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185 Responses to *To sleep, perchance, to scream*

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1. *Jean* says:

February 15, 2008 at 1:29 pm

Ferberizing our daughter at 6-7 months pretty much saved my life. Working in a lab with dangerous chemicals and falling asleep driving were not options anymore so my husband took the "bull by the horns" and did it for the both of us. He read the book cover to cover, kicked me out to the basement, and did it. He thinks that if you follow it to the letter and do not deviate at all from the book, then it works. I think that it worked because he did it and not me because I do not think I could have done it.

He did it 2 years ago and I would not change a thing. Our daughter has slept through the night ever since. We started at the 6-7 month mark because it has been scientifically proven that most healthy children (ours was healthy) do not need to feed at night starting at around 6months and actually their health benefits more by teaching them how to sleep through the night than from the feeding. This and the fact that my husband did it were the key factors. (One other reason that my husband had to do it was because the issue with our daughter was her use of breastfeeding to put herself back to sleep and she had to learn to put herself back to sleep without breastfeeding. She was not nursing as a nutritional source but rather to put herself back to sleep.)

However, I agree with Andrea though, everyone is different and should do what is best for their family. For us, me getting 2 hours a sleep a night was no longer an option as it was significantly affecting my ability to be a good parent.

2. *Megan* says:

February 15, 2008 at 2:16 pm

Wow, Andrea, I'm so impressed that not only did you let your kids cry themselves to sleep as babies, you actually admit it! These days, what with attachment parenting and the family bed, letting your babies cry to sleep is practically child abuse (if there are readers on here who subscribe to the more granola form of parenting, I'm glad it works for you, but it's not for me).

I used a combination between "The Baby Whisperer" and "Babywise", modifying it for my daughter as needed. I was able to force myself to have her cry herself to sleep at times, but if she or I needed a breather, I would go in and give her some pats and talk to her. She's a little over 2 and a great sleeper, and we have a really close relationship. So letting her cry herself to sleep at times has obviously not ruined the kid. I always thought it would be far more cruel to introduce good sleep habits to a pre-schooler who's used to Mommy's and Daddy's bed then to start sleep training with a baby. We hope to have at least one more, and I really hope the sleep-training with my daughter wasn't a fluke!

3. *lindsay.weiss* says:

February 15, 2008 at 3:17 pm

Great post title!

I'm of the same philosophy, but it wasn't my first choice. After 6 months of sleepless nights I just plain couldn't do it anymore, so we resorted to the "let-him-cry-and-shut-his-door-then-shut-our-door-and-turn-up-the-fan" method 😊

Like you, I don't necessarily believe this is the best or worst philosophy—it's just the one that worked. And really, that's all that matters!

4. *Carolyn Robertson* says:

February 15, 2008 at 3:30 pm

We have the same rules in our house. When my daughter was a baby, friends and family would be over and would get so uncomfortable by her crying in her crib. They would ask, "Did you want to go get her?" or "She's STILL crying" (as though I couldn't hear it!).

There were many months of screaming to sleep and I had moments of doubt. But we stuck to it and now, at almost two, she goes to bed happily and wakes up the same way. She doesn't necessarily go straight to sleep, she'll sing and chat and laugh for an hour sometimes. And when she's older I imagine she'll read under the cover with a flashlight, just like I did. 😊

5. *Arwen* says:

February 15, 2008 at 5:14 pm

We coslept for a year with breastfeeding (in other words, if he wakes up, pull out a boob, let him latch on and go back to sleep). It's amazng how much sleep you can get that way. Then we played musical for a year. It worked for us, despite the raised eye-brows from in-laws. "He's still sleeping with you?"

6. *Andrea Frazer* says:

February 15, 2008 at 5:18 pm

Hi all – I love these comments, because there are so many ways to "skin a cat" as they say. I love Arwen's approach to co-sleeping – how you can just roll over and give the baby a breast and sleep. But man, I couldn't breastfeed for anything. But I wish I could have. Her concept sounds lovely, and I get why people do it if it works.

7. *Jean* says:

February 15, 2008 at 5:57 pm

I think listening to yourself and your gut instinct is the way to go. Wish I had done more of that.



Andrea Frazer

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My mother is a pediatrician and had a lot to say in the first few weeks my daughter was born and looking back maybe too much to say. She was constantly at me about not co-sleeping (because of the whole SIDS thing), but breastfeeding (even though she had never breastfed my sister or I a single day in her life). I was left with being the only one in the house that was sleep deprived cause I had to get up, go across the hall, breastfeed upright in a chair, put my daughter back to bed and repeat this several times a night...it was a complete nightmare... cause I never got back to sleep myself. 6-7 months with 2hrs sleep/night really can make you insane. Hence, what led us to ferber (also another push from my mother, but in this case probably the right one).

