



Baby Sleep E-Book



# BABY SLEEP E-BOOK

# Baby Sleep Consultant

## SLEEP GUIDE

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# Contents

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Why your child is not sleeping	5
Lack of sleep assessment table	6
Goals for your child	7
Realistic Goals	9
Is your baby or toddler ready to sleep through the night?	11
Sleep Environment	13
Sleep associations and sleep props	15
Night sleep	17
How to drop night feeds	18
How to drop to one night feed	19
How to drop to NO night feeds	20
<b>Routines 1-12 months</b>	<b>21</b>
4-6 week old routine	22
6-9 week old routine	23
9-12 week old routine	24
4 month old routine	25
4 month old cat napping routine	26
5 month old routine	27
6 month old routine	28
8 month old routine	29
12 month old routine	30
<b>Settling and Sleeping</b>	<b>31</b>
12-15 month old routine	32
15-18 month old routine	33
18-24 month old routine	34
How to teach Independent sleep	35
<b>Self settling</b>	<b>39</b>
Case Studies	48
About the author	67

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*Sleep is a fundamental and essential NEED for us all, it's like food and water, we literally cannot survive without it, yet so many of us give it up once we hit parenthood.*

Once your child is sleeping better you will notice improvements in mood and emotions. Appetite begins to regulate and your child will get sick less as their immune system strengthens through sleep. In yourself, you might notice your own appetite regulate and any symptoms of depression lessen as your body's stress hormones ease off. You will have more energy, feel happier and have more patience for everyday parenting. Sleep is amazing!

Between the ages of 6-24 months', children go through a lot of changes, they drop from 3 naps, to 2 naps, to 1 nap! All by 18 months old!

This is why I have included routines in this sleep guide for you to look at for these months. These routines will give you a clear outline of when your child will be ready to drop their naps, ensuring your night sleep is preserved and not compromised through excessive day time napping.

Your baby will also learn to crawl, stand and then walk in this 6-24-month period. All of these physical milestones can lead to havoc when it comes to sleep but I have included below clear outlines on how to cope with these changes.



## *No Cry It Out*

Since you are using this sleep guide unsupervised by one of my amazing team, I have included a way I know YOU can teach your baby to self-settle without using cry it out. This will ensure success for everyone, you can alter the strategy to suit your child's temperament and your parenting style, and we have no concerns around unguided cry it out.

## *Why Your Child is Not Sleeping*

Every week I hear from parents who think their child hates their cot, or hates their bed, they hate their car seat or they hate sleeping! Once we have ruled out medical reasons for your child not sleeping, I can guarantee you that your child doesn't hate their bed, and doesn't hate sleeping.

If you have the all clear from a Doctor, and your baby is not in any pain from reflux or allergies or illness, then your child is probably not sleeping well due to 4 simple reasons.

- Poor timing
- Poor environment
- Parenting involvement
- Props, sleep props

Find out which of the above are contributing to your child's lack of sleep in the table on the following page. This is the first step in creating your sleep plan.

# *Lack of Sleep Assessment Table*

Have a read through the below table and answer the questions honestly. The answers to those questions that are applicable to you are outlined on the pages indicated in the right-hand column. Once you have answered these questions move on to goal setting for your sleep situation.

Does my child have no nap routine?	
Have I looked at the age appropriate nap routine?	
Is my child awake for too long in-between naps?	
Are my child's naps too short?	
Does my child's sleep environment need to change?	
Am I settling my child too much?	
Is my settling approach inconsistent?	
Does my child have a sleep prop?	
Is my child's sleep prop contributing to their lack of sleep?	
Does my child need me to get back to sleep at night?	



# *Goals For Your Child*

Working out appropriate and realistic goals is an important part of any sleep plan.

Once you have highlighted the aspects of your babies sleep that need to change on page 5 (above), you can simply turn these into goals.

i.e. Does my child have no nap routine?

**Goal:** Establish a nap routine roughly based on the routines on page (17)

Or

Am I settling my child too much?

**Goal:** Back off how much I assist my child to sleep



## *Realistic Goals*

Sometimes parents have unrealistic expectations for their child's sleep and this can prevent us from actually making any progress, or it can limit our success.

Realistic goals are flexible and allow for the fact that we are dealing with little humans who change daily. They have good days and bad days, they get grumpy, their appetite fluctuates and naps will not remain fixed.

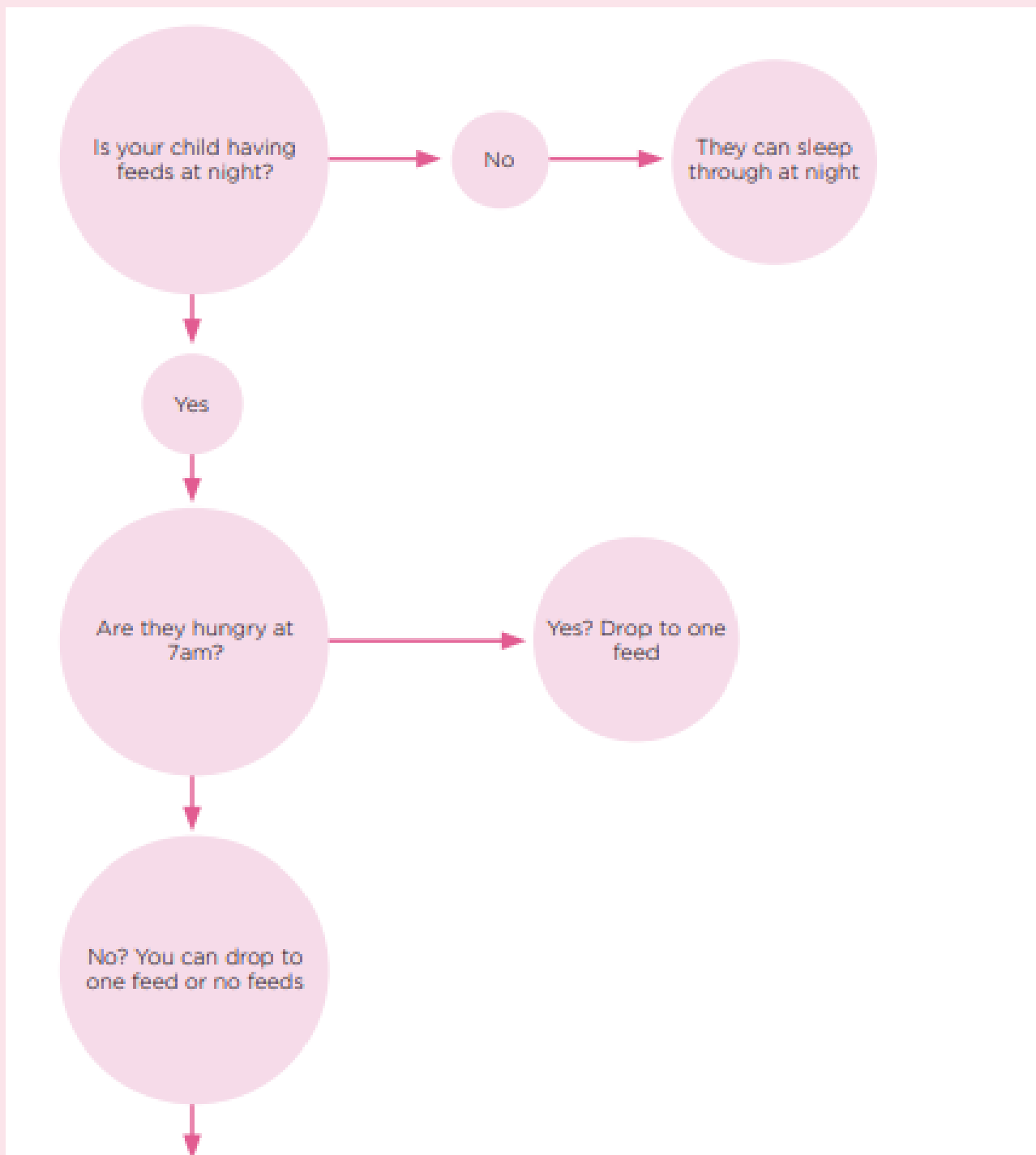
Realistic goals also allow for knowledge around how long your sleep problem has existed. If your 24-month-old has always woken 6 times a night, we can't expect that habit to change in 24 hours. Give yourself 1-2 weeks of consistency to sort any night sleep issues. The newer the problem the faster to resolve is a general rule of thumb.

