



The No-Cry Sleep Solution: Gentle Ways to Help Your Baby Sleep Through the Night

Elizabeth Pantley, William Sears (Foreword)

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A breakthrough approach for a good night's sleep--with no tears

There are two schools of thought for encouraging babies to sleep through the night: the hotly debated Ferber technique of letting the baby "cry it out," or the grin-and-bear-it solution of getting up from dusk to dawn as often as necessary. If you don't believe in letting your baby cry it out, but desperately want to sleep, there is now a third option, presented in Elizabeth Pantley's sanity-saving book *The No-Cry Sleep Solution*.

Pantley's successful solution has been tested and proven effective by scores of mothers and their babies from across the United States, Canada, and Europe. Based on her research, Pantley's guide provides you with effective strategies to overcoming naptime and nighttime problems. *The No-Cry Sleep Solution* offers clearly explained, step-by-step ideas that steer your little ones toward a good night's sleep--all with no crying.

Tips from The No-Cry Sleep Solution:

Uncover the stumbling blocks that prevent baby from sleeping through the night Determine--and work with--baby's biological sleep rhythms Create a customized, step-by-step plan to get baby to sleep through the night Use the Persistent Gentle Removal System to teach baby to fall asleep without breast-feeding, bottlefeeding, or using a pacifier

The No-Cry Sleep Solution: Gentle Ways to Help Your Baby Sleep Through the Night Details

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From Reader Review The No-Cry Sleep Solution: Gentle Ways to Help Your Baby Sleep Through the Night for online ebook

Cailean says

Well, if you know us, you know that when we have babies we more or less practice "attachment parenting," which we didn't even know existed until we were already doing it. It just felt natural to have our babies co-sleep, to not use a bottle or pacifier, etc. Little did we realize that I would become the "human pacifier" and that our oldest would have a very hard time weaning herself out of our bed. Fortunately we learned how to not begin that issue with our next two, but it still remained for our daughter who was nearing the age of 5 and Kindergarten. I discovered this book through Dr. William Sears who has written wonderful parenting books and who invented the "back to sleep" campaign that has saved many baby's lives. This book will give you many answers for how to get your child to sleep in their own bed. I found that it really had specific ideas for every possible scenario and I tried many of them. While it didn't "fix" it right away, it gave us the confidence that not only was there hope but that there were many other parents out there going through the same thing. And that eventually, she would grow out of it. And she has, by now at age 5.5, made HUGE strides in sleeping in her bed almost the whole night!

Curtis Edmonds says

There were a couple of times, reading this book, that I laughed. Not because it's a comedy (it isn't) but because the idea of doing a log for baby sleep patterns was... erm... well... let's just say it wouldn't have flown in our house.

Our twins were born in 2009, and I can't say much about the time when they were very little because I don't remember any of it and what I do I have blocked out. It was the most exhausting, demanding thing I have ever done or would ever want to do. The idea that I would be able to, at the end of the day, do a little chart about when Child A was sleeping or when Child B was sleeping sounds so totally alien to what my experience was that I can't comprehend it. I didn't have time to eat breakfast, much less fill out a little chart.

Like a lot of other baby books, the time to read this is before you have a baby. Like, way before. The problem with parenting small babies is that tired people make mistakes, and you're always tired. (I am tired now just thinking about it.) You may be too tired to read this when the baby comes, so read it before.

I think some of the sleeping ideas in here are fine, and the information is good. I am a bit annoyed that so much of the information is related to newborns, but there are a couple of good ideas on toddler sleep issues and I am going to try at least one of them.

The book appears, so far as I can tell, to favor co-sleeping. You can't co-sleep with twins, not easily, so we didn't try it. I am agnostic on the whole co-sleeping thing - I believe in doing whatever works for you and your baby. (We let one of ours, if memory serves, sleep on her tummy before the books said it was really OK to do that, because, you know, sleep.)

So, yes. Read the book. Check out the suggestions, and if they're good for you and your unique child, adopt them. But if they don't work, ditch them and don't feel guilty about it. There's no one right way to parent, and there shouldn't be.

Neligh says

The excellent podcast "pregtastic" has an interview with the author of this book on their website. It's episode 139 May 19, 2009 or you can click here: <http://www.pregtastic.com/new-moms-ne...>

William Sears writes the forward for this book in which he says:

"Sleep -or more accurately, the *lack* of sleep- is one of the most challenging aspects of parenting during the first year or two of a baby's life. The biggest hurdle is getting the baby to sleep through the night. Parents who are sensitive to their baby's needs are reluctant to try any technique that requires that they let their baby cry, so they often struggle through a fog of sleeplessness. This 'nighttime-martyr parenting' often leads to frustration and resentment, resulting in unnecessary feelings of guilt and obscuring a family's joy over the new arrival. ... At long last, I've found a book that I can hand weary parents with the confidence that they can learn to help their baby sleep through the night -without the baby crying it out."