I think that maybe listening a little less to the "experts" and a little more to ourselves and what is right and may have been a better way to go. However, I am certainly glad that we now have a child we can put to bed awake at night and for her naps in her own bed (crib really) and that stays there all night (cause she cannot crawl out). I am really bothered though about what will happen when she does get moved to a bed and can (and I am sure will) get up at night. Should be interesting!

8. [Arwen](#) says:
February 15, 2008 at 5:57 pm

What I think is interesting is that it seems like just about everyone feels judged no matter how they did it. I'm a bad mom if I let my baby cry it out. I'm a bad mom if I let him sleep with me. We should all just give birth to babies who are already naturally good sleepers. I think that's what my mother-in-law did – gave birth to six perfect children.

9. [Jean](#) says:
February 15, 2008 at 6:01 pm

Funny, Arwen, how our parents and especially in-laws always had perfect children and hence were perfect parents!! Now matter how one parents their children I think that the in-laws and parents tend to have always done it better. Makes me laugh sometimes.

10. [Ash](#) says:
February 15, 2008 at 7:07 pm

We co-slept with our son, and I let him nurse at night until he was 15 months old. Then we switched him to a toddler bed that was up next to ours (we didn't have a separate room for him at the time because we were still in college and renting a teeeeeeeny place) and our rule was that he could crawl into bed with us if he needed to, but he couldn't wake us up in the process. It worked for us, and we'll try the same thing to see if it works with this baby too. I completely understand why it wouldn't work for every parent, though. I think one of the reasons some parents become judgmental of others, especially in the area of sleep routines, is the authors of parenting books always insist they are right, and if you deviate from their way of doing things, you're probably just plain evil. I would love to read a parenting book by an author who admits he or she doesn't actually know more about my child than I do.

11. [Red Fraggie](#) says:
February 15, 2008 at 7:22 pm

Lindsay – glad to hear someone else owning up to the "Walk away because I just can't stand a minute more" approach. Thankyou!

Red

12. [Nic](#) says:
February 15, 2008 at 7:37 pm

What about the "let them stay up until they decide they want to go to sleep method"? I have a friend who does this and I always feel bad for the child because I feel like he is sleep deprived. He's only 2 and stays up until 10, 11, 12am. I am a believer in the same bedtime every night for my children whether they like it or not. Is the above practiced more often than I think? Am I too strict?

13. [Red Fraggie](#) says:
February 15, 2008 at 7:45 pm

no – bedtime is bedtime in our house (or rather bathtime is bathtime and bedtime is when we get to the end of the routine)

14. [MC](#) says:
February 15, 2008 at 8:27 pm

I swear by the BabyWise method. I only was able to breastfeed for two weeks with my daughter, who was a very sleepy newborn, but I made myself get up every three hours to feed her (which was much easier, I admit, after I stopped breastfeeding). The three hour timetable enabled her to transition to skipping the 2 or 3 am feeding at 9 weeks. We were able to sleep from around 10 at night until around 6 in the morning at 9 weeks with both my daughter and more recently my son. I have a friend who has not slept through the night in six months because she is demand feeding (10 minutes here, 30 minutes there). She is absolutely exhausted but does not seem to think anything is wrong, so I do not say much but I feel SOOO bad for her!

15. [Merry](#) says:
February 15, 2008 at 8:44 pm

I agree with bedtime is bedtime. Unless you are sick, bedtime is happening NOW. Kids need it, adults need it. We wouldn't survive without it! As I always said when my daughter was young, there are choices and then there are "have tos". Bedtime is a Have To for sure. Along with teeth brushing, eating dinner, blah blah blah...

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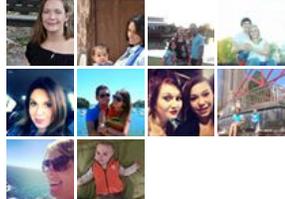
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3:06 pm
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LATEST IN LIFE & HOME



16. **Reema** says:
February 15, 2008 at 9:11 pm

I am going through this painful process right now!! My husband and I made the foolish mistake of letting our little one sleep with us, boob on demand, and so forth until she was 20 months old. It came to a point where she would wake up in the middle of the night to "play" or need a cup of milk. Now we are attempting to teach her to sleep in a big girl bed. It's so painful to our ears!! She cries and cries for hours!! We have a gate up at her door so she can't leave her room, and she knows it's bed time. I know she is no longer a baby, and as a toddler knows to "cry to get what she wants". We are trying to hang in there, but it's so difficult. Wish we did this from day one!! We have another one on the way, who is going straight to her own bed!

