

The Baby Sleep Site[®] is filled with invaluable resources to help parents and a baby or toddler get on the right sleep track, whether it's helping a baby or toddler sleep through the night, getting a baby on a regular nap schedule, weaning her off the breast or bottle or learning to set limits that reinforce good sleep habits.



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5 Ways to Help Your Child Sleep Through the Night

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20 Baby Sleep Myths

What is the real truth about baby sleep?

MYTH

All babies should sleep through the night by 4 months old.

FACT: 4 months is often the time that a baby may be physically able to sleep through the night, but many babies need a night feed until around 6 months, if bottle fed, or 9 months, if nursed. Not all babies are the same.

MYTH

My baby wakes several times through the night because he's hungry.

FACT: If your baby is over 4 months and waking several times through the night, it's probably not because of hunger. It's because he needs better ways of falling back asleep.

MYTH

If I get my baby tired enough, she will sleep through the night, or take a long nap.

FACT: Over-tiredness actually causes difficulty falling asleep, difficulty staying asleep, and increased waking in the early morning hours.

MYTH

A baby will sleep through the night when they reach a certain weight, such as 12 pounds.

FACT: Sleeping through the night depends on development of a baby's nervous system AND ability to learn how to fall back asleep without help. A baby could be 12 or 15 pounds, and these things still may not occur.

MYTH

Babies wake because they are breast-fed.

FACT: Infants wake because their nervous system is still immature and incapable of sleeping through the night. Older babies wake because they are unable to soothe.

MYTH

My baby deserves that I get up with him each time he cries.

FACT: Babies deserve the gift of sleeping well. By teaching them how to fall asleep and back to sleep on their own, you enable them to avoid sleep problems that can go into their childhood and adulthood.

MYTH

I'll wait until my baby is a toddler to help them sleep better.

FACT: With toddlers come increased persistence. Working on your baby's sleep sooner rather than later can help avoid habits that are really hard to break.

MYTH

My baby is just a poor sleeper. There's nothing I can do about it.

FACT: Sleep is influenced by BOTH a baby's natural makeup, and how we respond to them. You have a large influence over your baby's sleep.

MYTH

My baby should never cry during the night.

FACT: A little fussing or crying between sleep cycles is very common. When a baby knows how to sleep, they simply go into their next sleep cycle. Many babies can learn this skill using gentle sleep coaching methods.

MYTH

My baby is happy and does not need to nap.

FACT: Babies and toddlers compensate tiredness by appearing even more alert.



The BABY SLEEP SITE®

Helping you and your child sleep

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MYTH

My baby doesn't need as much sleep as most.

FACT: Babies need 11-12 hours of night sleep, and an additional 2-3 hours of sleep during the day divided into naps.

MYTH

8 months is the best time to sleep coach.

FACT: Babies can learn soothing techniques earlier than 8 months. In fact, there is a sleep regression that occurs between 8-10 months.

MYTH

My baby just does not like her crib.

FACT: As long as your baby has the option of sleeping in bed with you, or in her crib, she will choose to sleep with you.

MYTH

Teething keeps my baby up all night.

FACT: Teething can be tough, but when babies are up all night, it's because they need better soothing techniques.

MYTH

My baby doesn't rely on her pacifier. It's always spit out when she awakens.

FACT: Your baby is most likely awake because she needs you to replace the pacifier to help her soothe.

MYTH

Short naps mean I need to keep my baby up longer.

FACT: Not necessarily. It depends on age, and being awake too long can cause even shorter naps in young babies.

If you have any questions or comments on this handout or need help and support for your troubled sleeper, please e-mail us at:
contact@babysleepsite.com.

MYTH

My older child slept all night at 2 months, so that's what my new baby will do as well.

FACT: Every baby is different. One sibling's sleep patterns and temperament can be totally different than the other.

MYTH

My baby is just an early riser.

FACT: The number one reason for early morning waking is over-tiredness at bedtime.

MYTH

Never wake a sleeping baby.

FACT: Sometimes a sleeping baby does need to be woken, such as to preserve an early bedtime, or allow there to be time for all the recommended naps at his/her age.

MYTH

Two naps a day is enough for my 4 month old.

FACT: At this age, it's really important to keep wake time short. If she's napping only twice a day, she's overtired, which contributes to even more sleep challenges.



About the Author: Nicole Johnson is a sleep coach and the owner of The Baby Sleep Site® specializing in baby sleep products and consulting services. Nicole is a wife and the mother of two boys.

With a B.A. degree from UC Berkeley and an MBA from Ohio State University, Nicole has also received an honorary degree in "Surviving Sleep Deprivation," thanks to her son's "no sleep" curriculum. She has become an expert on infant and toddler sleep and has made it her mission to help other parents solve their child's sleep problems too.

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