The author says:

"Fourteen years ago, when Angela (her oldest of four) was a baby, I faced your dilemma. She did not sleep through the night. On the contrary, she woke up every two hours for my attention. As a new and inexperienced parent, I searched for solutions in books, articles, and conversations with other parents. ... I soon discovered two basic schools of thought when it comes to babies and sleep. One side advocates letting a baby cry until she learns to fall asleep on her own. The other side says that it is normal for babies to wake up at night and that it is the parent's job to nurture the baby -all day and all night. Eventually, when your baby is ready, she will sleep through the night. ... **In a nutshell, the two methods can be summed up as 'cry it out' or 'live with it.' I wanted neither.**" (p. 2-3)

"Typically, when a frequent night-waking baby wakes up and starts to cry, he's not hungry or thirsty or wet or even lonely; **he's just plain tired, as desperate for sleep, perhaps, as his parents but, unlike them, clueless as how to fall asleep.**" (p. 45) Your job is to either put them to sleep every time they wake up or teach them how they can put themselves back to sleep and set them up for success with routines, sleep associations, and paying attention to their cues.

Not having kids yet, I read The No-Cry Sleep Solution for two things: to get a realistic idea of what I can expect 'normal' infant sleep to be like and to hopefully hit the ground with a few tricks already in the bag.

Excerpts I found especially interesting:

"Babies make many sleeping sounds, from grunts to whimpers to outright cries [even shouting "mom!" when they're older:], and these noises don't always signal awakening. These are what I call sleeping noises, and your baby is nearly or even totally asleep during these episodes. These are not the cries that mean, "Mommy, I need you!" They are just sleeping sounds. ... In [your:] desire to respond to [your:] baby's every cry, [you may:] actually [teach:] her to wake up more often." p.76

"Many people put their babies to bed much too late, often hoping that if baby is 'really tired' he will sleep better. This often backfires because baby becomes overtired and chronically sleep-deprived. ... A baby's biological clock is preset for an early bedtime. When parents work with that time, a baby falls

asleep more easily and stays asleep more peacefully. Most babies are primed to go to sleep for the night as early as 6:30 or 7:00pm. ... plan for it by beginning your prebed routine an hour before. ... For babies, early to bed does not mean early to rise. Most babies sleep better and *longer* with an earlier bedtime. ... Many [parents:] were truly surprised to find that an earlier bedtime really did help their baby fall asleep easier and faster and often encouraged better sleep and a later waking time." p.103-104 I know this is true for me even as an adult. I get drowsy around 9 pm. If I try to power through that drowsiness to squeeze even one more hour out of the day, then often when I climb into bed at 10:00 I find myself laying awake until 2 am, unable to drift off.

"During the night, we move through a sleep cycle, riding it up and down like a wave. We cycle through light sleep to deep sleep to dreaming all through the night. In between these stages, we briefly come to the surface, without awakening fully. We may fluff a pillow, straighten blankets, or roll over, but generally we fade right back into sleep with nary a memory of the episode. ... Babies move through the same sleep cycles as adults do, but their cycles are shorter and more numerous. Babies also spend much more time in light sleep [dream sleep or REM:] than adults do, and they have many more of those in-between stages of brief awakenings." p.41-44 A "mother's best long-term sleep enhancer is to learn how to pretend to be asleep while listening to baby's sounds. And to wait. Your baby just may fall back to sleep (or may turn out not to have actually been awake in the first place) without your help. If she needs to breastfeed, you'll know that soon enough." p.78

There are many more bits explored in the book. Sleep associations, for example, are discussed and how to form the ones you want and avoid the ones you don't. Biological clocks' development are explained by age with tips on how to help them along, such as keeping it dim or dark at night, exposing the baby to natural light in the morning, and developing a routine. Avoiding activity that might wake baby up all the way includes not just leaving lights off and avoiding play, but also skipping diaper changes that aren't absolutely necessary (just be sure to start off the night w/plenty of ointment to avoid rashes). Also discussed is how getting a baby to 'sleep through the night' is an ongoing task: just when it's all sorted out, along comes a new tooth, illness, growth spurt, or milestone to throw it out of whack again. A growth spurt brings back the night feeding for a little while. A milestone interferes with sleep in all kinds of ways: if a baby is learning to stand, for example, he may pull himself to a stand with the crib railing and not be able to figure out how to sit down again; he may roll over onto his stomach and be ticked off about it and need help getting onto his back. Or his mind, eager to devour everything in sight, may be too distracted to nurse quietly during the day and he will try to make up for this by nursing at night.

