

LUCY WOLFE IS A CERTIFIED PAEDIATRIC SLEEP CONSULTANT AND A MUM OF FOUR YOUNG CHILDREN. SHE WORKS WITH FAMILIES TO IDENTIFY PROBLEM AREAS AND TOGETHER DEVISE A PLAN OF ACTION. SHE HAS SOME TIPS ON HOW TO GET YOUR CHILD TO SLEEP THROUGH THE NIGHT:

1. Have a structured but flexible feeding and sleeping schedule that is similar on most days. Our biological clock works better when it is regulated by consistent timings for waking up, eating and going to bed.

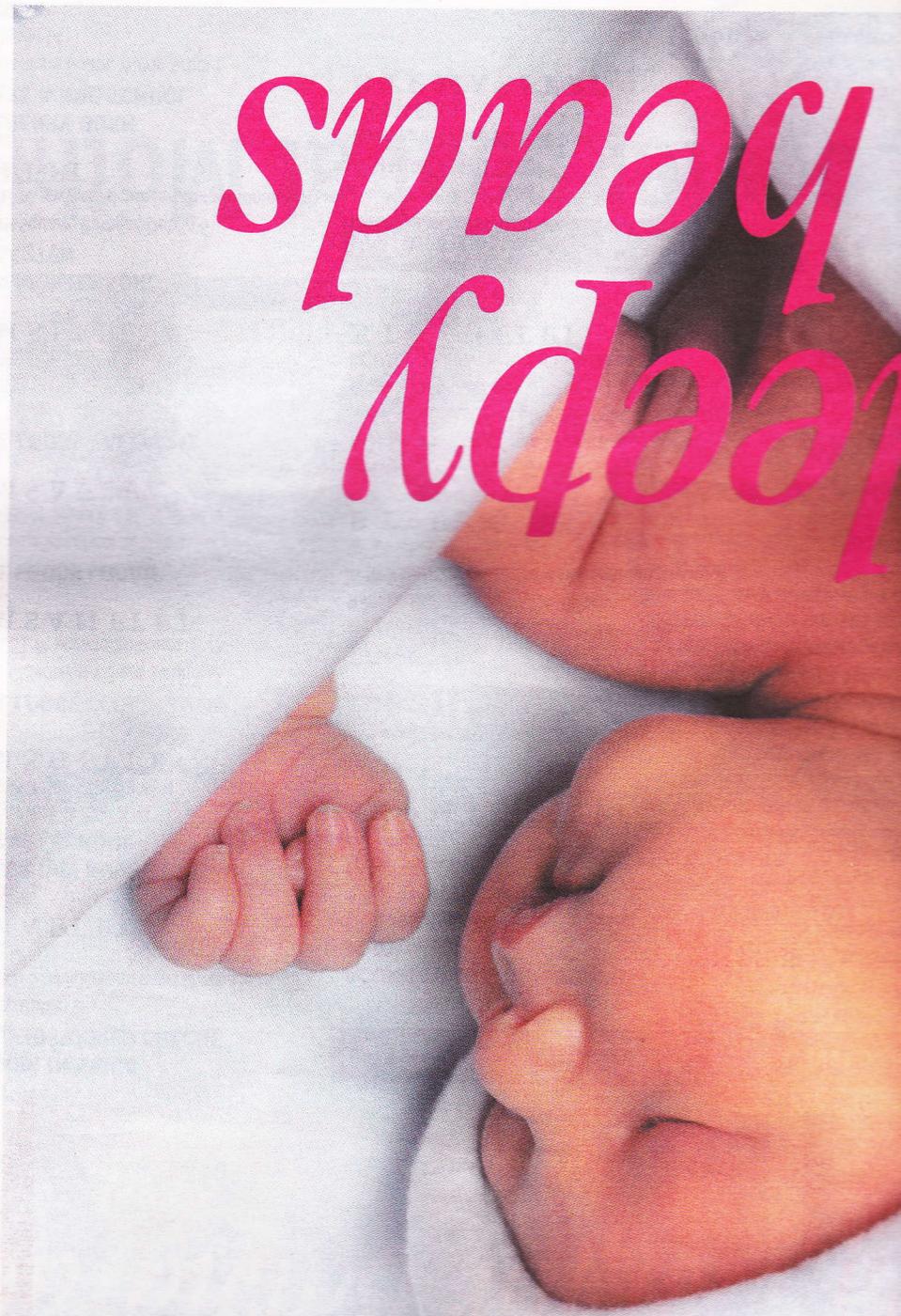
2. Make sure you pay attention to your child's sleep signals: yawning, eye rubbing and zoning out – all involuntary actions that suggest that, given the opportunity, she is ready to go to sleep. Don't assume that your child will sleep when she is tired; the body is designed to stay awake rather than sleep. Our task as parents is to create the right conditions so that sleep can happen easily. Ignoring sleep signals can make your child overtired, which in turn can make it hard for her to go to sleep and stay asleep.

3. Create a peaceful sleeping environment – not too bright, not too many distractions and one that you could fall asleep in yourself.
4. Try to allow your child to be awake when you put her into the cot or bed. If you put her down already asleep, she may wake up frightened, finding herself no longer in your arms and not be efficient at going back to sleep without your presence. Gradually work at phasing out sleep aids that require intervention on your part.

5. Try to avoid night-time feedings once they are no longer necessary. Whether your child still requires a night feed is for you to decide. However, frequent unnecessary feeds will result in learned hunger, large nappies and persistent night-time waking. Your child's digestive system will be waking up when it should be asleep and you may inadvertently be interfering with her daytime appetite and feeding.
6. You need to consider your child's sleep requirements on a 24-hour basis – if she needs daytime sleep on account of her age, then it is important for her to fulfill her sleep need then too. Sleep breeds sleep, so the better she is rested during the day, the better your child will sleep at night.

7. A balanced diet, outside exercise and plenty of one-to-one time during the day will also help your child to sleep better in the night-time hours.

References:
 1. Lim, J. and Dinges, D. F. A meta-analysis of the impact of short-term sleep deprivation on cognitive variables. *Psychol. Bull.*, 2010, 136: 375–389.
 2. <http://sleepmatters.ie/>



one to the land of nod
 sleep consultant **Lucy Wolfe** has some tips on
 of the most daunting parts of becoming a

- problems and it is not a reflection on you as a parent?"
- Wolfe recently spoke at SMA Study day on the topic of sleep troubles in toddlers and spoke out about some of the commonly accepted 'myths' of toddler sleep troubles:
- Keep your child up later and they will sleep later –False
- If they wake they MUST be hungry – False
- My child won't nap, so she/he doesn't need one – False
- Limit naps to promote night-time sleep – False
- Children will outgrow the problems – False

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