17. **Andrea Frazer** says:
February 15, 2008 at 9:25 pm

All of you have great stories. Thank you for sharing. I don't think we, as moms, can predict what is going to work and what isn't. Reena, for example. She co-slept for 20 months, and now regrets it. But how could she know? Maybe I would have let the kids cry it out and then regretted it. I didn't, but on a few issues, I did regret it. Like some potty training things. All we can do is what is best for our sanity, and hopefully in staying sane, get our kids happy. It's that fine balance, huh?

Any more tips from moms who either swear by co-sleeping, or swear by bed time in baby's bed only? Let's stay positive!

18. **C'smom** says:
February 15, 2008 at 9:35 pm

CIO was the way to go for us. I didn't follow any doctors method though. I wish I would ave done it sooner too. We are still in the process of working out all the kinks because we have only been at it for about two months. I have to agree with pp about how you can't do anything right. If you let the cio, you are a bad mom. If you let them sleep in bed, you are even worse. If your formula feed you should have never had a child. What people are forgetting is that every child is different and what may work for yours doesn't work for everyone else.

Personally, I think your child, your choice.

What I cannot stand is when other moms go off on how horrible and inhumane crying it out is, but then they add "Both my kids are great sleepers so I wouldn't know what it is like to deal with a difficult sleeper."

19. **Pam** says:
February 15, 2008 at 10:06 pm

I think it depends a great deal on how much sleep Mom and/or Dad needs. I don't need more than five or six hours of sleep, something I seemed to have inherited from my father. I was able to deal with my second, a horrible sleeper for two years, pretty well and still function. CIO for him would have never worked.

Conversely, CIO only took ten minutes one night for my first. They're all so different.

My third, now fourteen months, slept through the night last night for the first time. I woke up three times in a panic, thinking she must have passed away in her sleep. I've been engorged all day as a result, chasing her around trying to get her to nurse enough for some relief. lol She still nurses well before naps, but if she sleeps through the night again tonight, I will have to admit to being very sad about saying goodbye to cozy nighttime nursing. I'll never forget looking into each other's eyes by the light of the moon, and the sweet way babies always flutter-suck right before they drift off.

I used slings a lot with the second two; mine are all close together and they were a necessity. Most importantly, they kept my newborns safe from jealous siblings.

My mom, sister, aunts and a couple girlfriends all disapproved of my methods. It's been a lonely time. It was usually unstated, but you know how you can just feel the disapproval? Thankfully, my husband was with me all the way. I guess that's all that matters.

20. **Jennifer** says:
February 15, 2008 at 10:11 pm

I agree with the CIO solution. It worked for my first son who is now 3 1/2; however, my second son, 11 months, just doesn't get it. He will cry for 2 hours before going back to sleep. We've let him cry numerous nights but sometimes we have to go get him because he wakes up my 3 1/2 yr old who needs his sleep. His crying is like screaming too.

What do you do when you have another child in the house in the next room who needs to sleep as well. My DH and I can sleep through the crying but sometimes my son can't. We've used music for background noise to drown out the crying and sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. Any advice.

21. **Andrea Frazer** says:
February 15, 2008 at 10:17 pm

Oooh, Jennifer has a point. What do you do about sharing rooms, or if one child is crying? I will make that a subject of my next post. Meanwhile, what do you think?

And for translation purposes... 'cuz it took me a second, CIO stands for Crying it Out.

22. **Heather Haddo** says:
February 15, 2008 at 10:29 pm



13 appetizers for entertaining

Kami Bigler
posted November 22, 2014,
8:14 pm
no comments



10 Thanksgiving pies you need on your table

Lindsay Weiss
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4:31 pm
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I have to agree with MC, Babywise ROCKS. I believe that there are two types of parenting, which ever one you fall under will usually determine how you approach "to cry or not to cry." Children are different, mine definitely are. But I applied the same principle to all, and b/c of the discipline my husband and I had, we had the same results with every one of our children. I will say that nobody wants to hear their baby cry, especially a newborn, but they live.

23. *Heather Haddo* says:
February 15, 2008 at 10:45 pm

Jennifer I totally understand your situation. One of my sons is the "drama king" and he cries like yours on occasion in the middle of the night. My son like yours wakes up his older brother to. It's not fair to the child who is sleeping nicely, and it is a privilege for them to be in the same room. So whenever my kid doesn't calm down (I do check to make sure he's okay) and ends up waking up my other son, drama king loses the privilege of being with his brother, and ends up in the pack n play in another room. If they want to carry on and "express" their determined wills, ok, just not around us!

24. *Jennie* says:
February 15, 2008 at 11:39 pm

I have twin boys, and personally I would love to let them cry themselves to sleep. I think they should learn that mommy or anybody else will not come running just because they're uncomfortable. But unfortunately I live with my parents. Usually I feed them about 9 or 9:30, change their diapers, stick a paci in their mouth, and turn the lights out. The bad part is that it's in my bed. I can't leave them in the crib to cry because then my parents won't be able to sleep. But I think if I was by myself I would definitely let them cry.

