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UZBEKISTAN

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New Attitude to Parenting Takes Root

Soon-to-be parents learn about childbirth and newborn care



Photo: Project Hope

Janubek Mansurov and his wife Farida watch as a nurse examines their daughter.

“I am grateful that the USAID project helps train couples like us. I will pass information about the New Parent School to all of my relatives and friends,” said Janubek Mansurov, a proud new father.

Janubek Mansurov was apprehensive about an invitation to the opening of the USAID-supported New Parent School in Muzrabad Rayon. “What am I going to do at a maternity hospital?” he thought. “Only women will be there. Maybe my wife can go by herself.” But this was the couple’s first baby and Janubek wanted to be a good father, so he agreed to accompany his wife Farida.

New parent classes prepared Janubek and Farida for childbirth and the care of a new baby. The training also convinced Janubek to participate in the actual birth process. No man in his family had done this before. Partner-assisted delivery is very new to Uzbek families. In the past, men would visit maternity centers only to pay the doctor at discharge, or to inquire about the health of the mother. They were not permitted to visit their wives and children during recovery.

When Farida gave birth to their daughter, Janubek was there by her side. He comforted her, gave her sips of fruit juice, and rubbed her back. Of the birth, Janubek says he is filled with respect for his wife’s strength and realizes how precious his daughter is. Upon discharge, Farida said that she would never forget her husband’s presence and support during the delivery and seeing his happy eyes when their daughter was born. “The participation of my husband during the birth of our first child was a great support to me,” she said.

The New Parent School in Muzrabad was established with USAID help and is supported financially by the local health department. New parents learn about the physiology of pregnancy and the labor process. Partners are taught how to be helpful during delivery and learn about nutrition for pregnant women. They also learn skills to care for newborns and discuss the advantages of breastfeeding.

The New Parent School is part of a larger USAID-funded project that aims to improve maternal, child, and reproductive health in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan.

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