

- Lifestyle
- Television
- Horoscopes
- Weather
- Puzzles



NAPPY family
... Rebekka and Lote Tuqiri with son Samson.
Picture: Jamie Hanson

Lote passes on his skills

A free Government DVD will demystify the challenge of providing quality care for new babies. **Graham Readfearn** reports

STANDING at 191cm tall and weighing in at more than 100kg, you would struggle to peg Queensland and rugby union star Lote Tuqiri as a nappy-changing guru.

But his wife Rebekka says Tuqiri is "fabulous at changing nappies" and "not fumbly at all" when it's time to refresh two-year-old Samson.

Celebrities are given such an elevated status by some in society that the thought of Lote Tuqiri wiping a baby's bum or Russell Crowe trying to fit a car seat is almost impossible to picture.

But, as 28-year-old Rebekka Tuqiri reveals, even celebrities "get poo on their fingers when they change a nappy".

The Tuqiris are one of a glut of famous families who join ordinary parents on a new

government-backed DVD which aims to be the definitive instructional guide to caring for babies and children.

Australia is set to be the first country in the world to give a free DVD to parents of first-born children. *Raising Children* will be a central feature of the Federal Government's New Parent Kit, which is due for roll-out later this year.

"We were right in the thick of it when we were asked to take part," says Rebekka Tuqiri, a psychologist.

"We do have a lot of support in terms of family and nieces and nephews, but even with that, having a baby in the family is a real struggle."

She says that having her husband involved in the DVD showed people how even an alpha-type male can — and should — take a hands-on role in bringing up his children.

She remembers the stresses around feeding time, as Tuqiri would chase Samson around the living room trying to get him to eat a piece of sausage.

But the coming six weeks will be a testing time for the Wallabies winger, who is in France for Australia's tilt at the Rugby World Cup.

"Lote will certainly miss Samson," Rebekka says. "He is the sort of man who can shut off a little bit to focus on what he is doing but we have never been apart for this long."

"At least Samson is old enough that Lote can talk on the phone to him, even if it's just one-word answers."

"But a lot of the Wallabies squad have children under the age of five so maybe when people think we are all talking about footy, we are actually talking about our children's latest milestones."

Among the other celebrity parents on the *Raising Children* DVD are actor Russell Crowe, world champion hurdler Jana Rawlinson, chief Bill Granger and TV host Johanna Griggs.

Continued P46

'Even celebrities get poo on their fingers when they change a nappy'
Rebekka Tuqiri

Guide to bridge the gap for new parents

BABIES come with a lot of things — such as sleepless nights, regurgitated mummy milk, broken crockery and nappies with smelly presents inside.

What they generally don't come with, however, are any detailed instructions on how to care for them properly.

But a new DVD, backed by the Federal Government, is trying to fill this gigantic knowledge gap by giving straightforward instructional advice and tips from experts.

The DVD is available now from the www.raisingchildren.tv website and from later this year will be part of the Government's New Parent Kit which will be distributed free to all families when their baby is born.

Entitled *Raising Children - A Guide to parenting from birth to 5*, the DVD has at its core four movies covering newborns, babies, children and the effects of having



children on parents. With each interactive movie, the viewer can watch related demonstrations, such as how to change a nappy, do some basic first aid or fit a car seat properly. Also included are stories from everyday parents, celebrity mums

and dads and tips from experts among some of the five hours of material provided.

Much of the content has been derived from the national parenting website, www.raisingchildren.net.au, which was put together by the Raising Children Network at a cost of \$4 million.

The Government put \$1 million into the DVD project alongside grants from the Caledonia Foundation, Peter and Divonne Holmes a Court, the Falcorwood Foundation, the J.S. Love Trust and others.

To obtain a free copy of the DVD, go to www.raisingchildren.tv

Lote passes on his babycare skills

» From P45

But it's comforting to learn that, at least when raising their children, Hollywood stars and champion sportspeople have the same sort of problems as everyone else.

Rebekka says babies are a great leveller, and recalls recently that they had to take Samson to hospital after he "got a wax crayon stuck up his nose".

"He did it at day care — it was right up there high in his nose," Rebekka says.

"While we were sitting in triage at the hospital, in walks Russell Crowe with one of his children, who had a fever. He looked stressed, we were stressed and you could hear Russell's child crying.

"You realise it doesn't really matter who you are, you will do anything for your kids. Lote might be able to run straight into an All Black at full speed, but if something happens to Samson it will put the fear of God into him."

The executive producer of the DVD is Divonne Holmes a Court, a mother of two sets of twins and the wife of successful businessman and co-owner of the South Sydney Rabbitohs, Peter

Holmes a Court. She spent five years devoted to the DVD and the associated national parenting website, www.raisingchildren.net.au.

She reveals she was "dreading" the thought of having to use celebrities, but felt it was one way they could attract people to watch it.

"We wanted to make it a universal experience and show that with children, it doesn't matter who you are."

She remembers bringing home her first twins, George and Robert, now eight, and being "allowed to leave hospital with no idea what I was doing".

"My father was a doctor and my mother was a nurse, but I really didn't know anything," Holmes a Court says.

"I realised what parents needed and wanted was a single source of information that can solve the anxiety about what to test, what to do and about what's important and what isn't important.

"The DVD is not the answer to everything, but it's enough to give people that sense of confidence that is really important."