* **Sleep Cycles and Patterns**
* It takes a minimum of ten days to see changes and the circadian sleep cycle takes at least three weeks of consistency.
* **Sleeping routines**
* Sleeping is a learned behavior and this applies to resettling during the night.
* Teaching good sleep habits requires TIME, ACCEPTANCE, CONSISTENCY and TRANQUILITY (TACT).
* **Settling**
* I believe one of the most important skill that parents can teach babies is that of self-settling. It teaches babies how to gain control over their emotional state and this in turn leads to them developing their emotional backbone as they grow. It does not happen overnight and needs to be taught in a nurturing way.
* Basically when you go to bed you read a book, mediate, watch TV, or chat to your partner – a baby can only do one thing and that is cry. It is actually healthy for a baby to cry before going to sleep. It’s difficult to listen to and as long as they are happy and contented it is part of life. Remember you are not leaving the girls there to cry it out you are leaving them there to give them the ability to find their own sleep. You will not get anywhere by leaving the girls to cry for hours, you will succeed quicker by giving them their space and then helping them find their sleep.
* Try not to focus in trying to understand their cry going to sleep. They will both sound different and have different levels.
* **Tools for Settling**
* **Cupping**
* Cupping is when you cup your hand and do a slight push action upwards on their bottom or lower body and shushing at the same time.  This is done in rhythm with their heartbeat.

**Shushing**

* Shushing ideally is a long, low sound, resembling air being released from a tyre. It should be loud enough so that your baby can hear it over their crying. It is thought that babies respond to sshushing as it mimics the sound in the womb.
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* **Patting**
* Patting baby’s lower body or bottom mimics your baby’s heartbeat and reassures your baby of your presence. It may be a rhythmic, firm and constant pat or a stronger jiggling or shunting action. Both can be done in your arms or the cot.
* **The ‘Engulf’ Hold**
* Hold your baby so that the head is resting in your elbow crease slightly away from your body. This position ensures that being too close to their milk supply does not distract your baby.
* With your other arm running the length of your baby’s spine, draw your baby in close to your body so that you are pressed tummy to tummy. Your baby’s face will be nestled just below your shoulder.
* With your top arm, reach along and hold baby’s hand or forearm, whichever feels natural.
* Your baby’s legs will be tucked up under your other elbow.
* With light pressure, firmly hold your baby into your body.
* For this technique to be effective, there should be no eye contact or communication between you and your baby. You may wish to sit down with your “engulfed” in this position.
* Your baby will feel nurtured and supported in this hold.
* **Settling Cycle**
* Below is the ideal settling cycle that I suggest you use, however as long as you do 1 x 5 minutes and then one shorter to begin with then that is okay. I work on the principle that it takes most babies/toddlers 20 minutes to wind down before going to sleep and adjust this for each individual as well.
* Bed –“Dump and run” i.e., put in cot and walk away and “do not hover like a helicopter.” Walk out of the room and shut the door. Remember a dark room creates calmness and also signals time to go to sleep. Light is for playtime and dark is for sleeping.
* **1st Stage**
* Cry up to 5 minutes STOP THINK and ACT
* Comfort with either patting and shushing or cupping and shushing. Offer dummy at this stage Remember this is to reassure and should be shorter than the crying time
* Cry up to 5 minutes, you may choose to do just 2 or 3 minutes here to begin with - STOP THINK and ACT
* Comfort with either patting and shushing or cupping and shushing. Re offer dummy at this stage and stay in the room until the baby goes to sleep. At this stage if they do not go to sleep then you do have the option of picking up and putting them to sleep in arms
* **Then the next stage will be**
* Cry up to 5 minutes STOP THINK and ACT
* Comfort with either patting and shushing or cupping and shushing. Remember this is to reassure and should be shorter than the crying time
* Cry up to 5 minutes, - STOP THINK and ACT
* Comfort with either patting and shushing or cupping and shushing. Offer dummy at this stage Remember this is to reassure and should be shorter than the crying time
* Cry up to 5 minutes, you may choose to do just 2 or 3 minutes here to begin with - STOP THINK and ACT
* Comfort with either patting and shushing or cupping and shushing. Re offer dummy at this stage and stay in the room until they go to sleep
* **Then the next stage would be**
* Cry 10 STOP THINK and ACT
* Comfort with either patting and shushing or cupping and shushing. Remember this is to reassure and should be shorter than the crying time
* Cry up to 5 minutes, - STOP THINK and ACT
* Comfort with either patting and shushing or cupping and shushing. Offer dummy at this stage Remember this is to reassure and should be shorter than the crying time
* Cry up to 5 minutes, you may choose to do just 2 or 3 minutes here to begin with - STOP THINK and ACT
* Comfort with either patting and shushing or cupping and shushing. Re offer dummy at this stage and stay in the room until they go to sleep
* Then the next stage will be
* Cry up to 15 STOP THINK and ACT
* Comfort with either patting and shushing or cupping and shushing. Remember this is to reassure and should be shorter than the crying time
* Cry up to 5 minutes, - STOP THINK and ACT
* Comfort with either patting and shushing or cupping and shushing. Offer dummy at this stage Remember this is to reassure and should be shorter than the crying time
* The last stage you will find that they will be asleep by the end of the 20 minutes wind down. If not then comfort as above and offer dummy.
* Also the crying isn’t to be crying at the top of their lungs for this length of time. Your baby may start of loud and slowly reduce and also stop and start. If its constant at one level and goes for a long time then you need to reassure and see what is happening.
* When comforting don’t talk or give your baby eye contact – both of these stimulate – you can use the shush shush noise and let your body talk to them. Also try and stand to the middle or bottom end of their body when comforting.
* Do this settling up to ten days – if its not working then you need to address what you are doing.
* As your baby grow then the crying time can and will be built up to 20 to 30 minutes especially on the first cry and then intervene.   Also the time frame does depend on the cry and also how you are feeling - nothing is set in stone but you do have to push the boundaries to get results.

