



# settling techniques



## 12 months to toddlers

Tresillian 24 hr Parents Help Line  
(02) 9787 0855  
or 1800 637 357  
(Freecall outside the Sydney Metropolitan area)  
[www.tresillian.net](http://www.tresillian.net)

Speak to a Tresillian Child & Family Health Nurse  
on-line at [ninemsn.com.au/messengermums](http://ninemsn.com.au/messengermums) or  
visit our website at [www.tresillian.net](http://www.tresillian.net)

This parent help brochure  
has been generously  
sponsored by:

**Bepanthen**<sup>®</sup>  
DINTMENT  
Help stop nappy rash before it starts

**Children are all very different.**  
**The following Settling Techniques are a guide only.**

A consistent routine is important to help your child recognise and establish good sleep patterns. Developing a bedtime ritual will also help signal to your child that it is time for sleep, this may include saying goodnight to family members, cleaning their teeth, reading a bedtime story and saying goodnight to their soft toys.

**When you observe your child's tired signs, prepare your baby for bed e.g.**

- Check the nappy
- Put your child in their bed/cot.

In order to help your child fall asleep by him/herself, you may find it helpful to understand normal sleep cycles and be able to identify their tired signs

**Tired signs may include:**

- Grimacing
- Sucking
- Yawning
- Clenched fists
- Grizzling
- Staring
- Frowning
- Rigid limbs
- Crying
- Jerky movements or becoming restless
- Minimal movements or activity
- Increased irritability e.g. whilst playing



# settling techniques

## 12 months to toddlers

A normal sleep cycle is approximately 40-60 minutes and some children will stir and re-settle themselves. However, some children who are dependent on their parent to help them fall asleep may have difficulty re-establishing sleep unless the same conditions for re-settling are met. For example, if your child needs the breast, bottle, dummy, cuddles or a complicated ritual to sleep, you may notice after one sleep cycle that he or she wakes and cries until the same conditions that he or she associates with falling asleep are re-established.

It can be difficult for children to learn to sleep by themselves. A consistent bedtime routine is important to help your child establish satisfactory sleep patterns.

\*\*When assisting your child develop a sleep pattern it is better to use levels of distress/cry as your guide to the need to comfort your child than adhering to a time schedule.

- Day: quiet time (story), bed
- Night: dinner, bath, quiet time (story), bedtime
- Spend some quiet time with your child, either reading a story, singing a nursery rhyme or a quiet cuddle
- Just prior to the agreed upon bedtime, tell your child that the story will finish soon
- Ensure your child is adequately clothed specially for the night e.g. warm pyjamas, enough blankets or a sleeping bag
- Having a favourite toy in the cot and a night light can help small children
- Say goodnight and kiss your child. If in a cot ensure that the sides are up and securely in place prior to leaving the room
- Give your child an opportunity to settle. Leave the bedroom door ajar. Try to leave your child for a short time
- If your child is not calming return to the room and reassure them, then lay him/her down

and tuck in the bedclothes

- In a calm voice tell your child it's time for sleep
- If the nappy is soiled or your child vomits, change with minimal fuss, then resume the settling technique
- You may have to repeat this for some time
- During the day if your child still remains unsettled for the length of the sleep with frequent reassurance then cease settling. Try to avoid "old habits" when settling, like giving a bottle or dummy. Continue with the usual daily routine and settling at the next sleep. At night time continue with settling

### Settling Technique if your child is in a bed

Ensure your baby has a consistent bedtime routine.

- Day: quiet time (story), bed
- Night: dinner, bath, quiet time (story), bedtime
- Place the child into bed – tuck in and say goodnight
- Special toy may help your child settle
- Tell the child what will happen if they get out of bed. Decide on this with your partner and be consistent
- If she/he gets out, put her/him back immediately with minimal fuss. Remain calm, but firm. If you get annoyed or angry they will become anxious, as they will think you are unhappy with them and not want to separate from you
- If the nappy is soiled or your child vomits, change with minimal fuss, then resume the settling technique
- If your child wakes again, either the same night or the next night, go in again and resettle
- You may have to repeat the above, often, for your child to settle

### FOR ALL YOUNG CHILDREN

If you wish to safely maintain physical closeness with your child while they are asleep, place their bed or a mattress on the floor beside your bed

If your child continues to remain unsettled, consider other management techniques. For example: cuddle; rhythmical movement (walk or rock); baby massage; relaxation techniques; music; or offer a drink of water. Choose whichever technique suits you and your child best.

With consistency these routines may take up to two weeks to show progress.

Times given are a guide only

### Safety Information

(adapted from the 'Kids & SIDS. Three Ways to Reduce the Risk' pamphlet)

The risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is increased if babies sleep on their tummies. The best position for babies to sleep in is on their backs

- Put your baby on their back to sleep
- Tuck in your baby's bedclothes securely
- Make sure your baby's head remains uncovered during sleep
- Make up the bassinette/cot so that the baby's feet are positioned at the foot of the bed
- Quilts, doonas, duvets, pillows, soft toys and cot bumpers in the cot are not recommended
- Use a firm, clean well-fitting mattress
- Do not put your baby on a water bed or bean bag
- Avoid smoking near your baby
- Bed sharing is unsafe if your baby slips under the bedding or into a pillows, is trapped between the bed and a parent or the wall, falls out of bed, becomes too hot from too much bedding or is rolled on. And of course, don't bedshare if you have been drinking alcohol or are affected by other drugs

**If you still need further assistance contact the  
Tresillian 24 hr Parents Help line on (02) 9787 0855 or  
1800 637 357 (Freecall outside the Sydney Metropolitan area)**