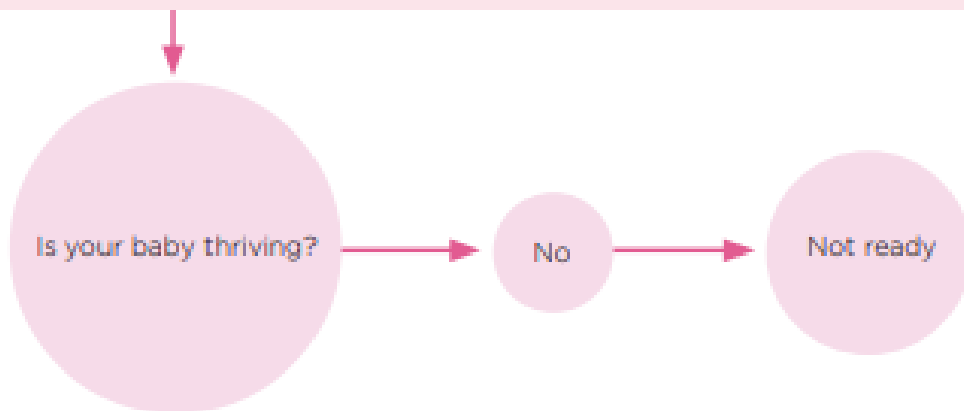
Another realistic goal is around sleeping through the night. It is unrealistic to expect to not hear from you baby for 12 solid hours, EVERY SINGLE NIGHT. All babies and toddlers and adults wake every 2-4 hours over night, this is simply the end of a sleep cycle and allows for us to adjust our position, get comfortable and go back to sleep. You won't even remember that you do this. But your child might grizzle or cry out for a minute as they do this. Or you might see them moving or standing, or sitting on your monitor. This is normal behavior, and unless they are excessively upset they don't need us to adjust or change anything.

Feeding at night is outlined on the chart below. Work through the flow chart to work out if your baby or toddler needs a feed at night. Since you are working through this guide unsupervised, you may choose to air on the side of caution and aim for 1 feed a night until 12 months old, and from 12 months old, no feeds. It is totally normal for a baby, especially a breastfed baby, to need 1 feed a night right up until 9 months. If you are unsure about whether your baby is hungry, 1 feed a night until 12 months will put your mind at ease. If in doubt, chat with your child's doctor for the all clear to drop night feeds, they will have a clear picture on your child's weight and wellbeing.

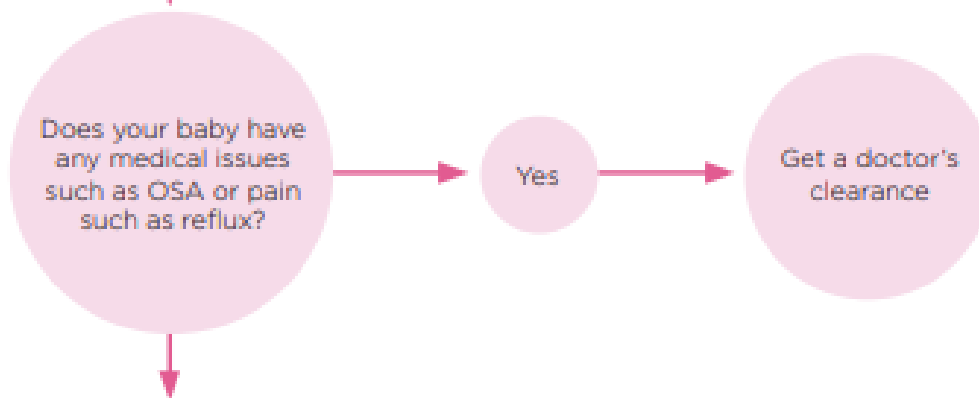
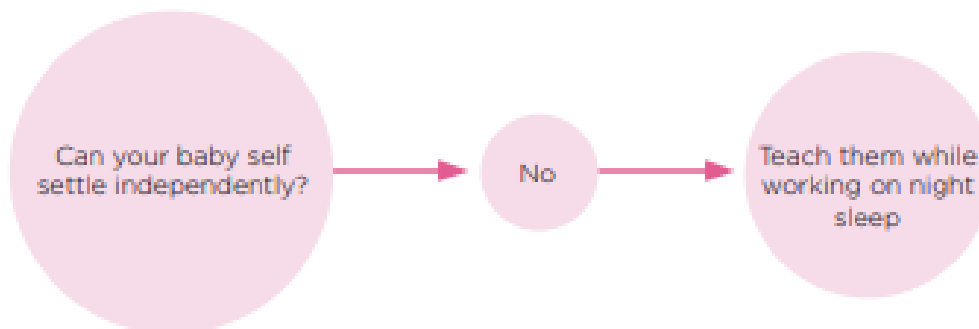
# *Is Your Baby or Toddler Ready To Sleep Through The Night?*

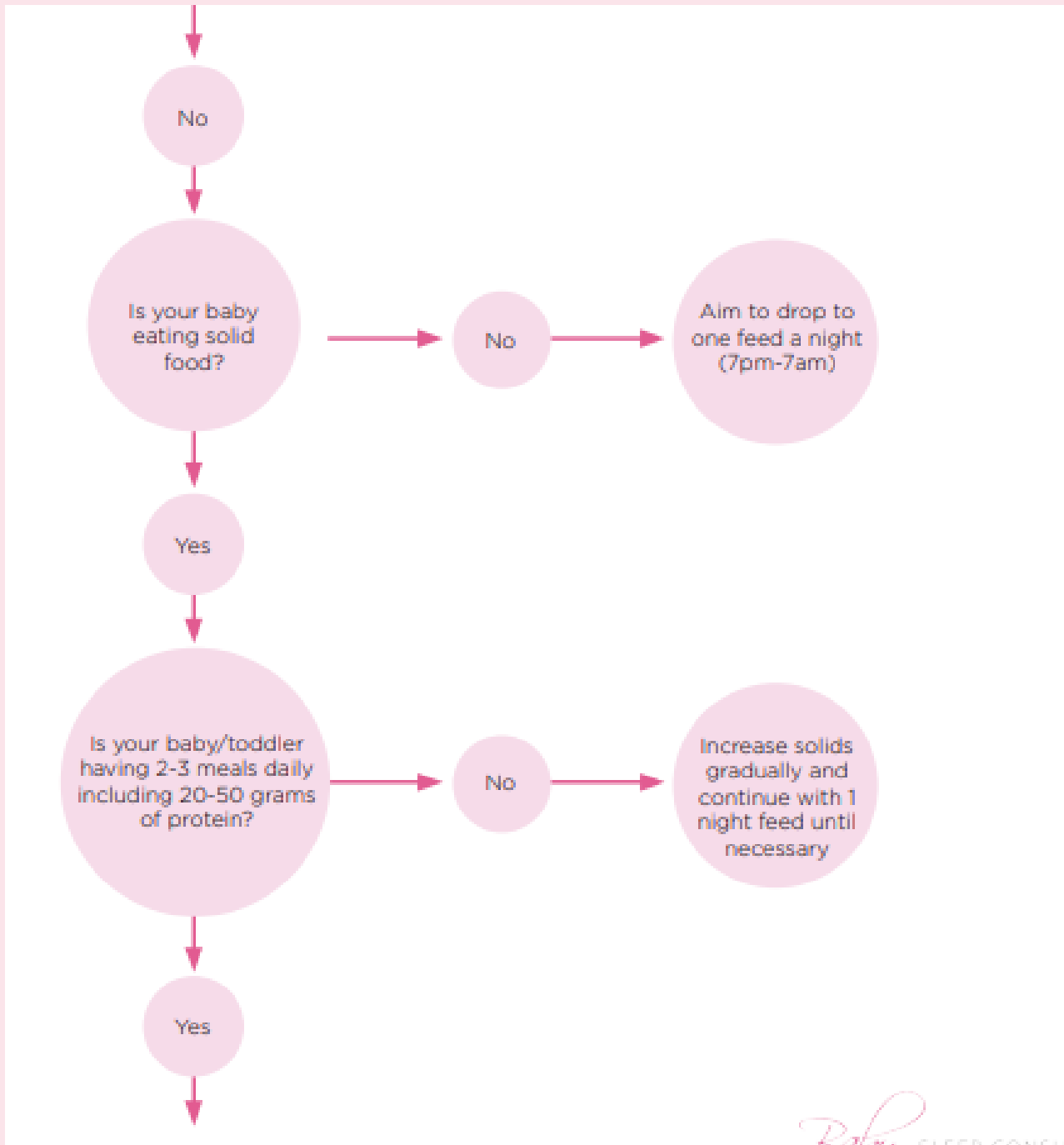
Answer these questions





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AIM FOR 11-12 HOURS SLEEP OVER NIGHT WITH NO FEEDS

# *Sleep Environment*

Before we start making any changes to the way your baby or toddler sleeps, we need to ensure the sleep environment they are sleeping in is conducive to sleep! Not addressing the sleep environment is like exercising to lose weight without addressing your diet.

The two go hand in hand for successful sleep changes!

Your baby should have a warm but not too warm place to sleep. This can be their own room or your room. Their room should be super dark for all naps and night sleep.



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Darkness is your friend when it comes to sleep!

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Darkness helps promote the production of the sleep hormone melatonin. This hormone is responsible for our drive to sleep, without it we can't sleep.

Light blocks the production of melatonin, and can make it tricky for some children to fall asleep. Not to mention how distracting a beautifully decorating bedroom is for an already overtired child.

Invest in some blackout blinds and get that room as dark as you can.

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## White noise for under 12 months

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If your child is under 12 months old, playing continuous white noise in their sleep environment while they are sleeping can help them to settle faster, sleep longer and cry less.

Give the white noise 7 days to work before deciding to turn it off for good.

You need white noise to be louder than their crying if they are upset, and then once they are asleep or calm, it should play at a continues volume similar to a vacuum cleaner.

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## Sleeping bags

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Ensure that your child is still sleeping in a weather appropriate sleeping bag. This will ensure they don't wake up cold, and it will discourage climbing from the cot!