As much as I like this book, I like the information in *Good Night Sleep Tight* even better. Both are worth reading, but if you only have time for one I'd lean towards *Good Night, Sleep Tight*.

Kate says

While I appreciate the idea of a method in between "cry it out" and "deal with it", I was infuriated by Pantley's inclusion of a speculative description of the agony a child might be feeling as they cry it out (e.g., "His little body is burning with desire and utter loneliness" - I'm paraphrasing, but that is exactly the tone.) You can't use that manipulative, mean tactic AND say that (a) that you're offering a moderate option or (b) that whatever works for a family is what's best. I'm not wild about letting my baby cry it out, and it doesn't always work, but I'm not going to tolerate being judged for trying it, or judge everyone for whom it has been a lifesaving technique. This reminds me of the "breastfeeding Nazis" and other women (and men) who say that mothers who go back to work are selfish and hurting the baby, or that you have to feed solids to (or not,

or wean, or not, or take away or give the pacifier or lovey, etc.) at a certain point. I'm not sure why everyone insists on being so harsh judging (other) parents. Every child, every family, every situation is different. If you watch the documentary "Babies," you'll see that children raised with incredibly different styles are all still doing about the same things at 1 year. Yet everyone is sure that everything you do or don't do before, during, and post-pregnancy will completely ruin your child's life.

I couldn't continue reading this book, and anyway the reviews on Goodreads and Amazon clearly summarize her points, and indicate that this is nothing new. Picking up my baby, calming her, and trying to put her down is what I'm already doing instinctively. I'm not going to start obsessing about every detail of the sleep pattern of someone who changes constantly. I'm happy for everyone this book has helped, but I cannot abide the guilt-tripping flavor of this book.

Sarah says

All these sleep books are so annoying. They go on and on about nothing, taking forever to get to what I paid for, the miraculous technique that will supposedly get my baby to sleep and stop pushing me to the brink of insanity, and then it turns out to be some dumb piece of common sense that isn't helpful. Yes, babies need routines and consistent bedtimes, very good, I'm not an idiot and I've already got that covered. What I want to know is why does he hate me so much that he feels it appropriate to wake me every couple hours all night long and more importantly, how do I convince him that this is not acceptable baby behaviour and that no, not all the other babies are doing it too. Also, my baby is not a robot so what works for some people will not necessarily work for everyone, so why are you disillusioning me into thinking this will for sure work and if it doesn't there is something wrong with my kid. My annoyance isn't so much specific to this book, but to all sleep books in general since they are all the same, completely useless. My choices are spending my whole night patting, shushing, picking up, putting down or alternatively leaving him in a dark room alone to think I don't love him anymore. I've given up and can only hope that someday when my son leaves home and goes to university his roommate will get him sorted out for me in the sleep department and if not oh well, it won't be my problem anymore.

Lisa R. says

I liked this book and found it to be helpful. That said, my baby did not have major sleep issues when I started it, nor was he an older baby (he was about 5 months). We were also instinctively using some of the book's recommendations already, so that made implementing it much easier.

We're not interested in letting our baby cry it out and this book helped us feel supported in that stance. It's true that many of the suggestions are commonsense, but we found this book helped to "tie it all together" and really motivated us to develop a cohesive plan for getting our son to sleep better (we had difficulty with both naps and night-waking and he nursed to sleep about 75% of the time).

This book does take patience and is not at all a quick fix. We've been doing our "plan" for three weeks and we have seen improvements, not miracles. I feel confident that if we continue for another few weeks, our baby will finally sleep as well as we all would like him to. The author does warn repeatedly that it will take a month or two to see results.

I would recommend this book to parents of newborns. To me, it's a likely follow-up to "The Happiest Baby on the Block" and helps address some of the issues you may face after the techniques in HBOTB are no longer relevant. If you are committed to gentle parenting and would like to get more sleep, I would recommend this book - it can't hurt and will most likely help your plight.

Stephanie says

While this book claims to be the third option for sleep-deprived parents (1 being: "cry-it-out," and 2 being "live with it"), I found that it was more like "live with it," with a couple of helpful pointers to make you feel like you are doing something. Or perhaps it works as the preparation phase before going on to the Ferber method.

