

BABY WOMBATS ARE CALLED JOEYS.

A wombat joey spends the first 6 months of life safe and snug in mum's pouch. The next 3 – 4 months are spent in and out of the pouch. Initially this will occur in the safety of the burrow where the joey will climb over mum playing and staying within easy reach of mum's pouch.

Gradually as the joey grows and becomes more confident (around 3kg) it becomes too large and heavy for mum to carry.

The next stage is called being "at heel". This is when the joey is most vulnerable. The joey always needs to stay close to mum to keep safe and so she can warn of any dangers. Mum and joey wombats communicate with a soft huff-huff letting each other know where they are. Danger is usually signalled by a loud harsh screech.

Wombat joeys stay at heel until they are around 16 – 18 months of age by which time they have learnt wombat behaviour and the lay of the land.