Use a sleeping bag as part of the small short ritual you do before every nap, and before night sleep. It will act as a positive sleep association in this way, giving your child the cue that it's time to sleep so they are aware of what is happening.

You can buy natural fiber sleeping bags such as merino kids sleeping bags, all the way up to size 2-4 years. Encourage your toddler to stay in their bag for as long as possible.

# *Sleep Associations And Sleep props*

A sleep association is something your child associates with falling asleep. These can be purposefully creating such as introducing a sleeping bag or white noise, or they can be accidental, such as your baby falling asleep at the breast, or after a bottle feed.

Associations which are positive are ones which we plan and they help assist our children in their journey to self-settle. These include white noise, sleeping bags, cuddlies or lovies which they hold to fall asleep, or a short sleep ritual such as cuddling and singing a song before every nap and night sleep.

I suggest you introduce all these positive associations at the same time as addressing the negative associations or sleep props.

If you identified on page 21 that you are settling your child too much, or that they rely on you in the same way to get back to sleep, chances are there is a sleep prop involved. Even if that sleep prop is you.

If you have to put your babies dummy back in all night, the dummy is the sleep prop. If you rock your baby back to sleep, you are the sleep prop.

If you sit or lie down with your toddler, you are the sleep prop.

If you feed either breast or bottles to get your baby or toddler back to sleep, feeding is your sleep prop.

Most sleep props we remove cold turkey from the situation. The exception being a dummy or pacifier. If your child is over 8 months old, instead teach them to find and replace their own dummy in the settling strategy explained further on.

Once you have identified your child's sleep props or negative sleep associations, you can remove them or stop offering them (feeding, rocking, holding), and replace them with a settling strategy that works for your child. This might sound scary, but we will cover your new settling approach soon!

WHAT IS YOUR CHILD'S SLEEP PROP?

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WHAT POSITIVE SLEEP ASSOCIATIONS CAN YOU INTRODUCE?

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# Night Sleep

Association	Possible effect on night sleep	Solution
<b>Rocked to sleep</b>	Child could wake frequently looking to be rocked back to sleep, and take longer and longer to settle each time.	Teach child to self-settle and not rely on rocking to sleep.
<b>Feed to sleep</b>	Child could wake frequently looking to be fed back to sleep. Reactive co-sleeping often results.	Drop to two night feeds and teach baby to self-settle for all other wake ups. Look at flow chart before dropping any other feeds.
<b>Dummy to sleep</b>	Child could wake looking for help to replace their dummy with a sleepytot.	Under 8 months, take away dummy and teach baby to self-settle. Over 8 months, teach baby to find and replace their own dummy.
<b>Held to sleep</b>	Child could wake frequently looking to be held back to sleep, and take longer and longer to settle each time.	Put baby down calm from a pick up and teach baby to self-settle. Fall asleep in their bed not on mum or dad.
<b>Lying down with a toddler</b>	Toddler could have delayed onset of evening sleep, and wake overnight looking for parents to lie down with him to re-settle.	Teach toddler to self-settle in their bed without mum and dad in the bed.
<b>Bed sharing/co-sleeping</b>	Child could wake frequently looking for help to re-settle.	If you want to change this habit, put your child in their bed to self-settle and use the technique from this guide.
<b>Patting to sleep</b>	Child could have both delayed onset of sleep, and frequent wake ups as they are looking for parents to pat them back to sleep.	If over 6 months, stop patting to sleep and teach baby to self-settle.

# *How To Drop Night Feeds*

Whether your baby has 3 feeds or 6 feeds a night, the theory is the same.

- We need to wean those night feeds down.
- Increase day time calories at the same time.
- Ensure we have taught your child to self-settle.
- Be consistent in our approach and try not to regress with feeds.

Your child has sleep cycles overnight, these are different to their day sleep cycles which you know are 45 minutes long. Overnight these are more like every 2-4 hours long and your child needs to be able to self settle after each one of these wake ups, or partial wake ups if they are going to learn to sleep through the night.



A baby who has a dummy to go to sleep at 7pm and 9pm will want that dummy at 11pm and 1am, so if you are wanting to not replace a dummy at 11pm and 1am, then we need to remove it from all night sleep. The same thing can happen with feeds. We can remove a sleep association such as a dummy or rocking, but you might be left feeding every 2-4 hours overnight.

Feeding has become a settling strategy for your baby. You need to follow the flow chart on page 8 and work out if you can drop your child down to 1 or 2 night feeds. If you are concerned about night weaning, speak with your Doctor.

# *How To Drop To One Night Feed*

If you have successfully dropped to 2 night feeds for 3-4 nights, or your baby only has 2 feeds, and you are moving to 1 night feed straight away, then this is the strategy for you.

You will use the settling strategy for all wake ups before 11.30pm. Any wake ups after this time, or if your baby is still awake, offer a full feed and then use the settling strategy explained on page 21 to allow your baby to independently settle back to sleep.

If your baby wakes again before 6.30/7am, use your settle strategy to allow your baby to independently settle back to sleep.

If you feel things are not improving despite your consistent approach, please get in touch for some one on one guidance, as there might be a reason your nights are not consolidating.

When dropping to one night feed, it's important that you don't feed too early in the night, as these wake ups after often over tired wake ups, not hunger wake ups, and your baby is less likely to take a proper full feed and will wake again hungry later on.

# *How To Drop To NO Night Feeds*

When you feel your baby is not hungry in the morning after 1 night feed, and you have followed the attached flow chat as a guide and you are sure your baby over 6 months old is ready for no night feeds, you will use your settling strategy on page 21 for all wake ups overnight.

If your baby is ready, it will only take 3-4 nights for your baby to largely be sleeping through, and any wake ups will be very quick re-settles. We don't want your baby super upset for weeks on end!

Remember there is a huge physiological drive, pushing your child's body to sleep at night, hormones, body temperature, these are all saying to the body SLEEP.... Therefore, when all the ground work has been done, night sleep should consolidate relatively easily. (relative to how long your baby's nights have been fragmented and how deep rooted their associations are.)

## *Routines 1-12 months*

These routines are a great guide for how long your baby can be awake for depending on their age. They are also a good knowledge base for knowing when to drop a nap, or if your baby is not getting enough sleep.

I encourage you to use them as a guide and know that each baby is different. You might find your baby needs 15-20 minutes more or less at each nap, and you might also find that your baby doesn't consolidate their naps until 4 months. This is why I have included a cat napping routine.

I have included feed times in here, but know that you will know when your baby is hungry. If they haven't demanded a feed by the time suggested by me, offer one. But please don't leave your baby crying and hungry simply because the routine doesn't suggest a feed until later.

These routines are based off my experience with over 10,000 babies across Australia and New Zealand, I hope that they do improve the way your little one sleeps, or at least provide an interesting guide for knowing sleep duration goals, and age appropriate awake times.

You can adjust your routine to match the time your baby wakes up. If your baby is still unsettled or struggling with settling despite attempting a good routine, give us a call or check out the website for more information on our consultations.

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# 4-6 Week Old Routine

<b>7am</b>	Feed
<b>8am</b>	Optional top up feed
<b>8.20/8.30am</b>	Nap
<b>10am</b>	Awake and feed
<b>11am</b>	Offer a top up feed to help with a big long nap here
<b>11.20/30am</b>	Big nap
<b>1.30/2pm</b>	Feed
<b>3pm</b>	Optional top up feed
<b>3.30/3.45pm</b>	Nap
<b>5pm</b>	Wake baby for half a feed
<b>5.30pm</b>	Bath
<b>5.45/6pm</b>	Evening routine and second half of feed
<b>6.15/6.30pm</b>	Bed for the night - or your baby might still be cluster feeding at this age, and not settle for the night until after 9/10pm

**Feed on demand if baby wakes before 10pm or wake baby at 10/10.30pm for a feed. Feed on demand until 7am.**

If your baby is only doing 45 minute sleeps, you might find that a sleep at 11.30 and then again at 1pm works better and enables you to get through the afternoon.

# 6-9 Week Old Routine

<b>7am</b>	Feed
<b>8.15am</b>	Optional top up feed
<b>8.30/8.45am</b>	Nap
<b>10am</b>	Awake and feed
<b>11:15am</b>	Offer a top up feed to help with a big long nap here
<b>11.30/11.45am</b>	Big nap
<b>2pm</b>	Feed
<b>3.30pm</b>	Optional top up feed
<b>3.45/4pm</b>	Nap
<b>5pm</b>	Wake baby for half a feed
<b>5.30pm</b>	Bath
<b>5.45/6pm</b>	Evening routine and second half of feed
<b>6.15/6.30pm</b>	Bed for the night - or your baby might still be cluster feeding at this age, and not settle for the night until after 9/10pm

**Feed on demand if baby wakes before 10pm or wake baby at 10/10.30pm for a feed. Feed on demand until 7am.**

If your baby is only doing 45 minute sleeps, you might find that a sleep at 11.30/11.45am and then again at 1/1.30pm works better and enables you to get through the afternoon. You might need to also feed inbetween these short naps. Follow your baby's cues around feeding.

