



My Soundly Sleeping Baby

How to Optimise your 6-12-month-olds sleep

“A return to night waking after sleeping through the night is entirely normal.”

(Middlemiss.W, Kendall- Tacket. K 2014)



Development between 6-9 months

Physical Development - Large Motor

- **Sitting - Straight back and head with the ability to turn either way to observe and look around.**
- **Can roll over front to back - 5-6 months**
- **Back to front 6-7 months**
- **Able to hold up head chest & shoulders during tummy time**
- **Bears weight and bounces up & down when supported to stand.**



Development between 6-9 months

Physical Development - Fine Motor & Visual

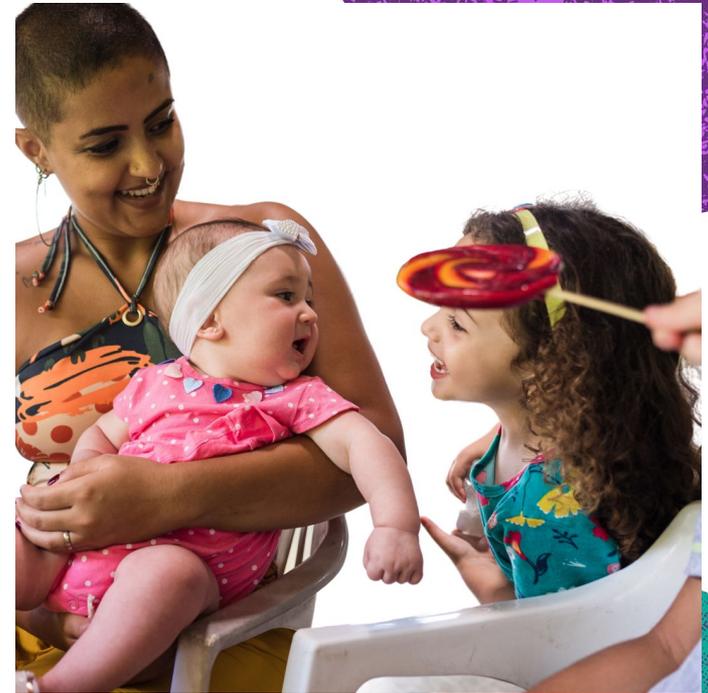
- **Visually Instiable - Very curious about environment.**
- **Stretches both hands to reach & grasp**
- **Will search for toy when dropped outside visual field (early object permanence)**



Development between 6-9 months

Language & Communication

- Will laugh & chuckle when playing & amused & can scream out of annoyance
- Will babble & vocalise to themselves or others.
- Recognition of facial expressions
- Turns to the sound of familiar voices & sounds at ear level.
- Listen to voices even if not in view



Development 9-12 months

Physical development- large motor

- Able to pull self into sitting and sits unsupported.
- Moves around on floor by way of rolling wriggling on abdomen and eventually crawling
- Pulls themselves to standing, holding onto to objects for support
Cannot lower back to the floor falling or sitting backwards with a bump.



Development 9-12 months

Physical development- fine motor

- Depth perception and distance perception developed.
- Able to follow a moving object visually with ease
- Grasps offered objects with curiosity
- Grasps objects within reach with curiosity
- Pokes and points with index finger
- Enjoys throwing objects

Development 9-12 months

Language & communication development

- Vocalises deliberately & to gain attention.
- Babbling syllables become longer “mum-mum” “dad-dad” “gaa-maa”
- Conversational babbling with carers
- Understanding of questions through behaviour ‘reacting to where’s mummy?’ by looking around.
- Will imitate playful sounds they hear. Coughs, mmmm, smacking lips.
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Separation Anxiety



Personal & social development

Fear of Strangers and the development of object permanence.

How does Separation anxiety impact sleep?

Element of the unknown

Your baby is now developing emotions & fear

Being Responsive?

How do you feel when you are learning something new?

It can be :

- Fun & exciting
- Frustrating or tricky
- Hard or overwhelming

All the above creates stress which elicits a stress response

Being Responsive?

Being responsive simply means:

- meeting your child at their level of current need.

Many parents worry that being responsive will lead to over dependent babies and difficulty creating boundaries around sleep, the opposite is true.

A child who is parented responsively both day and night is calmer, more relaxed and securely attached.

How we can optimise sleep, ours and theirs

**Do the easiest things first &
Remember**

- that this is all normal
- unavoidable

**Your baby at times will be
exhibiting the three C's.**

- **Crying**
- **Clingy**
- **Cranky**

Self care is important!