First of all, like most self-help books, it could have been about 10 pages. I read over half of it before I got to her actual methodology. The first half is dedicated to just plain sleeping facts about babies -- virtually nothing I had not heard before. Then, her 6 phase process is explained in about 3 pages which is followed by a couple chapters of encouragement. There is also workbook like sheets to be filled in as you document your progress.

The advice is pretty basic: create a bedtime routine (perhaps with a bath, bedtime music, reading stories, a "lovey", key sleep words, etc.) and then gradually put baby to sleep when baby is more and more awake so that baby will learn to fall asleep without you and gradually decreasing your degree of hands-on comfort during nighttime wake-ups. This really didn't work with me because my daughter would often go to bed completely awake, and it did not change how many times she woke up in the night or how well she responded to my comforting her in any way other than nursing her back to sleep.

I think this book is primarily directed towards moms of older children with behavioral sleep issues, rather than actually teaching a young infant (mine is 4 1/2 months) how to sleep better. There is no way a little baby is going to respond to "verbal soothing" in the middle of the night. The author is a proponent of co-sleeping, and breastfeeds her 18-month old. So I think her approach is accurately described as: "live with it" until it's ridiculous and your child can completely understand that he/she needs to stay asleep all night (i.e. at least 1 year old), and then incorporate this method.

No good for me.

I think you can get the same good advice without having to wade through pages and pages of fluff.

Natalie says

This is one of my favorite books on infant sleep. I really appreciated the tone of this book. The author offers many helpful suggestions for helping babies sleep depending on your parenting style and your babies temperament. So many other sleep books I've read try to tell you that their way is the only way and you must be doing something wrong if it isn't working for your child. It was refreshing to read something that gave ideas without the guilt trip.

Liz says

Her intent = 4.5 stars

Her writing = 3 stars

Her theories = 3 stars

Her experience = 1.5 stars

Astonishing advice = 0 stars

Her overall success = 2 stars

Why do these so called experts see parenting styles as black or white? You leave your baby to cry it out, you are a detached emotionally unavailable parent who should not have had kids but rather run a corporation. You respond to every cry, you are "attached" and your deserve a golden star your child will be perfect and you can write a book about it.

According to Pantley anyway.

I do like that she wrote the book in attempt to help mothers see there are alternatives to "crying it out." But I find it really hypocritical that she whines about such "sleep experts" for making her feel like a bad mom (for not teaching her kids to sleep) and then the last thing you read in her book is her singling out a mother at a baseball games as unloving and negligent because she rocked her child's car seat when he started to stir (instead of shoving a boob in his face).

I agree with most her ideas, and thought of just about all of them on my own (with a little tool called common sense) before I read her book. I did sleep logs. I waited a minute before responded to each cry. I lingered on the nursery floor and sang lullabies as he drifted off to sleep. Does this qualify me to write a book? I say no.

Though, I do think I'm a little more qualified than she. I did all those things naturally with my first child. She wrote this book after her 4th couldn't sleep for more than 45 minutes at a time. I know each kid is different, but I got the impression that her first 3 didn't sleep a whole lot better.

Also, it bugs me that she tries to reassure mothers that someday, regardless of your success with infant sleep training, your child will learn to sleep through the night, because we all do. Incorrect. I have spoken with several mothers (and read in several other sleep books) that some kids really do get up EVERY night, even when their 17. I think Pantley has good advice for those kids. Things like two free "come to mom and dad's room" coupons; once the two tickets are gone, tough luck. The nest next to mom and dad's bed is also a really good idea. A glass of water, flashlight, and one toy on the nightstand: good idea. The rewards posters, all of it great ideas for toddlers and even teens. But to promise people their kids will eventually sleep through the night is not a solution for mothers worn out and sleep deprived.

I personally have not resorted to the cry it out method, and I never intend to. Still, books like Healthy Sleep Habits, Happy Baby and Babywise work much better for me and my little boy. You just have to realize these authors are on the opposite end of the spectrum as far as your effects go. They'll say if you respond to every cry with a feeding you're child will have ADHD and throw tantrums as they grow older. I say, there's a lot more to parenting then how you respond to cries the first 6 months out of the womb. Though I do think the Babywise author makes a good point when he says this kind of attachment parenting ignores what might actually be making your baby cry. Personally, I tried feed for comfort, and it backfired. My little guy was crying cause his tummy hurt and he had bad reflux. More food makes that situation even worse, even though

the baby is eager to drink more cause sucking at mom's breast is comforting.

If you've let yourself feel guilty over occasionally rocking your little one to sleep or holding him through a nap or if you have no experience with children, this book may be for you. But if you have a serious sleep problem on your hands and your kid isn't old enough to care about a sticker on a poster, I suggest something else.