# 9-12 Week Old Routine

<b>7am</b>	Feed
<b>8.30am</b>	Optional top up feed
<b>8.30/8.45am</b>	Nap
<b>10am</b>	Awake and feed
<b>10:30am</b>	Feed
<b>11:30am</b>	Offer a top up feed to help with a big long nap here
<b>11.30/11.45am</b>	Big nap
<b>2.15/2.30pm</b>	Awake & feed
<b>4pm</b>	Nap
<b>5pm</b>	Wake baby for half a feed
<b>5.30pm</b>	Bath
<b>5.45/6pm</b>	Evening routine and second half of feed
<b>6.15/6.30pm</b>	Bed for the night
<b>10.30pm</b>	Wake baby for half a feed, keep baby awake with a nappy change a little kick around for 20 minutes, then second half of feed and back to bed

**Feed on demand until 7am.**

If your baby is only doing 45 minute sleeps, you might find that a sleep at 11.45/12 and then again at 2pm works better and enables you to get through the afternoon. You might need to offer another feed inbetween these small sleeps too.



# 4 Month Old Routine

<b>7am</b>	Feed
<b>9am</b>	Nap
<b>10am</b>	Awake
<b>10.30am</b>	Feed
<b>11.30am</b>	Offer a top up feed to help with a big long nap here
<b>12pm</b>	Big nap
<b>2.15/2.30pm</b>	Awake & feed
<b>4.30pm</b>	Nap
<b>5pm</b>	Wake baby for half a feed
<b>5.30pm</b>	Bath
<b>6pm</b>	Evening routine and second half of feed
<b>6.15/6.30pm</b>	Bed for the night

**Feed on demand until 7am. (Aim for 1-2 feeds overnight).**

# 4 Month Old Cat Napping Routine

<b>7am</b>	Feed
<b>9am</b>	Nap
<b>10am</b>	Awake
<b>10.30am</b>	Feed
<b>11.45am</b>	Nap
<b>12.30pm</b>	Awake
<b>1.30pm</b>	Feed
<b>2pm</b>	Nap
<b>2.30/2.45pm</b>	Awake
<b>3pm</b>	Feed
<b>4.30pm</b>	Nap
<b>5pm</b>	Wake baby for half a feed
<b>5.30pm</b>	Bath
<b>6pm</b>	Evening routine and second half of feed
<b>6.15/6.30pm</b>	Bed for the night

**Feed on demand until 7am. (Aim for 1-2 feeds overnight).**

# 5 Month Old Routine

<b>7am</b>	Feed
<b>9am</b>	Nap
<b>10am</b>	Awake
<b>10.30am</b>	Feed
<b>11.30am</b>	Offer a top up feed to help with a big long nap here
<b>12.15pm</b>	Big nap
<b>2.15pm</b>	Awake & feed
<b>4.30pm</b>	Nap
<b>5pm</b>	Wake baby for half a feed, or solids if you have started solids
<b>5.30pm</b>	Bath
<b>6.15pm</b>	Evening routine and second half of feed
<b>6.15/6.30pm</b>	Bed for the night

**Feed on demand until 7am. (Aim for 1 feed overnight).**

# 6 Month Old Routine

<b>7am</b>	Feed
<b>9.30am</b>	Nap
<b>10am</b>	Awake
<b>10.30am</b>	Feed
<b>11.30am</b>	Offer a top up feed to help with a big long nap here, or solids
<b>12.30pm</b>	Big nap
<b>2.15pm</b>	Awake & feed
<b>4.30pm</b>	Nap
<b>5pm</b>	Wake baby for half a feed, or solids if you have started solids
<b>5.30pm</b>	Bath
<b>6.15pm</b>	Evening routine and second half of feed
<b>6.15/6.30pm</b>	Bed for the night

**Feed on demand until 7am. (Aim for 1 feed overnight).**

# 8 Month Old Routine

<b>7am</b>	Feed followed by breakfast solids
<b>9.30am</b>	Nap
<b>10am</b>	Awake
<b>11am</b>	Lunch solids
<b>11.30am</b>	Milk feed
<b>12.30pm</b>	Big nap
<b>2.15pm</b>	Awake & milk feed
<b>5pm</b>	Dinner solids
<b>5.30pm</b>	Bath
<b>6.15pm</b>	Evening routine and full milk feed
<b>6.15/6.30pm</b>	Bed for the night

**Aim for 0-1 feed overnight.**

# 12 Month Old Routine

<b>7am</b>	Breakfast solids followed by milk
<b>9.30am</b>	Nap
<b>10am</b>	Awake
<b>11am</b>	Lunch solids
<b>11.30am</b>	Milk feed (optional)
<b>12.30pm</b>	Big nap
<b>2.15pm</b>	Awake & milk feed
<b>5pm</b>	Dinner solids
<b>5.30pm</b>	Bath
<b>6.15pm</b>	Evening routine and full milk feed
<b>6.15/6.30pm</b>	Bed for the night

**Sleeping through the night!**

# *Settling and Sleeping*

Having a good sleeping and napping routine is one piece of the healthy sleep habits puzzle for children.

During the first 6 months of your baby's life you will move from the bottom of this hierarchy to the top. Allowing your baby and encouraging your baby to self soothe to sleep, alongside a positive and age appropriate routine will ensure your baby is getting the best sleep they can, and your family is getting the sleep they need!

Sleep is a necessity; we can actually survive longer without food than we can sleep. It was knowing this and experiencing the effects sleep deprivation had on my family and my own mental health as a mother which drove me to create Baby Sleep Consultant. We are now the biggest and trusted sleep consultant company in Australasia. We train consultants internationally to do what we do, and we have helped over 10,000 parents get the sleep their families needed

If you are struggling with your babies settling or sleeping, please don't hesitate to get in contact for some assistance. We have available for you, home consult, phone consults, express email packages, webinars and our online forums for support.

xEmma and the Baby Sleep Consultant Team

p.s look out of the 12 month + toddler years routines!

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# 12-15 Month Old Routine

<b>7am</b>	Breakfast and milk/breastfeed
<b>9.30am</b>	Nap
<b>10am</b>	Awake
<b>10.30am</b>	Morning tea (something light and fresh)
<b>11.30am</b>	Lunch
<b>12.30pm</b>	Nap
<b>2.30pm</b>	Awake and afternoon tea or milk/breastfeed
<b>5pm</b>	Dinner
<b>5.30pm</b>	Bath
<b>6/6.15pm</b>	Milk/breastfeed and stories, quiet time
<b>6.30/7pm</b>	Bed for the night

If your toddler starts to wake up after 1-1.5 hours they might be ready for 3 hours between naps, or for you to drop the morning nap.

# 15-18 Month Old Routine

<b>7am</b>	Breakfast and milk/breastfeed
<b>9.30am</b>	Nap - your toddler will be getting ready to drop this nap. Either every other day, or drop it by 18 months at the latest.
<b>10am</b>	Awake
<b>10.30am</b>	Morning tea (something light and fresh)
<b>11.30am</b>	Lunch
<b>12.30pm</b>	Nap
<b>2.30pm</b>	Awake and afternoon tea or milk/breastfeed
<b>5pm</b>	Dinner
<b>5.30pm</b>	Bath
<b>6/6.15pm</b>	Milk/breastfeed and stories, quiet time
<b>6.30/7pm</b>	Bed for the night

If your toddler starts to wake up after 1-1.5 hours they might be ready for 3 hours between naps, or for you to drop the morning nap.

# *18-24 Month Old Routine*

<b>7am</b>	Breakfast and milk/breastfeed - milk might be in a sippy cup not bottle
<b>10.30am</b>	Morning tea (something light and fresh)
<b>12pm</b>	Lunch
<b>12.30/1pm</b>	Nap
<b>2.30pm</b>	Awake and afternoon tea or milk/breastfeed or milk in a sippy cup
<b>5pm</b>	Dinner
<b>5.30pm</b>	Bath
<b>6/6.15pm</b>	Milk/breastfeed and stories, quiet time
<b>6.30/7pm</b>	Bed for the night

# *How To Teach Independent Sleep Self-settling Without Cry It Out*

Independent sleep is a skill that all children need to master at some stage. Whether it's the child who moves to their own bed at 5 years old, or the baby who self-settles at 6 months old, all children are learning the same skill.

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Independent sleep, and the ability to self-settle to sleep.

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Your newborn was born without the ability to calm themselves down, and without the ability to fall asleep on their own. This is normal for a newborn, as they are neurologically immature, designed to be kept close to their parents, and designed to be nurtured and protected for survival

You probably found your newborn loved being rocked, or patted to sleep, these things triggered your babies calming reflex and allowed your baby to fall asleep. You might have had success feeding to sleep, or with a dummy or holding to sleep. All of these strategies are great for babies under 12 weeks old, but the issue is that we are not sure how to actually change from rocking our 12-week-old to sleep, to then allowing independent sleep to develop.

We hear the phrase drowsy “but” awake.....

This one always left me a bit perplexed, as I couldn't quite master the right amount of drowsy. Too drowsy and I basically rocked my baby to sleep, too little drowsy and I had a screaming child on my hands..... I gave up!

If you feel you have also been here and didn't have any success with this transitional phase, then you have probably arrived at post 6 months with a baby who can't settle to sleep independently.

Or you had an independent sleeper, but you hit a speed bump such as teething, or illness, or travel and slipped back into old habits and now you're not sure how to regain those sleep skills!

If this is you, you are in the right place, stay tuned as we talk about the step by step process you can start today to teach your baby to self-settle once again.