**Even the most calmest and chilled
person can feel stressed by a crying
baby.**

- **Stock up on healthy foods &
snacks**
- **Cook & freeze for times when
baby won't allow much hands
free time.**
- **Share the load with your village**

Quick Wins

- **Expose your baby to broad spectrum daylight as early in the day as possible. Allow your little one time outside in natural daylight.**
- **Reduce light intensity as the evening progresses.**
- **Create & consistently do your bedtime routine.**
- **Prioritise nap timing over nap location & self settling.**
- **- Meals should be at regular and consistent times every day.**
- **Bedtimes and wake up times need to be regular and consistent too.**
- **Ensure that your little one is getting plenty of exercise and is given plenty opportunity for activity. - this releases cortisol**

About naps

Naps can be tricky

@ 6 months baby may still need 3 naps

@ 9 months they may only need 2

@ 12 months they may only want 1 but sometimes need 2

Naps are to minimise the stress response caused from increased sleep pressure.

They don't need to be perfect in terms of length or location .

Work on getting the nap by any means and then work on where the nap takes place if you even need to.



Methods for settling

These methods may involve some crying. However you never have to leave your baby to cry alone. comfort and reassure them.

Being patient and just practising these methods will help baby become accustomed to falling asleep more and more independently.

Hug it out.

After the usual bedtime routine, mum or dad holds the baby in their arms until they are asleep.

- The baby may cry.
- Once the baby is asleep, place them down in their crib or bed.
- Repeat for every wake up.
- Once the wake ups reduce, mum can then hold until baby is sleepy but awake, then put them down in the crib and soothe them in the crib/bed.
- Once baby becomes used to being put down drowsy and falling asleep that way then parents can move on to settling baby awake in their cot or crib
- An alternative is to cuddle/hug baby while they remain in their crib or moses basket.

Hug it out.

This works well because the baby get physical comfort to reassure them through the change from how they usually fall asleep .

I suggest that the crib mattress is placed on the floor, and the parent can then lie right next to their baby, cuddling and soothing that way rather than standing and hugging, as the baby sometimes wakes up when transferred to their crib or bed.

This may not work so well if younger babies still need night feeds. It is hard work for parents and often involves a few sleepless nights.

If implemented consistently baby can learn to nod off within 3 - 7 days

Habits stacking

Multiple sleep cues



The idea is to layer up sleep cues so that the remaining cues are present when you remove the preferred cue.

- **Touch** - touching, stroking, patting, massage rocking
- **Sound** - ssshhing, white noise lullabies soft music
- **Smell** - your scent smell, lavender
- **Sight** - darkness, your face, minimal visual stimulation
- **Taste** - suckling, dummy, feeding

Drowsy but Awake?

Drowsy but awake doesn't work for some children as they startle or awaken when you begin to lower them down.

1. Practice drowsy but awake
2. Wait until child is in a deeper state of sleep to settle them in-situ
3. Try settling them laying with them and transitioning sideways



The Floor bed



The Floor Bed

Photo credit : breastfeeding twins & triplets blog. Kathryn Stagg IBCLC

- A useful alternative for parents wanting to move their little ones out of their bed and into their own bed in their own room.
- Helps eliminate “lowering to cot” waking
- Useful for allowing ease of comfort, parent can easily slip away without disturbing the child.

Shhhh Patting

This technique is another that can be practised and often works quite well.

- Carry out the bedtime routine as usual
- Settle baby in cot/crib or place where you want them to sleep
- Rub or pat their tummy whilst making a loud sssshhhushing sound
- Baby may cry and become upset
- Continue to shhh pat till baby falls asleep

This works well as baby has physical comfort and the presence of the parent to reassure them.

If implemented consistently baby can learn to fall asleep this way with less physical comfort from but still mum or dad presence within 1-2 weeks

Pick Up Put Down

This technique is another that can be practised and often works quite well.

- Carry out the bedtime routine as usual
- Settle baby in cot/crib or place where you want them to sleep
- Rub or pat their tummy whilst making a loud sssshhhushing sound
- Baby may cry and become upset if so pick baby up to calm them
- When calm put them back down.
- Continue to shhh pat till baby falls asleep

This works well as baby has physical comfort and the presence of the parent to reassure them. If implemented consistently baby can learn to fall asleep this way with less physical comfort from mum or dad presence within 1-2 weeks

Downside to this method is that PU PD can be quite stimulating and may cause some babies to get really cross and upset.