our family," said client and friend Leslie Fox, who utilized Diamond's services with her new twins. "These were my first babies, so I had no clue what I was doing. And having twins is exhausting, especially when they are newborns. ... Pam was extremely encouraging and certainly boosted by confidence about mothering."

Providing support after birth is a service that can significantly diminish the risk of postpartum depression, Diamond said. As families disperse and mothers and sisters live farther and farther away, Diamond's services and help become essential.

A doula helps fill the role that nearby extended family members have in the past, Diamond said.

"When Pam sits down with

you at your first meeting, you feel that she is taking all the information about the first years of life ... and creating a plan that is customized just for you," said client Chana Cotler.

Diamond said working as a postpartum doula is, above all, an honor.

"I – a virtual stranger – get to be with these parents and babies in a truly intimate way," Diamond said. "They are entrusting me with their babies and bodies and homes like I am part of the family."

Clients are comforted by Diamond's concern for their families, Fox said.

"Pam is a great doula because she loves mothers and babies. It is clear that she wants what is best for the whole family, and she nurtures every family that she works with," Fox said.

Though a doula must have the ability to understand and calm infants, Diamond said she is much more than someone who is "good with babies."

"I'm not a glorified babysitter or a grandmother-type who loves babies," she said. "I'm a professional, a mother and a baby specialist."

For more information on Diamond's business and services, see firstdaze.com.

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Pam Diamond, a postpartum doula and sleep coach, keeps a client's 2-month-old twins.

COURTESY OF PAMELA DIAMOND

SEE **HELP**, PAGE 3M