Before we go there, let's just think about sleep for a minute, and what exactly we are teaching our children?

When we get into bed as adults, we lay down, fluff our pillows, roll over a few times, perhaps start to think about our day. We adjust the pillows again, then relax a bit more, before at some point we eventually drift off to sleep.

The point of this is not that our children need pillows (they don't), but that no one lies down and immediately falls asleep. As parents, we need to be prepared to be patient and give our children time to fall asleep.

Grizzling, or rolling around, or standing up, or even sitting up... none of these actions are a reason to intervene and try to force our child to sleep. Before we get into the nitty gritty of self-settling, I want to cover the 5 key components of successful sleep training which I think every parent needs to understand and take on board.

## **RESPECT:**

You need to have respect for your baby's physiological need for sleep, allowing your child to get over tired constantly will make this process more difficult. Keep on top of those naps or try an early bed time! There needs to be respect between the parents, and both parents need to be on board with the sleep training and be supportive of this decision to sleep train. There also needs to be respect for your babies need for space. They might be rolling and crawling around the cot, this is fine. Give them space to figure out this whole sleep thing.

## **COMMUNICATION:**

Think about what you are communicating to your child? "I know you are tired and upset, I love you and respect your need for sleep, I am here for you and I will be patient and calm while you learn to go to sleep."



## How will you communicate this message?

Verbally with a shushing or quiet singing, and non-verbally with consistent behavior and responses, and by remaining calm, consistent and patient. What is your baby communicating to you? “I am tired mum and I am confused as to why you won’t nurse/hold me to sleep anymore?” They don’t hate you and are not panicked or distressed, you are right there, and are using lots of touch and voice to settle them. If you are inconsistent, or get frustrated and upset, these emotions might send the message to your baby “this is a bad process which is upsetting for mum”. Yet we are asking our child to be ok with it. This is why we need to be spot on with our positive communication. Everything is OK.

### **CONSISTENCY:**

This is the most important part of sleep training. Without consistency, we confuse our children and extend the time it takes to sleep train from 1-3 weeks to 5-6 weeks. Inconsistent reinforcement such as trying to settle for 40 minutes and then feeding to sleep is the kind of behavior which makes children cry longer and harder the next time you attempt a nap or night settle.

Please remember you can cancel a nap or take a break, but don't inconsistently reinforce the pattern we are trying to change. The most consistent approach is actually the gentlest of all.

### **RESPECT:**

You need to have respect for your baby's physiological need for sleep, allowing your child to get over tired constantly will make this process more difficult. Keep on top of those naps or try an early bed time! There needs to be respect between the parents, and both parents need to be on board with the sleep training and be supportive of this decision to sleep train. There also needs to be respect for your babies need for space. They might be rolling and crawling around the cot, this is fine. Give them space to figure out this whole sleep thing.

## CALMNESS:

Imagine the emotions your child is going through as you move them to their own room and teach them to self-settle and sleep independently. You need to ensure that you provide security through calmness throughout this process. Be the anchor or the rock in this time, don't be part of the turmoil. Children are very good at sensing anxiety, frustration and sadness, these emotions at bed time will not help your baby to settle quickly and can really hinder your success. Be confident in your approach and remain calm, knowing that you have made this decision for yourself and your family, your child is resilient and this is the right decision, now is the right time, and you know what you are doing.

Fake it for a few days if need be!

# *Self Settling*

## *Stage 1*

Set up for success! Make sure that your child's sleep environment is spot on! Nice and dark, and warm. Your child is in a sleeping bag and maybe has some white noise and a comforter.

Run through a 5-minute wind down ritual.

- Curtains shut, lights off
- Sleeping bag on
- Cuddle with a parent
- Sing a song or read a short book
- Say a sleep phrase
- Pop into bed calm but awake - wide awake!

If your child is at the stage where they stand up, I suggest you bring a cushion and sit on the floor by your child's cot. This will have your head at the height of their mattress which is where we want them to be.

If your child is younger and isn't standing up yet, then you can bring a chair in and sit by your child's cot on the chair.

You are going to sit here until your child is fast asleep, so you want to be comfortable!

Your child is probably going to cry and grizzle and generally protest and let you know that they would prefer if you would rock them to sleep, or feed them to sleep, or just plain get them up for a play, anything but sleep!

In this stage 1 phase of the sleep training, that means if they stand up, you can lie them back down, if they get upset you can cuddle them either in your arms or over the cot. The key is to only calm your baby with a cuddle, don't let them become too drowsy with your touch.

You can also put a hand on them if they find this comforting, or rub their back sporadically. You could comfort nurse them for a few minutes, but only until they are calm, not too sleepy

You are there to comfort, and calm, and communicate clearly and consistently that it's bed time, and mum isn't going to assist to sleep today.

Options to comfort your baby while allowing self-settling.

1. Lie down
2. Pick up and boring cuddle, straight back to the cot once calm
3. Back rub
4. Touch with your hand
5. Shushing or singing quietly
6. Comfort words and phrases
7. Nursing for comfort not until sleepy. Straight back down to the cot once calm

You could offer all of these or none of these. You could only offer a lie down and nothing else, the choice is yours. How much you choose to comfort is entirely up to you based on your parenting style.

What you choose to do in stage 1 will dictate....

- How long stage 1 lasts
- How quickly your child learns to self-settle

If you choose to only intervene every 5 or 10 minutes (sitting on your chair or cushion for 5-10 minutes) with only one of the options above, you will be able to move on from stage 1 in 2-3 days.

If you choose to use more of the calming strategies and offer them more frequently (which is totally fine!), you might be in stage 1 for 4-6 days.

Try to stick to the same 1 or 2 strategies over and over, boring is consistent, and consistency equals sleep! E.g. Pick up and cuddle, put down and shush from your chair. Pick up cuddle, put down shush from your chair. Over and over with more and more time in your chair as the time extends and your baby falls asleep.

Lie down, rub their back, sit back on your cushion, they stand up, mum waits a minute or two, lie them down, rub their back and sit back on your cushion... over and over with more and more time in your chair as the time extends and your baby falls asleep.

Pick up, nurse until calm, back in the cot, sit on mum's chair shhhhh..... pick up, boring cuddle, back in the cot, mum sits on the chair. Baby cries, mum shhhhhh's for a few minutes, then picks up and boring cuddle. Mum back on chair and baby cries, shhhh for a few minutes, maybe slightly longer than before, then pick up and nurse until calm... repeat the sequence until baby is asleep.

Some parents will touch constantly for the first 10-20 minutes, stroking or back rubbing, lying the child down, singing or shushing, then as the child calms down, they can retreat to their cushion or chair and just intermittently use their voice as the child drifts off to sleep.

If you find what you are doing is talking a long time and upsetting your child more than helping, then back off slightly. Just sit on your chair or cushion for a minute and take a breather. Count to 100, re-group, think about clear communication and begin your process again.

Will your child benefit more from 5 minutes of you being there for them with no touch, just your presence before you touch them again? Or do they need the frequent touch and cuddles to calm them down?

Knowing your child's temperament will really help you to get this spot on. Some parents will just help for a minute with touch and singing, and then sit down for 2-3 minutes, and repeat this sequence until the child falls asleep.

As long as you don't fully assist to sleep, or do anything to force your child to get drowsy stage 1 is working.



## *Remember Everyone's Journey is Different.*

While in stage 1, you will remain with your child until they fall asleep, even if you are just sitting with your eyes closed modelling sleep.

If you feel your child's temperament lends itself to more space, you might try leaving the room when you put your child down initially for 5-10 minutes, before returning to your cushion or chair to begin stage one.

Move onto stage 2 when you feel settling is happening faster, wake ups are a little less frequent and you and your child feel more confident in self-settling.

If you feel this is not happening, you might need to start to reduce how much you are intervening and spend more time sitting on your chair or cushion, or consider some one on one help from the Baby Sleep Consultant Team

*Progressing to stage 2 usually occurs after 2-6 days.*

# *Self Settling*

## *Stage 2*

Stage 2 is about creating more space and opportunities for your child to self-settle.

You will carry out the same wind down ritual for 5 minutes prior to sleep and you will still put your child to bed calm but awake.

Remember they are learning to progress through the stages of

- Into bed calm and awake
- Making themselves drowsy and sleepy
- Moving around to get comfortable
- Falling asleep independently

If we do any of these stages for them, such as putting them down drowsy or moving them constantly every night, then they won't learn these stages themselves.

In stage 2 after we have put them to bed calm, we retreat to our cushion or chair (unless you have chosen the option to leave for 5-10 minutes only returning if your child is upset) and wait for 5 minutes before intervening with any touch or singing or shushing. We just model sleep and see what stage 1 has taught our children. Some children at this stage will start to settle themselves and we can just wait for them to fall asleep before we leave.

Other children will be upset for this entire 5 minutes and need us to calm them down with a boring cuddle, or a lie down, or any of the options from the first list.

Remember to try to stick to 1-2 options and keep things simple and consistent and a little boring. Boring equals sleep!

Once they are calm, try another 5 minutes on your chair modeling sleep and see how they cope the second time. If they coped well and appear to be trying to settle to sleep, you can stay where you are and wait for them to fall asleep!

If they are upset again, use 1-2 of the options listed to help them calm down for a little longer this time. Then back into the cot and return to your chair.

