

Squeaking shoes in vibrant colors

Moms need all the help they can get keeping track of a curious toddler. Now it's easy to turn sneaky feet into squeaky feet with new Wee Squeak shoes for little boys and girls.

Wee Squeak shoes feature a tiny "squeaker" in the sole that announces every step a child makes.

Company founders Pam and Doug Wike discovered the shoes in China while they were there adopting their two daughters.

"They brought back 100 pairs, held a trunk show and the moms in the neighborhood went nuts for them," said partner Kendra Estrada. Soon the Arlington, Texas-based company was up and running.

Estrada said the shoes are popular because they come in hard-to-find colors like hot pink and red. They can also help children learn to walk properly.

"They were designed as training shoes and the squeaker only works when a child walks heel to toe, not up on their toes like some children do," she said.

There's also the added comfort of being able to hear your child move through the house by keeping track of the tiny squeaks coming from his or her shoes. The squeaker can be removed at any time by an adult.

For girls there are Mary Janes with tiny butterflies or flowers in hot pink, red, green, white, brown and black, and sandals in red, white, pink, hot pink and green. For boys there are shoes and sandals in brown and black. Sizes range from 2 to 8 and all are available for under \$30.

For more information visit www.weesqueak.net.



Wee Squeak shoes come in hard-to-find colors and feature a "squeaker" that helps parents track a child as she moves through the house or around the yard.

Feeling good about a plus-size body

Three years ago when Brette Sember sat down to write what would eventually become her first book, "Your Plus-Size Pregnancy: The Ultimate Guide for the Full-Figured Expectant Mom" (Barricade Books, \$16.95), she had no problem creating an outline and choosing topics for chapters.

"This is the book I wanted when I was pregnant and realized I was not going to be one of those little women with a basketball bump," the mother of two said recently from her home outside of Buffalo, N.Y.

Aimed at women who are larger than a size 12, the book and its companion Web site soon gained a loyal following.

"A lot of women out there have been waiting for someone to tell their story because there's not a lot of good sources of information out there for them," she said. "In many pregnancy books there's maybe a paragraph or two,

and they always talk about 'high risk factors' without really explaining what that means. The truth is some risk factors are slightly elevated for plus-size women, but if you take good care of yourself you will stay healthy and you'll have a perfectly healthy baby."

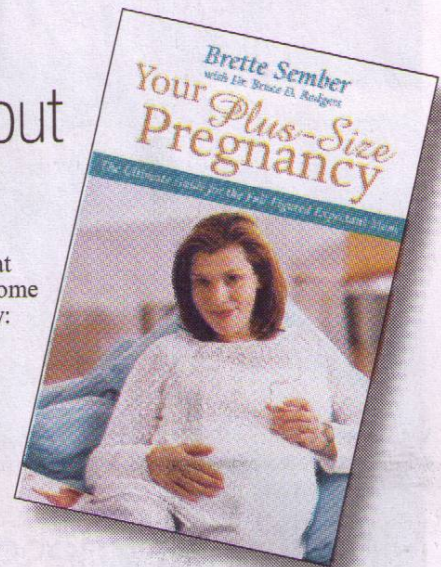
Sember said many plus-size women struggle throughout their pregnancies because they feel conflicted about weight gain.

"They think, 'I'm so fat,' and they're afraid to gain weight, but when you're pregnant weight gain is normal and you can't help it," said Sember, who added she sometimes dreaded her doctor's appointments because she didn't want to know how much weight she'd gained. "I don't feel like I totally enjoyed my pregnancies so that's my mission — to encourage other women to feel good about themselves and embrace their bodies and really enjoy being pregnant."

The book and the Web site include detailed medical information and statistics as well as tips for staying positive, birth stories, fertility issues and even where to shop for stylish plus-size maternity wear.

The book was co-written with Dr. Bruce E. Rodgers and is endorsed by the State University of New York Buffalo School of Medical and Biomedical Sciences. It is available at www.amazon.com and local book stores.

For more information visit www.yourplussizepregnancy.com.



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Top baby name predictions for 2006

Girls

1. Madison
2. Ava
3. Abigail
4. Emma
5. Cadence
6. Riley
7. Chloe
8. Bailey
9. Isabella
10. Olivia

Boys

1. Aiden
2. Caden
3. Caleb
4. Ethan
5. Brayden
6. Hayden
7. Dylan
8. Jaden
9. Logan
10. Noah

SOURCE: WWW.BABYNAMES.COM