

NDC Baby and Toddler or 'Possums' Sleep Program (2020 Edition)

Our evidence-based baby and toddler sleep program has been transforming families' lives since 2011.

In this 2020 edition, Dr Pamela Douglas shares information, answers questions, and takes you step by step through the NDC or Possums sleep strategies for making the nights manageable and the days with your baby as easy and as enjoyable as possible, without crying and stress.

If you have a toddler or older child, it's still very important to know about the basic sleep science and how to create healthy sleep patterns, before you go on to look at the special section *Toddler and healthy childhood sleep going forward* at the end of the 2020 edition. We have asterisked videos that are relevant for parents of toddlers, right throughout the program.

Enjoy!

Welcome and introduction

Welcome and how to find your way around our NDC Baby and Toddler or Possums Sleep Program! *

We don't want our little ones crying in the night – there is a better way *

Are you concerned about your little one's sleep? *

What's the problem with baby 'sleep training'?

The myths of overstimulation and overtiredness in babies *

Why 'sleep training' worsens sleep for many families *

What does adult sleep science tell us about the baby 'sleep training' approach? *

Why graphs illustrating infant sleep architecture don't help *

How our revolutionary approach to baby sleep (NDC or the Possums Sleep Program) came about *

The sleep science

Will my baby's sleep problems affect development in later childhood?

How much sleep does my baby need? *

What's the difference between normal and excessive night waking? *

Sleep regulator # 1: the circadian clock *

Sleep regulator # 2: sleep pressure *

Biologically hardwired sensory needs *

Is my baby grunting and wriggling a lot in the night because of gas pain? *
Baby-wearing: my baby only sleeps when carried
Experimentation is the key to resilience! *
My baby only catnaps during the day
What time should my baby go to bed at night?
White noise and other 'sleep aids' *
Does it help to track my baby's sleep with an app?
Can I wake a sleeping baby?
Is my baby waking because of gut pain?

How to change sleep patterns: begin during the day

How long does it take to change sleep patterns? *
Does it matter when we start the day? *
Taking the work out of daytime sleep *
Tool #1 for making the day as easy as possible *
Tool #1 (breastfeeding): offer the breast frequently and flexibly to dial baby down
Tool #1 (bottle-feeding): offer the bottle frequently and flexibly to dial baby down if 0-4 months of age
Focus on daytime sensory adventures if your child is weaned *
Tool #2 (sensory): meeting baby's biological hunger for rich and diverse experiences outside the home *
Babies sleep easily during the day if they are enjoying rich and changing sensory-motor experiences *
Sleep pressure drops off quickly with even a tiny nap *
My baby only sleeps on me during the day and wakes all the time at night *
How to manage baby sleep when there is an older child (or two or more!) needing my attention
Is it ok for baby to nap when I'm out and about? *
How much daytime sleep does my baby need? *
Don't let your baby's sleep get in the way of you enjoying the day!
Should I wake my baby from a daytime nap?
Childcare and daytime naps *
Naps for older babies and toddlers *
Late afternoon naps
You often know when your baby's sleep pressure is rising (but the baby still doesn't need to go straight to sleep!)
Taking off the sleep lens and putting on the sensory lens *
Will starting solids earlier help my breastfed baby sleep better?
Will eating more solids help my older breastfed baby sleep better? *
The introduction of solids and sensory play *
Should I eliminate foods from my diet because my breastfed child is unsettled at night?
Feeling under pressure to get milk or solids into your baby for the sake of sleep can make the days and nights harder not easier *
Is it ok to use a pacifier or dummy? *

How to change sleep patterns: evenings and bedtime

Melatonin, the circadian clock, and managing parental exhaustion in the evenings *
Should I let my baby nap in the evening? *
What can we do about bedtimes?
Does breastfeeding my baby to sleep create bad habits? *
How can another loving adult help with sleep when the baby is breastfed? *
Gradually make baby's bedtime later in the evening *

Manageable nights

Four disruptors of baby's night-time sleep (NOT including disruption of the circadian clock!)
Safe baby sleep 0-6 months
Is it safe to have my baby in bed with me?
Will wrapping help my baby sleep?
Is my older baby waking at night because of hunger?
Is my baby waking at night because I breastfeed frequently or because I breastfeed to sleep?
My child wakes up screaming in the night *
Should I feed my baby every time he or she wakes in the night? *
Is my baby grunting and wriggling a lot in the night because of gas pain? *
Does co-sleeping make my baby wake more in the night?
Do dream feeds help with sleep? *
When should I stop breastfeeding in the night? *
How do I stop breastfeeding in the night? *
When will my child stop needing a bottle in the night? *
What can I try if my child won't transfer into the cot during the night? *
Are you lying awake for long periods in the night when the baby sleeps? *
Protecting sleep throughout childhood (by letting sleep be easy) *
UNICEF Sharing a bed with your baby: a guide for breastfeeding mothers pdf

Toddler and healthy childhood sleep going forward

Daytime naps and shaping healthy toddler sleep patterns *
Is it normal for toddlers to wake in the night? *
Does my child need a bedtime routine for healthy sleep into childhood? *
Is it ok that my toddler comes into the parental bed in the night? *
Growing easy sleep throughout childhood *

The Possums Sleep Film (2015 Edition): Foundations for Healthy Parent-Baby Sleep

Time bar numbers on this page signify when each section begins in case you want to jump ahead. You will find *The Possums Sleep Workbook (2015)* and a *Possums Sleep Program Summary Document* at the bottom of this page. There are sections for toddlers in the Possums Sleep Film, including a consultation between parents of an 11-month-old and Dr Pamela Douglas, and information for the older child in *The Possums Sleep Workbook*.

Taking control

- Clarifying the problem
- Exploring your values
- What is cued care?

About the sleep science

- You can't 'make' your baby sleep but you can support healthy baby sleep (- a paradox!)
- The two biological sleep regulators
- Normal variability of infant sleep
- Dialling down the baby's sympathetic nervous system
- Safe sleep

Creating an action plan

- Deal with excessive night-waking by re-setting the circadian clock
 - Why is rich sensory nourishment important for your baby?
- Managing difficult thoughts and feelings
 - Mindfulness
 - Emotional Acceptance
 - Physical Activity
 - Relaxation etc
 - Deep Breathing
 - Conscious Muscle Relaxation

What is required for a sleep-promoting life?

Six months plus

- Learning something new in the night
- Possums sleep consultation with parents of baby aged 9.5 months (by Renee Keogh)
- Possums Sleep consultation with parents of baby aged 11 months (by Dr Pamela Douglas)*

Possums Sleep Program Summary pdf*

Exercises from Acceptance and Commitment Therapy

- Deep breathing
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- A mindful nappy change
- A mindful moment
- Mindfulness before bed-time
- Acceptance of emotions
- Mindfulness

The Possums Sleep Workbook (2016 Edition)