Remember we are not leaving the room until they are asleep, we are establishing trust and consistency. They can trust you will wait with them; and that you will be consistent in your approach. You are giving them all the emotional and physical support they need without assisting them to sleep.

During stage 2 your child will start to self-settle faster and faster, they will learn the routine of wind down, into bed awake, mum sits on the chair, I fall asleep knowing she is right there if I need her.

Your child will get more and more confident at falling asleep independently and you can begin to trust that they can sleep!

You will find your 5 minute intervals turn into 10 or 15 minutes and you don't have to do anything as your child is becoming an independent sleeper. You might have to offer the occasional shushhhh as re-assurance but not a lot else.

Move onto stage 3 when you feel confident your child is starting to really understand self-settling and you feel you are on the path to having an independent sleeper. Your babies wake ups will be less frequent, your settling time will be reducing and you will be down to 1 or 2 cuddles maximum. This is the time to move onto stage 3.

Stage 2 should take 3-5 days at the most and you will do a little bit less each day

# *Self Settling*

## *Stage 3*

Stage 3 is about letting all your hard work pay off!

You will carry out the same wind down ritual for 5 minutes prior to sleep and you will still put your child into bed calm but awake.

Remember they are learning to progress through the stages of

- Into bed calm and awake
- Making themselves drowsy and sleepy
- Moving around to get comfortable
- Falling asleep independently

Once you put your child into bed you will sit straight down on your chair or cushion (unless you are doing the option of leaving for 10 minutes, returning only if your child is upset). By stage 3 you will have moved your cushion or chair 2-3 meters from the cot, creating some space between you and your child as they have displayed independent sleep skills by this stage.

You will sit patiently on your chair or cushion, relying only on singing or shushing or sleep phrases (so only your voice, no touch) to calm your baby as they drift off to sleep. This should be fairly minimal by this stage and try to become more and more intermittent with this as you move through stage 3.

Remember to be patient and only leave once your child is fast asleep. This stage should only take 2-3 days before you can move onto stage 4.

You will know you are ready for stage 4 because your baby will be settling themselves with no touch from you! It will feel “easy” and you will feel confident!

# *Self Settling*

## *Stage 4*

Stage 4 is about getting you out of the room while your child attempts to use their skills on their own.

You will carry out the same wind down ritual for 5 minutes prior to sleep and you will still put your child into bed calm but awake.

We are still teaching your child to move through these stages on their own so we are getting ready to leave.

- Into bed calm and awake
- Making themselves drowsy and sleepy
- Moving around to get comfortable
- Falling asleep independently



Once you have put your baby to bed, instead of moving to your chair or cushion leave the room for 5-10 minutes (you choose what you are comfortable with), if your baby starts to cry while you are gone, try to wait for your designated time, as you know your baby can self-settle to sleep, you have seen them do it!

After your chosen time, if they are upset, go into their bedroom, sit on the chair or cushion and use shushing or singing to help them calm down.

**Don't revert back to stage 1 settling. Wait on your chair for 2 minutes then leave again.**

Leave the room for 5-10 minutes, again you choose the time, but make sure that it's the same as before, or longer, not less! If your baby starts to cry while you are gone, try to wait for your designated time, as you know your baby can self-settle to sleep, you have seen them do it!

After your chosen time, if they are upset, go into their bedroom, sit on the chair or cushion and use shushing or singing to help them calm down. Don't revert back to stage 1 settling. Wait on your chair for 4 minutes then leave again.

This sequence is going to continue until your baby self-settles either with you in the room on the chair, or out of the room.

Each time you go in to sit on your chair or cushion, stay for 2 minutes longer

This stage is encouraging your baby to fall asleep without you in the room, and although on night one or two they might fall asleep with you on the chair again, by night 3 or 4 they will be falling asleep with you out of the room!

You have an independent sleeper!

You can revert back to stage 1 or 2 if your child gets really sick or hits a huge regression. If you travel, I would only revert back to stage 3 or 4.

If you have to repeat this progress after an illness regression you might find you can move through the stages faster as your child remembers and has more sleep confidence.

*Baby*

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## *Freya 6 Months Old*

### *Dummy to Sleep*

Freya is a 6-month-old girl who was waking 2-3 times a night for a quick feed before going back to sleep, she was having short cat naps over the day and appeared to have a dummy sleep association and possibly a slight feed before sleep association due to the recent timing of her bottles and naps.

Freya had difficulties with weight gain over her life but this was resolved when mums milk supply increased, and more recently when mum had made the move to formula full time. Freya is not drinking a lot of formula which could be due to her adjusting to taking bigger amounts in one go, or being a bit too lazy for her variable flow teat. Mum kept an eye on the goal which was for her to drink at least 600ml in 24 hours, but ideally, she would have this between 7am and 7pm so we could drop her night bottle

Freya had been a cat napper for some time now, Mum learnt the importance of blacking out her room to help with this and also possibly trying some white noise for naps only. These two things helped a little with the short naps.

A routine for Freya was implemented, this was quite fluid as she was learning to self-settle and also to consolidate her sleeps. Some days she needed an extra 10-20 minutes on the walk to school at 2.30pm, if her lunch nap was only 45 minutes, then she needed more than 20-30 minute at 4.30pm to catch up. Mum aimed to have her awake by 10/10.15am so she would then take her lunch nap between 12-1pm and not delay the school pick up. Mum stuck to the feed times, but allowed a 45-60-minute window to offer the bottle, this way Freya was able to finish it, but also have enough time to develop true hunger before her next bottle. We also moved those bottles away from her naps.

Freya was only awake for a short amount of time first thing in the morning, so we used gentle distraction such as a walk outside to keep her awake at least 2 hours, which then kept us on track for the day

We ditched Freya's dummy for sleeping cold turkey, mum taught Freya to self-settle for all naps using the approach outlined in this guide.

We spoke about helping her practice rolling to create some muscle memory and once she was rolling more frequently it was time to ditch her blankets so her cot was nice and safe.

Because Freya was 6 months, I suggested mum give her two attempts at solids each day, after lunch and at dinner time. If she showed no interest in lunch solids after a couple of weeks, then I suggested Mum only give her half a bottle, then her solids, then finish her bottle. This way the bottle isn't putting her off eating any solids.

This worked well and mum gradually increased her solids, and ensured she quickly made her way through the first foods, so she tried a range of fruits and vegetables and quickly moved onto meats.

We dropped Freya down to one bottle a night, using the self-settling approach outlined in this guide.



# *Hugo 9 Months Old*

## *Fed, Feld and Bounced to Sleep*

Hugo was a 9-month-old baby who was sleeping in his cot next to mum and dad's bed. He was fed, held and bounced to sleep for his naps and feed back to sleep over night a lot. He often ended up bed sharing from 1/2/3am onwards, and sleeping on mum from 4am, trying to start his day as early as 5/5.30am. Hugo had two naps of 1-2 hours a day and went to bed between 7-9pm depending on when his last nap ended.

We discussed the options around progressively changing Hugo's sleeping situation and decided we would attempt nap one in his cot and nap two would be assisted to sleep until his night sleep had consolidated and mum had more emotional and physical energy to work on both naps during the day.

Hugo needed two sleeps and around 2.5 hours in total of sleep.

I explained the importance of nap one being shorter than nap two, and Hugo's biological nap windows which are 9-10am and 12-2pm, so if Hugo could start his naps in these windows mum would find these naps would be easier to consolidate and he would be tired by 7pm in the evening. An example of his day structure is below in the routines.

We used the 2-3-4 rule as it is quite an easy one to use to structure naps, 2.5, then 3, then 4 hours between sleeps.

We tried Hugo's nap in his bed in the morning, we would only attempt the nap for 1 hour before cancelling the nap. If Hugo didn't settle to sleep in one hour, then we moved his lunch nap slightly sooner, i.e. 12pm so didn't get over tired.

As Hugo was sleeping in mum's room and there wasn't a lot of room for his cot to move away from her bed. We discussed the limitations of room sharing, and mum was open to considering Hugo moving out if the room sharing was stopping the sleep training progressing. We discussed teaching Hugo to self-settle without feeding/bouncing/rocking to sleep and mum used the technique outlined in this guide.



We also discussed Hugo's night sleep and decided to try for a maximum of 2 feeds, no closer than 4 hourly overnight. After 1 week, we progressed to 1 feed and used the self-settling technique for all other wake ups.

Hugo was eating a good range of foods, but was excluding gluten, dairy and red meat. Mum was ready to start offering these food groups and understood that Hugo would probably not react in the same way she does to these food groups.

Offering new foods frequently is the best way to avoid allergies and intolerances becoming worse.

There is a lot of research out now to support not holding back on foods such as eggs, nuts (nut butters not whole nuts!), dairy, gluten fish etc.

The main food group I was very keen to see Hugo start on in order to help his sleep was red meat. Iron is very important for babies and toddlers and once babies become anemic their sleep becomes very fragmented and I have had quite a few clients on iron therapy prescribed by their doctors as breastmilk or formula

alone can't give babies all the iron they need after 6 months.

We spoke about Hugo's protein intake and discussed ensuring he is getting 25-50 grams of meat each day. This ensured that he didn't get hypoglycemic at night and wake hungry while we were trying to teach Hugo to take his daily calories in during the day.

