

# COMMUNITY LIFE

THURSDAY, JULY 6, 1995

## Baby brings diapers, bottles, depression

Having a baby doesn't always bring the joy and excitement that people expect. A Farmington mother of five children founded a local group to help mothers with postpartum depression.

By BARBARA WILSON  
SPECIAL WRITER

It's supposed to be the most wonderful time in your life. After nine months of anticipation, you're bringing home your beautiful new baby and you are filled with wonder and excitement for what the future might hold.

These lovely visions are dashed in many cases when the new mother is left feeling dazed, confused and depressed. Farmington resident Kathie O'Donahue used to bid her husband goodbye as he went off to work shortly after their baby was born. Then she would close the blinds, sit in a chair rocking her baby and crying - almost all day long.

"After my first delivery I didn't really understand what was going on and why I felt the way I did," O'Donahue said. "After my fourth child, I had a really bad experience and really began studying it."

The mother of five children - ages 1 through 9 - O'Donahue sought help from a national group called DAD - Depression After Delivery. She then came to understand that postpartum depression was the label she had been looking for to apply to the way she felt.

Postpartum depression strikes thousands of women, although many never learn what the problem is and never seek help.

Postpartum depression is a hor-



Happy times: Kathie O'Donahue plays ball with her five children, Brian Boguslawski, 8; Colin Boguslawski, 5; Shae Boguslawski, 1; Matt Boguslawski, 4; and Chris Boguslawski, 9.

monal-biological disorder that occurs shortly after delivery. The symptoms can show up right away or up to four months later and can continue until your baby's first birthday.

Some women suffer minor cases while others reach levels of psychosis.

"You always hear the tragic stories of women committing suicide or even infanticide as a result, but those cases are very few compared to the number of women who suffer

more mild cases of postpartum depression," O'Donahue said. Suffering from PPD after one delivery is almost always an indicator that subsequent pregnancies will also end with postpartum depression.

Stephanie, another sufferer who asked that her last name be withheld, likes a description presented to her by a doctor of what happens to women suffering from PPD. Our brain, she explains, has a series of file folders where we place our vari-

ous emotions and feelings and these help us sort out things that happen to us. For those suffering from PPD, those file folders are scattered about and there is nowhere to place those feelings in order to deal with them.

"I couldn't read or write. I lost my sense of smell and taste," Stephanie said. "I had everything going for me a beautiful, healthy baby and a husband who loved me, but I just couldn't function. Luckily I never

See MOMS, 12A



PETER GABEL

## Massage rubs away stress

Here are the Top 10 reasons you need a massage:

10. You need a crowbar to separate your shoulders from your ears.
  9. The nervous twitch in your eye is frightening your children.
  8. Your back is so tight your neck has disappeared.
  7. Elevator music is too stimulating.
  6. Your sleep is so restless your spouse demands hazardous duty pay.
  5. Your spouse keeps suggesting that you take a long vacation.
  4. You're thinking of looking into a body transplant.
  3. You can't seem to get through the day without your calm, soothing half hour of Barney & Friends.
  2. Your neck is so stiff you have to turn your whole body to check your car's mirrors.
  1. Gump happens.
- The list is not really exaggerated. Massage isn't just for pampered rich men and women at day spas. A good massage augments one's good health, especially because of the stress reduction.
- What are the medical reasons you may need a massage? It generates a healthy lifestyle; increases mental alertness; improves circulation; relieves pain/aching muscles; reduces toxin lev-

See MASSAGE, 12A

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