

FAST FIXES TO TRY BEFORE SLEEP TRAINING

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QUICK FIXES & SLEEP TRAINING



Some of these quick fixes can also help you lay down a good foundation for sleep that will benefit you and baby in the long run when started in the early weeks of baby's life.

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The decision to sleep train can be overwhelming. Especially as there are so many sleep training options and opinions on those options out there. A skim of the internet and most facebook groups will tell you that.

Plus sleep is so important to our physical and mental health, and if we aren't getting the amount of sleep we need, as adults we can get irritable and short tempered, and baby won't be too much fun to be around either.

It's also important to remember that sleep problems are individual to each parent and baby. What may be a problem for someone else may not be an issue for you and vice versa.

But whether you choose to sleep train or not, it can be beneficial to try these quick fixes first and you may possibly find that sleep training will go much smoother and quicker.



8 QUICK FIXES FOR BETTER SLEEP

Remember to be consistent and predictable.

1. **Get outside!** When baby is born, they do not produce the sleep hormone melatonin nor do they have a circadian rhythm. Their sleep while they were on the inside was regulated by your sleep system. In order to jump start their circadian rhythm, which also helps get melatonin flowing, they will need daylight, a broad spectrum of light. Take them for walks or a trip to the park, varying the times of day you do it to get that light exposure.

2. **A predictable bedtime routine.** This should probably be number one on my list because it is what I feel is the single most important thing you can do. And can be started very early on. In the first 3-4 weeks of life you are basically just trying to survive. Your healing and learning about your baby and their cues. Once you have a rhythm of life happening you can start to create a predictable and consistent bedtime routine.

Babies can't form habits during these early weeks but the predictability can be calming and will allow baby to eventually understand that when these consistent things happen, they will be getting rest.

The bedtime routine doesn't need to be complicated, bath, feed, book/song, snuggle and bed, all completed in 30-45 minutes.

The key to it all will be consistency, even on weekends and during vacations.

3. **Socks!** Yes, simply putting your baby to sleep with socks on, even under footy pyjamas can help those baby's that think it's okay to wake up at 4am to stop doing that. In the early morning hours, our core temperature drops and can wake us up. Weirdly, research has shown that our core temperature is regulated by our feet. So popping some socks on to keep baby's feet warm in the early morning hours can be helpful.

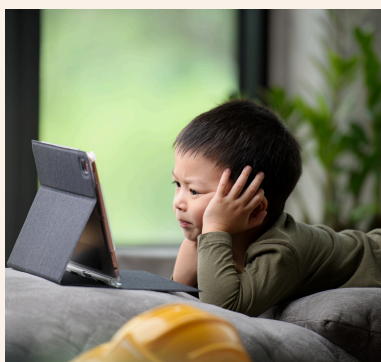


QUICK FIXES...



4. Create a consistent daytime nap schedule. Now don't stress too much, when the schedule needs to be flexible because of appointments or family gatherings, that's okay. We are really looking at the times between naps, as well as the length of naps and especially the last nap before bed so that we can have enough sleep pressure built up so that baby will fall asleep more easily and stay asleep longer.

Sample Nap Schedule (3 months to 1 year)



5. Limit screen time. I know this one is constantly being thrown out there and in this day and age, it should be a no brainer, but for good sleep at night, it's a game changer. The blue light that screens emit can actually block the sleep hormone, melatonin and make it more difficult to fall asleep. Try removing the screen time 1-2 hours before the child is expected to go to sleep.



6. Parent/child time. In our busy lives, with work and other commitments, it can sometimes feel like we never see each other. Your child may be resisting bedtime because they actually miss you. Try to carve out some time during the bedtime routine or just before to have some one on one time with your child. When my kids were little, I spent most of the time with them, but their dad didn't, so bath and bedtime was their special time together.

QUICK FIXES...



7. **Wind-down time.** Before diving into a bedtime routine, consider doing something calming and relaxing after dinner time. 15-30 minutes before the bedtime routine, dim the lights, start speaking in a calmer voice, do some tidy up, maybe pick out the books for bedtime. These calming activities can help lower cortisol, which is an energy, stress hormone that can inhibit sleep and the release of melatonin.



8. **Check out your child medically speaking.** Sleep can be affected by a number of different factors. Some of these can include: eczema, colds, allergies or even food intolerance, and what my mum referred to as growing pains. Getting some medical advice on baby's sleep from their paediatrician or family doctor can and should be considered.



Bonus!!! Give your self a break and try not to strive for perfection. Remember, your baby isn't a robot. Like you they have good days and bad days. You don't always sleep a solid 8 hrs every night...and if you do, what's your secret? Illness, starting daycare, teething, holidays, vacations and a plethora of other things can disrupt sleep. With a loose structure and a bucket of patience you can easily roll with any bumps life throws at you.