

MyExpression™ Banking
 Show your passion on your checks, Check Card and credit card. Whatever your passion, we've got you covered.

[Learn More](#)

Bank of America
 Bank of Opportunity™

MEMBER FDIC

Anchorage Daily News

Subscribe | manage subscription | E-Edition



Bear sightings
 The bears are awake and showing up around town. Post your photos.
[submit photo](#) | [forum](#)

52° 57° | 49°
 forecast | statewide
 Daylight : 6:58 AM - 9:00 PM



adn.com Web search powered by YAHOO! SEARCH

find >>

Last Update: 4:16 AM

- News
- Sports
- Outdoors
- Features
- Money
- Entertainment
- Opinion
- Blogs
- Multimedia
- Classifieds

Home | Alaska Newsreader | Obituaries | Archives TV Listings | Movies | Music | Restaurants | Submit Event

Deals Jobs Homes Cars Rentals

Sell it today ▶ Place an ad | Find an ad

Palins' child diagnosed with Down syndrome (04/22/08)

FAMILY FEELS BLESSED: Back at work already, governor says she wasn't in labor in Texas.

By LISA DEMER
 ldemer@adn.com

Published: April 22nd, 2008 01:11 AM
 Last Modified: April 22nd, 2008 07:49 PM



enlarge
 JIM LAVRAKAS / Anchorage Daily News
 Gov. Sarah Palin with her husband, Todd, and her newborn son, Trig Paxson Van Palin, who is the couple's fifth child.

Gov. Sarah Palin was back at work Monday in Anchorage, holding a meeting on the proposed natural gas pipeline three days after giving birth to her fifth child.

She and her husband, Todd, showed their new baby, Trig Paxson Van Palin, to a few reporters and photographers and answered questions about his condition and the sooner-than-expected delivery.

Trig has Down syndrome, a genetic abnormality that affects a child's intellectual and physical development, the governor confirmed.

Related Links

Blog: Alaska politics

More Top stories >

- Palin out of sight, but on people's minds
- Palin seeks review of Monegan firing case
- Stevens' lawyers want to block phone evidence
- Energy rebates will be taxed, garnished
- Boaters survive flip, entrapment on the Talkeetna River
- Tuesday race series opens with a run through Kincaid Park

Story tools

- Comments
- E-mail a friend
- Print
- Digg this
- Seed Newsvine
- Send link via AIM
- MY YAHOO!
- Yahoo! Buzz
- Font size : A | A | A

"When we first heard, it was kind of confusing," Palin, 44, said. She called the revelation "very, very challenging" and said she initially felt sad.

But the family has worked through that. Palin said she and Todd feel blessed and chosen by God. With a big family including four older kids, grandparents, aunts and uncles, Palin said, they will have lots of support for what's ahead. In their eyes, she said, "he's absolutely perfect."

The oldest Palin kid, Track, is in the Army and texted his mother after learning the news with something to the effect of "This is just so cool -- I finally got my brother."

In a letter she e-mailed to relatives and close friends Friday after giving birth, Palin wrote, "Many people will express sympathy, but you don't want or need that, because Trig will be a joy. You will have to trust me on this." She wrote it in the voice of and signed it as "Trig's Creator, Your Heavenly Father."

"Children are the most precious and promising ingredient in this mixed-up world you live in down there on Earth. Trig is no different, except he has one extra chromosome," Palin wrote.

As for people who think a baby like Trig shouldn't even be born, look around, the governor wrote. Who is perfect or even normal?

A MOTHER'S AGE

The risk of Down syndrome increases with the mother's age. For mothers under 30, it happens in fewer than one in 1,000 births. For mothers Palin's age, it's one in 35, according to the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

Most children with Down syndrome are considered mildly or moderately disabled; there's a big

- Eliminate Credit Card Debt
- Building Strength and Muscle without Illegal Substances
- Is Your Computer Slower Than When You Bought It?

Top Jobs all 67 top jobs

- Management/Professional **Land Manager**
Cook Inlet Region, Inc
- Management/Professional **Healthcare Management**
Southcentral Foundation
- Management/Professional **Research Professional 3**
University of Alaska
- Education/Training **Teacher**
Kids Corps, Inc
- Construction/Skilled/Trades **Water Treatment Operator**
Pogo Mine

find

Advanced search >> | Place an employment ad

Homes By RE/MAX more

SPACIOUS 3125SF EAGLE RIVER HILLSIDE HOME
 4BR 3BA, MIL apt and a 5 car garage. \$549,000

©2008 COPYRIGHT

5 of 11 ▶



find

Search ADN Real Estate | Place a homes ad
 Realtor Market Place | Homebook

Top Rentals more

Park Plaza

range. A toddler may not walk until age 2; an adult may never live on his own. But support groups stress that those with Down syndrome are more like other people than not and can live rich and rewarding lives.