Ensuring that dinner was carbohydrate rich, (potatoes and kumara with Hugo's other vegetables) helped his night sleep also. Lunch was protein rich and dinner sometimes had a little protein. Due to Hugo not having dairy, Mum gave Hugo coconut yoghurt with fruit for dessert after his lunch and dinner, these extra calories really helped the night sleep situation.

Hugo was predominately demand fed in regards to breastmilk, we moved his feeds to after his breakfast and lunch, not right before naps and not after naps. This spacing out of feeds increased Hugo's appetite for solids over the day

# *Jack 8 Months Old*

## *Patted and Shushed to Sleep*

Jack was an 8-month-old boy who was patted and shushed to sleep for his naps and over night when needed. He was mix fed as mum was working, he had around 150-180ml of formula or a full breastfeed three times a day and up to two feeds a night.

Jack was eating well (solids) although it sounded like we needed to increase the volume he was eating and style of food he was eating. A switch from commercial food to homemade food was needed.

Ideally jack would eat 3 times a day, around half a cup followed by dessert (fruit/yoghurt etc.) and some finger food and all milk feeds after his solids since he was 8 months.

Breakfast was changed to be cereal and fruit, or toast fingers and fruit, lunch was the ideal time to have him eat his meat/protein, so 25- 50 grams of protein each day and the rest of his meal was a mixture of carbohydrates and vegetables. Carbohydrates at this age could be vegetables or rice, or pasta, or millet, or oats or quinoa etc.

Moving food before milk he naturally ate more and we ensured he was getting the nutrition he needed in the day to not need to eat at night. I felt we needed to move his naps to match up with his biological sleep windows which are 9-10am and 12-2pm, his 2pm nap missed his second window, and any sleep after 3pm could have been responsible for one of his night wake ups. The long morning nap was causing a reverse sleep phase shift which I felt we could fix by shortening his morning nap.

Overnight I suggested we teach Jack to self-settle (during his naps too) and we reduced down any feeds he is having over 7 days and teach him to sleep through with no feeds. We used the technique outlined in this guide.

Mum was nervous about Jack crying, so I explained that I understand this is difficult for any parent but I assured Mum it's normal to not enjoy it and it's normal for it to stress the parents and even the baby. But crying doesn't always mean despair to a baby, it is also their way of communicating.

Communicating tiredness, frustration, hunger, pain, all of these things are expressed with crying. I feel it's our job as parents to learn this and understand our baby's needs and work within this to achieve a happy home balance.

The American academy of pediatrics has a frame work of stress which we work within, they have a list of stressors and where they fall on the scale from positive stress response to chronic toxic stress. While sleep training of any kind does produce a physiological stress response (a spike in cortisol), a short-term spike has not been proven to be dangerous, and this is a normal stress response to all kinds of situations such as immunizations and meeting new people.

Research has shown that sleep training only spiked cortisol levels for 1-2 nights, and that these levels are lowered within 15 minutes of being held and played with by a sensitive parent for 30 minutes.

Mum was happy her technique fitted well into her family philosophy and Jack responded beautifully.

## *Kai 7.5 Months Old Feed, Rock and Dummy Association*

Kai was a 7-month-old baby who was still cat napping and waking 6-8 times a night. He appeared to have a feed and rock and dummy association to get to sleep. A previous consultant introduced a dummy which managed to change Kai's full rock to sleep association but now he had a dummy association.

Kai was sleeping with a sleepytot and his dummies with a duvet. I recommended we move him to a sleeping bag eliminating the possibility he woke up cold, this also acted as a great positive sleep association. He started to associate the sleeping bag and sleepytot with sleep.

Kai was only having 3 bottles a day but then small frequent feeds from midnight onwards of 50-80ml. I felt we needed to increase his bottles during the day to 4 bottles until he was drinking more at each bottle and less at night.

We implemented the routine from this guide which shows when he had his bottles and solids. We moved to solids first once he was 8 months old.

Kai was having 3 solid meals and some snacks, I recommended we drop his snacks at this stage as they were probably dulling his appetite for milk and this meant he was not getting enough calories during the day. The fact that he finished his bottles right before naps was also adversely affecting his appetite for proper meals.

We moved his bottles to those times indicated in the routines and allowed a 45-minute window for him to finish his bottles, we offered solids after this 45-minute window. This helped to ensure he ate well and drank well, and thus slept well at night.

Kai needed to learn to self-settle, this was his predominant issue. We used the technique outlined in this guide and Kai quickly picked this up. We put the Sleepytot in Kai's hands every 2-3-4-5 minutes to help him find and replace his own dummy and learn to self-settle.

Mum was vigilant with no more dummy in his mouth and only sleepytot in his hand. This meant Kai quickly learnt to self-settle.

### Key changes for Kai

- More solids.
- More milk during 7am-7pm.
- Possibly try for a third nap, on days the naps were short.
- Earlier to bed in the evening.
- No more dummy in the mouth.
- Into bed wide awake, no more making Kai sleepy in mum's arms.
- Overnight limited his bottles to one, and then reduced this to none after 7 days.



## *Issac 2 Years Old*

### *Hair Sleep Prop, Bed Sharing*

Isaac was nearly 2 years old, he had moved from his cot to a big bed at 18 months old, and had continued to nap in his cot, but has slept at night in his big bed. He napped well during the day and self-settled, however at bed time he was using his mum's hair or hand as a sleep prop and was coming out of bed for 1-2 hours before finally settling down for the night. He was coming into mum's bed around 9-11pm and sleeping the rest of the night in mum's bed.

We spoke at length about the options to teach Isaac to stay in his big bed or teach him to sleep through in his cot. Mum decided to go with popping Isaac back in his cot and using the strategy in this sleep guide, we both agreed he napped perfectly in his cot, so didn't have any negative associations.

We used some role play with the cot to demonstrate how positive bed time can be! We also used some immediate rewards for Isaac in the form of Thomas stickers.

He got these stickers followed by over the top praise if he stayed in his cot all night and slept! This helped Isaac understand what it was we actually expected of him as he was a bit confused.

This technique gave mum the confidence to teach Isaac to self-settle without feeling like she was letting him cry it out.

I did feel that Isaac was probably a bit over tired at bed time in the evening, as his day started at 6.25am, and didn't get into bed until closer to 7pm with Isaac only having a 1 hour nap at day care. I felt Isaac could have a 1.5 hour nap consistently at day care and at home, and go to bed between 6-6.30pm. This meant less clean up time before Isaac gets into bed, but ultimately this is what Isaac needed, especially in light of his 9-11pm wake up time, this is a classic over tired wake up window.

Mum let Isaac know that he is going back into his cot as he didn't stay in his big bed and Mum was getting very tired. Mum made sure Isaac knew she thought he would sleep well in his cot as he was a clever big boy. Big hug from mum, into bed. Mum left to do the dishes then returned 5 minutes later to start her technique.

Overnight, Mum waited an initial 5 minutes before she went into him when he woke up crying, this was to give him time to try to settle himself to sleep before Mum got out of bed! We also shut Isaac's door so it was a bit darker and we tried some blackout blinds on his curtains in the evening. This made the world of difference for him.

# *Flora 9 Months Old*

## *Fed to Sleep – Baby Carrier*

Flora was a 9-month-old baby who was sleeping in her cot next to mum and dad's bed. She was fed and held to sleep for her naps (or in the ergo baby carrier) and feed back to sleep over night a lot. She often ended up bed sharing from 1/2/3am onwards. Flora took two naps of 20 minutes-2 hours a day and went to bed between 6-7.30pm depending on when her last nap ended.

We discussed the options around progressively changing Flora's sleeping situation and decided we would attempt nap one in her cot and nap two would be assisted to sleep until her night sleep had consolidated and mum had more emotional and physical energy to work on both naps during the day.

Kai was only having 3 bottles a day but then small frequent feeds from midnight onwards of 50-80ml. I felt we needed to increase his bottles during the day to 4 bottles until he was drinking more at each bottle and less at night. We implemented the routine from this guide which shows when he had his bottles and solids. We moved to solids first once he was 8 months old.

Kai was having 3 solid meals and some snacks, I recommended we drop his snacks at this stage as they were probably dulling his appetite for milk and this meant he was not getting enough calories during the day. The fact that he finished his bottles right before naps was also adversely affecting his appetite for proper meals.

Flora needed two sleeps and around 2.5 hours in total of sleep. I explained the importance of nap one being shorter than nap two and Flora's biological nap windows which are 9-10am and 12-2pm, if Flora could start her naps in these windows mum would find her naps were easier to consolidate and she would be tired by 7pm in the evening. An example of her day structure is in the routines in this guide.

When we tried Flora's nap in her bed in the morning, we only attempted the nap for 1 hour before cancelling the nap. If Flora didn't settle to sleep in one hour, then we moved her lunch nap slightly sooner, i.e. 12pm so she didn't get over tired. The morning nap attempt is nap teaching time, so mum didn't feel she had failed if Flora doesn't settle. Her naps were much harder to achieve than her night sleep, but Flora started to take her morning nap in her cot by day 3.

We also discussed Flora's night sleep and decided to try for a maximum of 2 feeds, no closer than 4 hourly overnight. We then progressed to 1 feed around day 10, we used the settling strategy in your guide for all other wake ups while sleep training Flora.

