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## Baby sleep explained



Baby sleep is undoubtedly one of the most challenging aspects of parenting. Just ask any parent who is struggling with catnapping, frequent night waking or sleep regression – all while operating on less sleep themselves.

A new baby typically results in 400 to 750 hours of lost sleep for parents in the first year, according to research into the sleep habits of Australians by the Australasian Sleep Association (ASA).

The ASA's National Sleep Research Project, which surveyed thousands of people on the quality and quantity of sleep, found parents with young children experienced less shut-eye, and sleep disruption had a significant impact on productivity, mood and alertness.

For babies who have difficulty settling, the impact of insufficient sleep is also evident. Research shows a link between sleep and physical growth. Without adequate sleep, growth problems can occur.

Armed with this knowledge, baby sleep has become a waking issue for some parents. So much so that many expectant mums are enquiring about admission to specialist sleep schools well before they have given birth.

Waiting lists at some private sleep schools have blown out by up to four months (this can vary and younger babies who do not require a separate room may be accommodated earlier).

Many of these specialist settings and locally run sleep and settling programs only cater