Always try and settle in their cots. Its harder to resettle if you take them out of their cots, but trust me there will be times that you will do this.

* Try not to use movement as a calming tool or to put the baby to sleep – this is the hardest habit to break.
* The crying time does depend on the cry but try not to go in under the time frame that you are working with. You need to work within your comfort zone and also the baby’s comfort zone. It is not about leaving him/her alone to cry until he/she is exhausted and goes to sleep, but it is about giving the baby space to find their sleep.
* When comforting do not talk or give the baby eye contact – both of these stimulate – you can use the shush shush noise and let your body talk to him/her. Also try and stand to the bottom end of the cot when comforting. If you do talk to him/her keep the verbalization to a limit so in other words try not and have a full conversation with him/her.
* You need to take small stepping stones so dependent on how you feel you can do the full cycle above or start with doing two lots of crying and at the end of the second pat off to sleep.
* Do this settling up to ten days – if its not working then you need to re look at what you are doing.
* Optional Cuddly Toy
* It’s a good ideal to give the baby a cuddly toy or blanket (snuggly) so that he/she can find comfort with it.
* **Getting Up**
* When you go to pick your baby up from their cot whether it is after a nap or in the mornings, open up their room before picking them up. This encourages your baby to play or lie in their cot and also they will learn that when you walk into the room you are not going to pick them up straight away. I always chat to my babies when I go into the room and while opening up the room. I also use this time to put away clothes etc.
* **Resettling Suggested Cycle**

Most babies wake up after going to sleep and its usually between 20 to 45 minutes. They have different levels of sleep and the two most talked about are their light sleep and then their deep sleep.

In the beginning I would suggest that you respond straight away, as it is easier to get them to go back to sleep if they are not fully awake. As they grow it is important that you do take a step back and let them find their sleep themselves.

**1st stage**

Response immediately.

 To coax them into their deep sleep, place one hand over their chest and with the hand begin the cupping action and then progressing to gently patting and sssh them back to sleep. Offer dummy as well. You can also turn the baby on their side facing away from you and then do the cupping action.

This is what I call ‘engulfing’ in the cot. Remove hand from chest and then pat lighter ending up patting the air. IF they do not change their sleep pattern then leave the room. If they wake then you need to repeat the process and stay with them until they have go back into a deep sleep.

**Next stage**

Use the settling cycles for crying as above – you will find that you will progress to this resettling stage quicker at nighttime

Comfort two ways of doing this, you stay in there until they go into a deep sleep and then you leave OR you can attempt to calm them down and leave and then give them an appropriate time to see if they will resettle. IF the girls do not go back to sleep then will need to stay with them until they go into a deep

Always try and settle in their cots. Its harder to resettle if you take them out of the cot, but trust me there will be times that you do this.

* You can’t spoil a baby at this age; they need lots of nurturing and reassurance.
* Do this settling up to ten days – if its not working then you need to re look at what you are doing.