Flora's diet excluded meat, grains, and dairy. For us to help Flora sleep better at night we increased the amount of carbohydrates Flora ate dramatically. She needed 1/2-3/4 of a cup 3 times a day at each meal. Each meal since Flora was a vegetarian would be 1/3 protein, 1/3 carbohydrates and 1/3 non-carbohydrates. She also needed dessert to be offered at each lunch and dinner.

## Examples for Flora Protein:

Quinoa, lentil patties, falafels, chick peas and kidney beans, tofu, eggs, goat's cheese, nut butters.

Carbohydrates: Kumara, potato, banana, parsnip, buckwheat, quinoa, barley, oats.

Non-carbohydrates: pumpkin, beans, tomatoes, carrots, cucumber, broccoli, cauliflower, lettuce, kale, spinach, capsicum.

Desserts: Coconut mango porridge, coconut yoghurt, coconut banana "ice cream".

Iron is very important for babies and toddlers and once babies become anemic their sleep becomes very fragmented and I have had quite a few clients on iron therapy prescribed by their doctors as breastmilk or formula alone can't give babies all the iron they need after 6 months.

Flora was predominately 'demand' fed in regards to breastmilk, we moved her actual feds to after her breakfast and lunch, not right before naps and not after naps (apart from the midday nap). She needed a feed after her lunch nap for her afternoon tea. Her next feed was before bed in the evening. This spacing out of feeds increased Flora's appetite for solids over the day which helped her night sleep.



# *Emma 20 Months Old*

## *Co-Sleeping to Independent Sleep*

Emma was a 20-month-old who had been bed sharing with mum since she was very little. Mum had reached the stage now where her and dad wanted Emma to be able to sleep independently and for dad to be able to settle her to sleep.

Mum made the decision recently to stop feeding to sleep which was fabulous and had set Emma up for successfully being able to now learn to self-settle.

We spoke about using the technique outlined in your guide but first mum slept in in Emma's room for the first 3 days to get Emma used to sleeping in her new room.

After this mum left the room and slept in her own room once Emma was settled. After 7-10days of moving further and further away from the bed Dad took over the process and started off where mum had finished. This meant that Emma began to get used to someone else settling her at bed time and overnight.

This was hard for Dad and it caused a small regression in terms of how long it took Emma to settle but she still definitely selfsettled, and this was wonderful for her to not rely on Mum, and for Dad to feel involved.

Overnight we aimed for 1 breastfeed after midnight, and then just settling until morning. Emma had frequent wake ups from 3am-7am due to Emma being in a light sleep and the continual snacking (prior to sleep training) triggering her body to think it was awake time, not sleep time. After 3-4 days, we also dropped the 12am feed. We didn't cut all feeds cold turkey so mum didn't suffer night weaning too quickly and Emma had time to adjust.

We spoke about Emma's food and possibly increasing her protein intake due to not being able to have any dairy or nuts or eggs! Mum tried things like slow cooked beef or chicken casseroles.

Mum also went back to using Emma's sleeping bag as otherwise she was waking cold.

We also spoke about role playing at bed time for Emma, so she could see exactly what it was we expected of her now that she was learning to sleep by herself and not in Mum's bed. This was really important as she was very confused about her new sleeping situation at first. Mum offered her lots of praise and instant rewards too, such as stamps and stickers on her hand in the morning. This helped boost her confidence and self-esteem around sleeping on her own.

# *Elle 14 Months Old Bottle and Hold to Sleep Association*

Elle was a 14-month-old who was still waking at night for a bottle which mum and dad were keen to ditch. She was also frequently being held to sleep for her night sleep and middle of the night wake up.

Elle was attending day care and often napped at not ideal times at day care. She was frequently having a longer morning sleep around 10.30/11am and then no afternoon sleep. This leads to a rise in sleep debt which meant she was hard to get to sleep in the evening due to stress hormones. This also made it more likely that she would wake overnight. She also sometimes slept as late as 3-4pm in the afternoon at day care, it was important we let day care know that sleep after 3pm is not conducive to good night sleep either.

Elle was wheat free in her diet and a little bit of a picky eater, mum and dad did healthy options in lieu of wheat. We spoke about ensuring that she gets lots of protein in her diet and a bit more iron also. Pate on crackers, slow cooked beef or lamb. Cottage cheese mixed through her vegetables or regular cheese.

We spoke about Elle's bottle at night and I recommended reducing it down from 180ml to 120ml with 30ml of water, then 90ml of formula with 30ml of water and 60ml of formula and 30 ml of water. We did this over a few nights and then dropped the bottle completely and use the self-settling technique in your guide which is described below. At the same time that we reduced her bottle down, we needed to add a few more calories during the day to replace these lost calories, this is where chatting to the day care about her food really helped us know she wouldn't be hungry.

Elle needed a more regular bed time routine. Elle's new routine included having stories with her brother in the lounge then she had her bottle in her room before bed. Mum made sure she didn't feed to sleep and mum didn't hold her to sleep either. Mum gave her a cuddle and popped her into her sleeping bag and into bed wide awake.

We needed to aim to have her in bed around 4-4.5 hours maximum after her second nap ended, this is why we couldn't have her nap as late as 4.30pm.

Mum used the technique in this guide for all settling including bed time and any other wake ups, including 5.30am feed before her breakfast. Each time Elle stood up Mum laid her down and shushed her, stroked her face, and went back to her chair.

# *Frequently Asked Questions*

## **1. WHAT IF MY BABY WON'T FIT INTO YOUR ROUTINE?**

You can work on establishing routine while sleep training. The important aspects of the routine to apply to your own day, are the number of feeds (we don't want hungry children) and awake windows, especially the awake window from the last nap until bed time (we don't need over tiredness ruining our chances).

## **2. WHAT IF I DON'T WANT TO CHANGE MY ROUTINE BUT I WANT TO WORK ON NIGHT SLEEP?**

Apply the same important aspects as listed above and just work on nights, you will probably find your nights will easily fall into place.

## **3. WHAT IF I AM HAPPY TO ASSIST TO SLEEP IN THE DAY FOR NAPS, BUT WANT TO WORK ON NIGHT SLEEP ONLY?**

Working on nights only is fine, just as long as your child is not over tired from their naps, your nights will fall into place.

#### **4. WHAT IF MY 24-MONTH-OLD IS IN A BIG BED?**

You can still use the strategy outlined in this guide but you will have to physically return your child to bed each time they get out.

#### **5. WHAT ABOUT TEETHING, SHOULD I STOP?**

Most doctors agree with us that teething causes minimal disruption to sleep. As such, if you are worried about teething, I would advise that you continue with your sleep training and chat with your doctor about pain relief.

#### **6. WHAT IF MY CHILD GETS SICK WHILE I AM SLEEP TRAINING?**

If your child gets a cold or simple sniffles again you don't need to worry about stopping your sleep training. If your baby has a fever, ear infection, vomiting bug or anything beyond a cold then you will probably be advised to stop sleep training and wait until they are well again. Always check with your Doctor if you are concerned.

## **7. WHAT IF MY BABY IS CRYING AND CRYING AND NOT SLEEPING?**

If you are attempting nap training during the day, give your child 1 hour to fall asleep before cancelling a nap. If your child is taking more than 1 hour at night to fall asleep and your baby has been very upset this entire time either offer a feed to calm them down and try again, or do a self-check and consider backing off how much soothing you are doing and if your baby would be better with a little more space to try to self-settle.

## **8. WHAT IF MY BABY IS UNDER 6 MONTHS OLD?**

This sleep guide is specifically designed for children over the age of 6 months. You could contact us for a plan for your younger child, or wait until 6 months to start this guide.

## **9. HOW DO I KNOW IF I CAN DROP A NIGHT FEED?**

Ensure your baby is thriving weight wise and if concerned check with your doctor. But the flow chat in this guide should take you through the questions you need to answer to work out if your baby can drop their night feeds.



## 10. MY BABY WON'T STOP CAT NAPPING, WHAT DO I DO?

You can do a few extra naps between 9am-3pm to ensure your baby isn't over tired, or you can work on re-settling to stop the cat napping.



# Author

**Emma Purdue** is the owner and founder of Baby Sleep Consultant NZ and Australia, Happiest Baby on the Block educator and Mother of 3. She has a bachelor of Science and a Diploma in Education from the University of Auckland.

Her approaches in child sleep have led to the development of the international training company, certifying and training sleep consultants around the world. [www.babysleepconsultanttraining.com](http://www.babysleepconsultanttraining.com)

Emma's team of consultants have helped over 15,000 tired parents around the world, they understand sleep in all areas, as well as parental stress' and the emotional challenge we face as parents when trying to improve our children's sleep.

It's not easy and you only want what's best for your child. The Baby Sleep Consultant Team have many free resources on our website in addition to this sleep guide [www.babysleepconsultant.co.nz](http://www.babysleepconsultant.co.nz) or [www.babysleepconsultant.com.au](http://www.babysleepconsultant.com.au)

We have live sleep Q&A on our facebook pages frequently [www.facebook.com/babysleepconsultant](https://www.facebook.com/babysleepconsultant) join us for one soon!

If you need some one on one assistance we offer phone, email and home consults, please get in touch [emma@babysleepconsultant.co.nz](mailto:emma@babysleepconsultant.co.nz)



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