

All parents want to do what's best for their child.

But sometimes loving parents come to regret a decision they may have made for their child, when they learn things they didn't have a chance to consider before.

Circumcision can be one such regret.

We live in a culture that puts a lot of pressure on parents to circumcise, out of cultural habit and myths. Unfortunately, many parents make the decision to circumcise a son without adequate information from their healthcare providers. You may not really have understood that circumcision is not only unnecessary but is actually damaging, that it can affect breastfeeding and his future sex life, or that it can lead to numerous complications that were never mentioned.

Finding out some of these things, after the fact, can be a very painful thing for a loving parent to have to experience. You may understandably go through feelings of sorrow, regret, guilt, shame, defensiveness, anger, or depression.

If you feel this way, you are not alone!

What's done cannot be undone, but there are things you can do to heal and to help your son as he grows up.

- Try to **forgive yourself** and let go of the guilt. You did the best you could – with the best of intentions – with the information and support you had at the time. So remember to be kind to yourself! Seek therapeutic help as needed.
- **Seek support** from other regret parents (see Facebook groups listed in this pamphlet).
- **Apologize** to your son, in an age-appropriate way, when the time seems right. This can help you both, even if he's still a baby. If he comes to you with questions or concerns, listen to him and validate his feelings.
- **Be honest.** Explain why you did it. Admit your regret.

- **Leave future sons intact.** Many families with older circumcised boys have chosen to leave other sons intact, with no issues whatsoever. Provide age-appropriate explanations about differences.
- **Educate your children** so they know not to circumcise their future sons.
- **Tell your story!** Your experience is a powerful learning opportunity for others.
- **Educate yourself, then educate others.** Saving other boys and parents from the regret and harm you and your son are experiencing can be very healing.
- Provide information on **foreskin restoration** when your son is of an age to make his own decisions.

*"I did then what I knew how to do.
Now that I know better, I do better."*
– Maya Angelou



RESOURCES FOR REGRET PARENTS

Helpful blogs, articles, and testimonials on circumcision regret

www.ourmuddyboots.com

www.drmomma.org

Closed Facebook support groups – submit request to join:

- Parents regretting circumcision
- 2nd son – 2nd chance: Parents who say NEVER AGAIN to circumcision
- Keeping future sons intact
- Your Whole Baby: Regret, support & moving forward

Public Facebook page:

- Keeping future sons intact

For more support and information, search the Web and YouTube under “circumcision regret.”

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CIRCUMCISION AND THE FORESKIN

www.circinfo.org

www.drmomma.org

www.circumcision.org

www.yourwholebaby.org

www.thewholenetwork.org

For information on foreskin restoration:

www.norm.org/whyrestore.html

www.restoringforeskin.org/beginners-guide-foreskin-restoration

This pamphlet has been prepared by:

Colorado Advocates for Body Integrity
and Children’s Rights

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FOR PARENTS WHO REGRET CIRCUMCISING A SON



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