



SLEEP AND NAP TRAINING

* By 4 months babies are too interested in their surroundings and won't sleep well or for long if not in their cribs. Respect their sleep needs and be home for those naps (or direct their caregivers regarding naps). At 6 months you can put your baby in his/her own room.

* The maximum awake time between naps is **2 hours**. The exception is the first nap in the morning which may be only 1.5 hours from wake up time as it is a continuation of night sleep early on. Naps may last 45 min to 2 or 3 hours and you watch the **interval** between sleep not an actual nap time.

* This works out to **three naps until 9 to 12 months** when the evening nap naturally disappears.

* The evening nap needs to be short enough not to interfere with bedtime (you can break the rule and wake the baby).

* Bedtime needs to be **reasonable**: between 6:30 pm and 8:30 pm so your child can get 11 to 12 hours of sleep (waking up to feed with minimal stimulation and no diaper changes unless it's poop). Don't force your baby to sleep through the night until after 12 months. Ten percent of 12 month olds still wake up to feed and it has nothing to do with cereal!

* Give your baby a transitional object or "lovey" that is not a suffocation risk. Keep an extra one and rotate them. They may not notice it at first but will remind them of home when you're away. Help them learn to fall asleep on their own.

Books: Healthy Sleep Habits, Happy Child by Marc Weissbluth
Guide to Your Child's Sleep by the American Academy of Pediatrics