

Peaceful baby sleep day and night

European Development Foundation, Bulgaria

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Babies need enough sleep to grow healthy

- Usually newly born babies sleep during the day and the night
- Young parents need to:
 - Establish a routine for “feeding – staying awake - sleeping”
 - Gently teach their baby to sleep when it is supposed to be necessary
- At different age babies need different amounts of sleeping time



Babies and Sleep

Age	Number of hours per day (24 hours)
First 6 months	From 16 to 20 hours, split into almost equal periods throughout day and night
From 6th to 12th month	Around 3 hours per day and around 11 – per night
From 1 to 3 years	From 10 to 13 hours during the day and night, split into day naps and night sleeps

How external conditions affect peaceful baby sleep?



- General health conditions of the baby
- The sleeping room – temperature, noises, darkness
- The baby crib / mattress
- Healthy feeding and breast feeding

Last but not least: parents' stress level and health conditions; tiredness and sleep deprivation; need to adjust to new habits and routine related to the baby

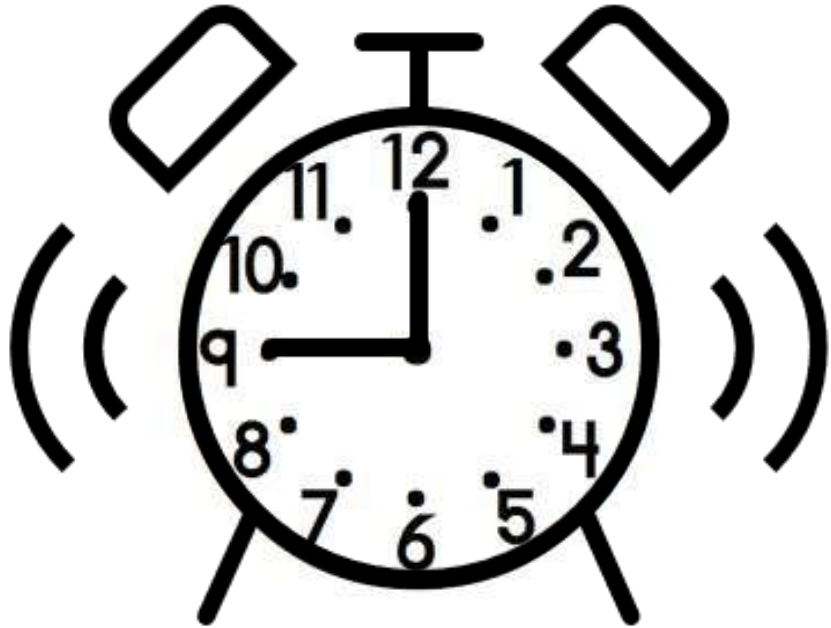
The importance of routine for the peaceful baby sleep

- Activity / Rest periods and how they affect baby sleep
 - Adjusting baby's internal clock to day/night routine
 - Creating a sense of predictability and routine in the baby's programme within the day/night periods
 - Establishing a sleeping routine – for the day naps and the night sleeps
- How to select the best sleep timing for our baby?



The importance of routine for the peaceful baby sleep

Keep in mind:



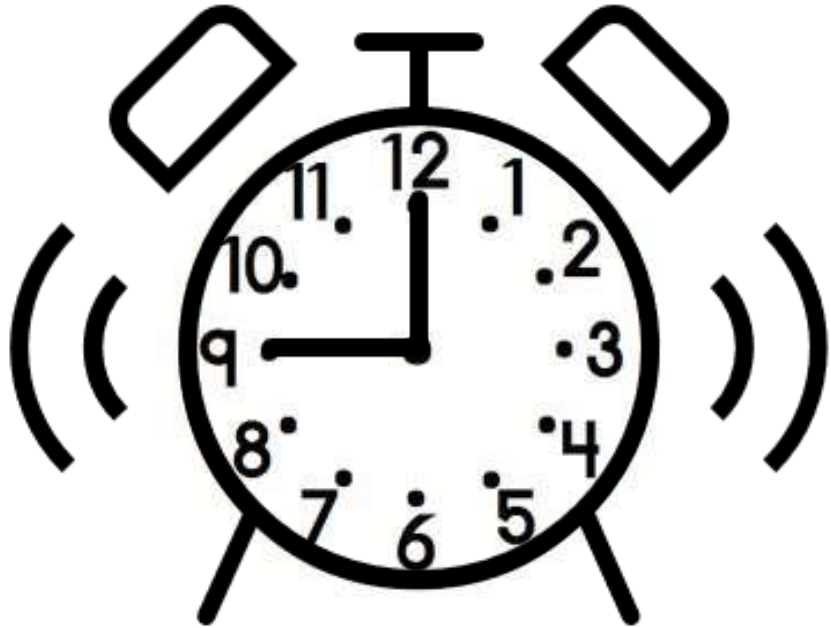
- ❖ Baby's exhaustion affects his/her calmness and peaceful sleep
- ❖ For babies and children going early to bed means early wake up
- ❖ Good daily naps/sleep is a precondition for the good night sleep

Creating sleeping rituals

- What is a ritual? – something which we repeat or do on a regular basis and predisposes us to expect something else
- Examples of rituals:
 - Doing massage
 - Singing a song
 - Gently touching the baby
 - Reading a tale / book
 - Holding the lovely teddy
 - Doing a warm bath (not all babies calm down, so be careful with it)
 - Or anything else which will calm down and relax your baby



Creating sleeping rituals



Keep in mind:

- ❖ The most important thing for establishing a sleeping ritual is to do the same things in the same order and everyday, so as to make the baby feel that the sleeping time is coming
- ❖ You have to think about two different rituals – for the day nap and for the night sleep

How to avoid negative sleep associations?

- What is a “negative sleep association”?
- Some examples:
 - Falling asleep while sucking – during breast or bottle feeding
 - Swinging – in parents’ hands, in the crib
 - Sharing a common bed with the parent/s



Keep in mind: it is very easy to create bad sleep habits

Some positive practices to avoid negative sleep associations

By introducing



Key words or sounds to indicate sleeping time

A “transitive object” to replace the presence of the parent



– a toy, the blanket, or mammy’s T-shirt

Keep in mind:

- ❖ Try to avoid parents’ presence around the baby in time of falling asleep
- ❖ Learn to distinguish night sounds from night awakening

As a parent



- Be prepared for change (and don't be afraid of it)
- Be patient – establishing a new habit takes time
- Be persistent in teaching the new habit/s and don't give up if things go slowly
- Be ready to detach from your baby – he/she grows and becomes a separate creature

Keep in mind: sometimes parents might not be ready for the change and this could ruin the entire process

Something to conclude....

- ✓ Establishing new things is like dancing a tango – you do a step forward and then – a step backward
- ✓ Introduce changes in habits one by one
- ✓ Parents must be ready to change and adapt to the new situation
- ✓ First few months are crucial for establishing good sleep habits for your baby and save parents lots of problems at a later age
- ✓ Big changes in the family – illness, death, travel, etc, might affect your baby's sleep



And don't forget...



There are no right and wrong
parents

We learn to be parents and
could make mistakes on the
road

Love your baby and enjoy parenting!

Thank you for your attention!!