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Baby Sleep Tips – Developing Sleep Associations

By Brandon C. Hall

Everyone who has had the experience of being a parent knows all too well the difficulties of getting your baby to sleep soundly throughout the night. The dark circles around the eyes of new parents are usually familiar to all those that have been around them. In terms of baby sleep tips, one of the most important things you must try and establish as a parent is getting your baby to learn to fall asleep on his own. The process by which your child begins to fall asleep on his own is one that involves a natural transition from falling asleep with the mother to falling asleep in an independent fashion. One of the best ways in which you can speed up this transition is to encourage your child to develop sleep associations that he or she can recreate independently.

Naturally, everyone – and babies in particular – will develop sleep associations. These are the things that you associate with bedtime, and allow you to create an environment in which it is easy to fall asleep. When your baby is at an extremely young age, he will naturally develop sleep associations involving the mother, as he will often fall asleep in her arms. As you attempt to get your baby to sleep in his own, however, it is crucial that you work to change these associations.

If you always put your child to sleep by holding him, or allowing him to use a pacifier, you create a sleep association with these things. Then, when your child wakes up in the middle of the night, he can't go back to sleep on his own because he is unable to recreate his sleeping environment without you: he needs you to feed him or rock him in order to sleep.

As you begin to try and get your child to sleep on his own, you should introduce items into his sleeping routine that he can sleep with, such as a particular blanket or a stuffed animal. What this will do is create associations for your child with these items for sleep. Then, when he awakes in the middle of the night, he will be able to recreate a sleeping environment without your assistance by grabbing his stuffed animal, etc. It can also be beneficial to introduce "transitional items" into your baby's bedtime routine: Allow him to have his stuffed animal or blanket with him during a final feeding and before-bedtime activities, and allow him to take these things with him to bed.

No matter what you do, your child is going to be creating his or her own sleep associations. Your job is to try and create associations with items that are under his or her control. By giving your child as much

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control over his sleeping environment as possible, you allow him to begin to achieve sleep independently. The most difficult transition in early parenting is the one towards independent sleep for your child, and if you introduce new items into your child's sleeping place, you will hasten this transition, which will soon allow both you and your child to get a good night's rest.

Brandon C. Hall maintains (

<http://www.freeinfoblog.com>

) which contains many articles and resources

on baby sleep tips at (

<http://www.freeinfoblog.com/category/baby-sleep-tips>

). There is also information

on dozens of other topics.

Baby Sleep Tips – Feeding During The Day

By Brandon C. Hall

Every parent of a newborn will inevitably deal with many sleepless nights. Babies, of course, have many needs, and when they awake in the night they will cry for their mothers. One of your most important tasks as a parent is to establish good sleeping habits in your child. Every baby must go through a transition where he adjusts from sleeping with his mother to sleeping on his own. This is a natural transition of course, and takes some time, but there are things you can do to expedite the process. Not only will this help your child develop better sleep habits, it will allow you to get some much needed rest.

Many baby sleep tips exist, and every parent would be well advised to research many different baby sleep tips. It is important to keep in mind, however, that no baby sleep tip should be considered hard and fast rules. As a parent, your instincts know best, and when you are in doubt in regards to baby sleep tips remind yourself of this fact. Many first time parents experience insecurity in terms of whether their decisions and strategies are correct, and while you shouldn't be uninformed, you should always view baby sleep tips through the lens of your own parental instincts.

Now, one thing you should consider when trying to get your newborn to sleep better at night is what his feeding habits are. Oftentimes the child will be active and otherwise busy during the day, and won't be doing a lot of feeding. The problem with this, of course, is that he will then wake you repeatedly thought the night for feedings. A good technique, then, for getting your baby to sleep better at night is to "tank up" during the day. Try feeding every three hours during the day. This will not only ensure that you child's appetite is satisfied for the night, but will create an important association: you want your child to associate feeding with the daytime. If your child does wake up in the night for a feeding, try to get him

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to do one full feeding the first time he wakes up. If you don't do this, you encourage him to "snack" throughout the night – i.e. wake you up every couple hours.

Again, it is important to understand these baby feeding tips should not be taken as hard and fast rules, but rather as guidance. In a general way, you want to create both daytime and sleep associations for your child. You want him to associate feeding and play with something that happens during the day, and lullabies and baths as something that happens at night, before bed. By doing this you ease the transition between sleep and wakefulness, which is the ultimate goal in terms of putting your child to bed easily. If, however, your child doesn't want to feed every three hours, don't force him. Similarly, don't force a full feeding when you wake him at night. Rather, think of the bigger picture: by creating general habits and associations for your child, you will ensure a hasty and healthy sleep development.

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