Lynne says

OK, so here's the deal with The No Cry Sleep Solution.

I got this book because I really did not want to let my baby cry it out. I was pretty much attachment parenting from the time my baby was born until, oh, about 3 days after reading this book!

I did get a few good tidbits from the book, which is why it was not a "1."

First, having a really good bedtime routine is essential.

Second, Pantley's "gentle removal method" for stopping your baby from nursing to sleep works great. In fact, not only does he not nurse to sleep, but he also doesn't use a pacifier anymore. Great.

Third, I learned that a lot of awakenings are not real awakenings, and that you could actually be waking a sleeping yet crying baby by going in too soon.

Everything else? Not so much. A lot of the book is for people who already co-sleep, which we do not do anymore. In the end, we let him cry it out and it took 2 days for him to get used to going to sleep on his own. He still loves us and he still trusts us. But if you feel that you really don't want to let your baby cry, ever, this might be for you :)

Amyleemc says

I credit this book with the ideas that have gotten my son to sleep by himself. Okay, okay, he's still waking up once a night and I'm going into his bed, but that's the next hurdle to get over and I'm confident we will.

The key things I learned, either through the book (admittedly, I finished it 3 months ago) or through my process:

1 - be patient. They say do something for 10 days before giving in. Somewhere else I've read that something becomes a habit after 3 days for a child this young. So, don't give up too quickly.

2 - There's a difference between crying out of fear and confusion, and crying out of frustration because you're not getting your way. I allowed the latter, but not the former. So, at times my son would cry because I was laying down in the floor instead of in his bed. That was okay, imho. But I never left him alone to cry it out.

3 - The general strategy is, ease your way out. I couldn't ever figure out how to leave when my son was on the verge of sleep, as the book suggested. So I would stay til he was asleep, but my position in the room kept moving. First I was in bed with him, then sitting on the floor with my head on the pillow in his bed, then laying on floor next to the bed, then laying on the floor further and further towards the door, then sitting up

(reading a book, no eye contact) at the door, then in the doorway, then out in the hall with door open, then out in hall with door closed. It took a month, but it worked! Not only did it work in that he would put himself to sleep, but he started sleeping longer. :)

Marre says

It has some good ideas and points to follow, but it could be covered in some 30 pages. The rest of the 300 pages are full of nothing and repeating over and over the same nothing.

Mike says

80% of the advice in here is stuff we were doing already because we've read *Caring for Your Baby and Young Child, Revised Edition: Birth to Age 5* and *The Baby Book: Everything You Need to Know About Your Baby from Birth to Age Two*. We were following this advice before, during, and after our daughter's sleep problems developed. Another 10% of the advice was just ridiculous grasping at straws. Then 5% is just waiting for the problem to get better (which the author explicitly says the book isn't in her introduction and throughout), and the last 5% is hidden way in the back is just a modified cry-it-out.

If this is maybe the first parenting book you've read or if you were too tired to pay attention to the other books, that 80% is all still good advice. But if, like me, you were already following these practices, you might want to try *Solve Your Child's Sleep Problems: New, Revised, and Expanded Edition*. It worked for us with a max of 13 minutes of crying on the first night. By day four she was sleeping through the night with only one or two brief wakings. Today is day seven and my seven-month-old daughter slept for 10 hours straight.

Jen says

This book is the opposite of the BabyWise series, that I used for my first born child. It recommends a way to get your baby to sleep without using the "cry it out" method. I love the idea because it's so hard to listen to your little one cry but the book was not for me and my second born child. The book advises you to put the baby to sleep, however you usually do (nursing, rocking, swaying, etc.), but lay the baby down JUST BEFORE the baby is truly asleep. If the baby wakes up at all, pick them back up and repeat. I did this OVER and OVER and OVER for THREE hours one night and by then, I was exhausted!! It is meant for babies that do NOT sleep ANYWHERE throughout the night. I purchased it to try to find a way to get my co-sleeping baby OUT of my bed but she SLEEPS 4-6 hours straight in my bed!! I'd rather have her SLEEPING, even if believed to be unsafe by many, than repeat the book's method all night long where NEITHER one of us gets ANY sleep.

Alana Garnica says

A bit repetitive. ...but a lot of helpful hints, I will definitely be using a few of the ideas in this book to see if they work! I don't really fall into 1 category in this book....sometimes we cosleep sometimes hee sleeps alone

in his crib but just like any other parenting book...i take little pieces of advice and make my own routine. .