Because of prenatal testing, most families now know beforehand, said Judy Waldron, president of the Alaska chapter of the National Down Syndrome Congress, a support and education group that delivered a parent packet to the Palins in the hospital.

"They anticipate it and they kind of relish the challenge of having a child with special needs," said Waldron, an Anchorage teacher whose 19-year-old daughter, Lyn, has Down syndrome.

While it's "no walk in the park," the joys are great, she said. "Just the fact that they require such great effort to complete some simple tasks and that's real rewarding."

Todd Palin said the family has gotten a flood of supportive e-mail from families around the country with special-needs children. He said he's playing it by ear as far as his North Slope job.

Some people call them "angel children," straight from God, Waldron said. They are usually sweet-natured but can be ornery, like anyone.

EARLY ARRIVAL

Palin was in Texas last week for an energy conference of the National Governors Association when she experienced signs of early labor. She wasn't due for another month.

Early Thursday -- she thinks it was around 4 a.m. Texas time -- she consulted with her doctor, family physician Cathy Baldwin-Johnson, who is based in the Valley and has delivered lots of babies, including Piper, Palin's 7-year-old.

Palin said she felt fine but had leaked amniotic fluid and also felt some contractions that seemed different from the false labor she had been having for months.

"I said I am going to stay for the day. I have a speech I was determined to give," Palin said. She gave the luncheon keynote address for the energy conference.

Palin kept in close contact with Baldwin-Johnson. The contractions slowed to one or two an hour, "which is not active labor," the doctor said.

"Things were already settling down when she talked to me," Baldwin-Johnson said. Palin did not ask for a medical OK to fly, the doctor said.

"I don't think it was unreasonable for her to continue to travel back," Baldwin-Johnson said.

So the Palins flew on Alaska Airlines from Dallas to Anchorage, stopping in Seattle and checking with the doctor along the way.

"I am not a glutton for pain and punishment. I would have never wanted to travel had I been fully engaged in labor," Palin said. After four kids, the governor said, she knew what labor felt like, and she wasn't in labor.

Still, a Sacramento, Calif., obstetrician who is active in the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, said when a pregnant woman's water breaks, she should go right to the hospital because of the risk of infection. That's true even if the amniotic fluid simply leaks out, said Dr. Laurie Gregg.

"To us, leaking and broken, we are talking the same thing. We are talking doctor-speak," Gregg said.

Some airlines have policies against pregnant women onboard during the last four weeks of pregnancy, and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists advises against flying after 36 weeks.

This was going to be Palin's last flight anyway, her doctor said.

Alaska Airlines has no such rule and leaves the decision to the woman and her doctor, said spokeswoman Caroline Boren. Palin was very pleasant to the gate agents and flight attendants, as always, Boren said.

"The stage of her pregnancy was not apparent by observation. She did not show any signs of distress," Boren said.

Palin never got big with this pregnancy. She said she didn't try to hide it but didn't feel a need to alert the airline, either.

They landed in Anchorage around 10:30 p.m. Thursday and an hour later were at the Mat-Su Regional Medical Center in Wasilla.

Baldwin-Johnson said she had to induce labor, and the baby didn't come until 6:30 a.m. Friday.

"It was smooth. It was relatively easy," Palin said. "In fact it was the easiest of all," probably

We offer a beautiful, controlled entry community filled with studio, one and two bedroom apartment homes.

3 of 13



[Advanced Search](#) | [Place a rentals ad](#)

Top Autos

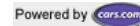
[all autos](#)

Affordable Used Cars - Fairbanks



2004 Chevrolet TrailBlazer
\$12,995
Affordable Used Cars -
Fairbanks

2 of 10



[Search for a New or Used Car](#) | [Place an auto ad](#)

Featured Advertisers

[all](#)



Lybergers Car & Truck Sales
Great Prices on Used Cars every
day!



Stanley Motors
Your local Mitsubishi and Kia
Dealer. From high MPG Cars &
SUVs to dependable Trucks &
Vans.



Shred Alaska
On-site document shredding,
commercial, residential and
retail

because Trig was small, at 6 pounds, 2 ounces.

Palin said she wanted him born in Alaska but wouldn't have risked anyone's health to make that happen.

"You can't have a fish picker from Texas," said Todd.

Palin said she won't take maternity leave but will go with Trig to doctor's visits, physical therapy, whatever he needs. She's breast feeding and plans to bring Trig to work with her, just as she did with Piper.

"It just feels like he fits perfectly," Palin said. "He is supposed to be here with us."

Find Lisa Demer online at adn.com/contact/lidemer or call 257-4390.

