

I Just Need Sleep!!!

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Settling one baby to sleep can be hard enough, but because I have twins it can be just that little bit more challenging.

Newborn babies are pretty good at falling asleep anywhere. It doesn't matter if they are at home, out and about, being held, rocked or fed they will usually just drift off to sleep when they are ready.....unless of course it is night time then it is a different story!!

Newborn babies aren't born with a functioning body clock, therefore they wouldn't have a clue whether it is night or day. That is why they could decide that it is party time at 3am. As they mature so do their sleep cycles. When your baby hits about 8 weeks old and is starting to notice the world around them, they will start to respond to you with social smiles. This is the time that they also start to take note of how and where they are falling asleep. Now is the time to set a consistent routine and put them down to sleep in the same place as much as possible.

When you have the same routine each time you put them to bed your baby will start to respond to these cues and realise that it is time to get sleepy. Put them into their bed on their back, drowsy but awake and they will start to develop the skills to self sooth and fall asleep. Smile as you put them to bed so that they associate their bed with being happy, warm and comfortable.

Other tips for an environment conducive to sleep for children of any age are:

Dim the lights, turn off any screens and do quiet activities in the hour leading up to bedtime. Don't encourage any rough and tumble or physical games, talk quietly and



make the whole house a calm and relaxing place to be.

Make the room as dark as possible even for day sleeps. This may mean investing in some good blackout curtains. If you use a nightlight insure that it is a red, orange or yellow light. White, blue or green lights stop the body from producing melatonin which is an essential hormone for sleep. When it isn't sleep time, try to get outside in natural light as much as possible.

White noise is fantastic for blocking out other noises. When listening to music the brain stays active as you listen to lyrics or melodies. White noise however blocks out background sounds without giving the brain any patterns to focus on. Continuous white noise is better than white noise that turns off after a set time as this keeps the environment the same when your children are getting back to sleep after waking. Turn the white noise on before taking your children into the bedroom as it is more relaxing entering a room where it is playing than having it come on suddenly.

If your children are having multiple night wakings, or waking before 6am this is a sure sign that they are overtired. Try an earlier bedtime for a couple of weeks to get rid of any sleep debt.

Lastly try not to stress if your children aren't sleeping!!! This is easier said than done, but your children will pick up on your body language, so the calmer and more relaxed you are, the calmer and more relaxed they will be.