**No Time for School?
Graduate**

Get a Degree in as Few as 2 Yrs- Graduate Faster with Online
www.ClassesUSA.com

**See Today's
Mortgage Rates**

Calculate Your New Mortgage Payment. See Rates- No Credit Check
LowerMyBills.com

Online Degrees

Get Your AA, BA, Masters or PhD at a Top Online School.
www.NexTag.com

Ads by Yahoo!

Comments

Please [log in](#) to post comments.

59 Tuesday, September 2, 2008 - 9:14am | mikeccccc

REPUBLICANS BLIND, DEAF, AND DUMB !

I'm nauseated over the lies coming out of the mouths of republicans who sit there and defend Palin and praise her decisions on national television. My parents were very active in politics and so I know how much back patting and brown nosing is required to move up the chain of command...but, I also know how much time is consumed by career minded politicians. The bottom line is that her teena ...

[read more](#)

58 Monday, September 1, 2008 - 8:48pm | My_Voice

Choice - Children or Country?

What if something happens to a President McCain and she has to assume Presidential duties and something simultaneously happens with her special needs child or her teenage daughter? What would come first? As a mother I would hope it would be her children, but as a citizen of this country I would hope it be this country!

57 Monday, September 1, 2008 - 8:43pm | My_Voice

Down Syndrome Child

My friend has a Down Syndrome child who is 18 months old and his care is very intense. He has to have special physical therapy, speech therapy, etc. I just can't understand why a mother with an already demanding job would accept the nomination for VP for the entire country! As a mother, I just don't think this is the right time for her to take on such a big task. Pregnant teenage daughter, and ...

[read more](#)

56 Monday, September 1, 2008 - 4:58pm | lbarin

Republicans are above it all!

Palin should submit to DNA testing which would put this issue to bed (no pun intended). If a Democratic candidate was accused of this, the Republicans would make a commercial out of it and air it over and over and over until the election in November. So Democrats -- let us not give in to the Republicans! Remember when Clinton was hounded on everything he did, yet he still managed to balance t ...

[read more](#)

55 Monday, September 1, 2008 - 1:55pm | mikeccccc

Wake up !!

Most of you are overlooking the biggest issue which is Palin's ridiculously poor parenting decisions and skills. Would any you mothers risk your child's health by getting on an 8 hour flight after your water had broken and you were experiencing contractions? Trig was BORN 8 hours after the plane touched down. Her getting on that plane was a horrible, horrible decision. Especially when ...

[read more](#)

54 Monday, September 1, 2008 - 6:44am | CKAIinRedStateUSA

It amazes me how low some will go, or how ignorant...

...they may be. For example, one anonymous commenter said that Gov. Palin didn't appear to be breast-feeding her new baby, insinuating that meant the child was not her own. NEWS FLASH! Not

all mothers do that. With such low intellect or such high coarseness, not to mention plain of dullness of wit, no wonder the Obamaitos and Obama, or whatever his real name might be, as well as his shil ...

53 Sunday, August 31, 2008 - 4:41pm | [reveling_john](#)


Interesting time to take a hike to work

This show is called Alaska HDTV presents "Alaska Podshow #190," which aired Febuary 20th, 2008. About half-way through this show there's a 4 or 5 minute interview with Sarah Palin. She walks (hard to tell how far, but at least a mile given the change in scenery) to work and does not mention once that she's pregnant: <http://alaskapodshow.com/index.php/2008/02/20/my-visit-to-juneau-alaska/>

[See all 59 comments](#)

| Top stories » | Most read | Most e-mailed | Most-viewed galleries |
|---|--|---|---|
| Palin out of sight, but on people's minds | Secrets out: Palin pregnant (03/06/08) | Natural first parents (11/18/2007) | Alaska Governor Sarah Palin gallery |
| Palin seeks review of Monegan firing case | Palins child diagnosed with Down syndrome (04/22/08) | Bristol Palins boyfriend heads to convention | Bear sightings |
| Stevens' lawyers want to block phone evidence | Bristol Palins boyfriend heads to convention | Gov. Palin gives birth to son Trig (04/18/08) | Reader-submitted: Tattoos |
| Energy rebates will be taxed, garnished | Palins child diagnosed with Down syndrome (04/22/08) | Petersburg man killed ex-boss, then himself, police say | Reader-submitted: New Alaskans |
| Boaters survive flip, entrapment on the Talkeetna River | Creation science enters the race | Alaska Newsreader | Palin and me |
| Tuesday race series opens with a run through Kincaid Park | | | |

 Important warning about e-mails purporting to be from the adn.com staff.

© Copyright 2008, The Anchorage Daily News, a subsidiary of The McClatchy Company 

[Contact Us](#) | [Newsroom Contacts](#) | [Communication Forms](#) | [Subscriptions](#) | [Advertising](#) | [Terms of Use](#)

[Daily News Jobs](#) | [RSS Feeds](#) | [ADN Store](#) | [Newspapers in Education](#) | [Privacy Agreement](#)