25. *Ashley* says:
February 16, 2008 at 12:53 am

I slept with my son until he was about 3 months then rocked him to sleep until he was about 8 months. He would still wake up for a bottle about twice a night. He just turned 9 months and I've just recently started trying to get him to go to sleep by himself. At first he would SCREAM for about an hour then give it up. It took me a little bit to get over the "am I a bad mom for letting him cry?" I have been trying this now for about a week and for the past 2 nights he has went to sleep on his own with very little tears 😊 I think it's healthy for both of us. Me and my husband get our alone time back and our son is getting alot more sleep!

For those who have tried the just-let-them-cry method, if you have tried it a couple of times and caved in.... (as I did a few times) BE STRONG! Believe me the pay off is well worth it!

26. *Kristi* says:
February 16, 2008 at 2:17 am

Nap times are fabulous. Putting her to bed at night is fabulous. Waking during the middle of the night is... not.

I agree with CIO. It has worked with us. Our second child will be done MUCH sooner than our first. Hopefully I will learn from my mistakes.

I've done CIO so many times over the past few years with our first though but a week or two would go by (with fantastic results) and then she would relapse and I would be caught zombie-like stumbling to her room because DH couldn't take it, or I felt bad, or I just wasn't prepared to stick to my guns because it 'must be something' since we had such great results for the past few days. (I guess I can't blame it ALL on DH... I sure do feel guilty when he starts questioning me about what we should do though....)

After another call to the pedi this morning after a frustrating night we will be modifying her eating habits during the day and again, trying CIO during the times she wakes up and is hungry. It needs to work! I am due in 5 weeks, I can not do this with two.

I'm considering booking a hotel for DH though. 😊 I can be strong by myself with a pillow over my head but I start second guessing myself when he starts questioning me.

27. *Jo* says:
February 16, 2008 at 6:33 am

My baby slept in our bedroom for the first 2-3 weeks in his own crib. Then we transferred him to his own room.

I was waking in the beginning every 3 hours and it "was" tiring but as of about 4 weeks ago he's just taken to sleeping through the night all by himself.

I occasionally have to give him milk around 5am. I believe to make him wait and cry himself back to sleep is not only cruel but dangerous as he'll get dehydrated.

I have never been one to advocate letting them scream and cry to sleep and Max has been no bother for doing the opposite and comforting him if he needs it on occasion.

28. *Lori* says:
February 16, 2008 at 9:47 am

Andrea, I agree with you completely. I have always been firm with sleep and as a result of this my oldest slept through the night by 7 weeks and my second at 8 weeks.

Now at nearly 5 and nearly 3 they have the bedtime routine down pat. At 8 teeth and potty then we watch Backyardigans in Mommy's bed. Then off to their room; prayers, talk about our day, a group round of "Rock A Bye Baby", then hugs and kisses and done. They share a room and know that a few minutes of whispering is fine but if it lasts too long or if anyone gets up then they lose their nightlight. (Horror of horrors!) They both sleep until daylight.

If sicknesses arise, we allow the sick party to sleep on blankets on the floor next to our bed, never in the bed. Sleeping with mommy and daddy is something that only gets done on vacations, period.

My husband works a lot of overtime to compensate for me being home with the kids. We almost never get time alone so when we finally do, it's nice to have an empty bed to retreat to.



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Stacy-Ann Gooden

posted November 14, 2014,
4:17 pm
4 comments



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Stacy-Ann Gooden

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10:17 pm
9 comments



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Stacy-Ann Gooden

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September 2014	August 2014
July 2014	June 2014
May 2014	April 2014
March 2014	February 2014
January 2014	December 2013
November 2013	October 2013
September 2013	August 2013
July 2013	June 2013
May 2013	April 2013
March 2013	February 2013
January 2013	December 2012
November 2012	October 2012
September 2012	August 2012
July 2012	June 2012
May 2012	April 2012
March 2012	February 2012
January 2012	December 2011
November 2011	October 2011
September 2011	August 2011
July 2011	June 2011
May 2011	April 2011
March 2011	February 2011
January 2011	December 2010
November 2010	October 2010
September 2010	August 2010
July 2010	June 2010
May 2010	April 2010
March 2010	February 2010
January 2010	December 2009
November 2009	October 2009
September 2009	August 2009
July 2009	June 2009
May 2009	April 2009
March 2009	February 2009
January 2009	December 2008
November 2008	October 2008
September 2008	August 2008
July 2008	June 2008
May 2008	April 2008
March 2008	February 2008
January 2008	December 2007
November 2007	October 2007
September 2007	August 2007

This routine works fantastic for us but I know everyone needs to do what is best for them. I am flexible on a lot of things but never bedtime.

29. *Stephani* says:

February 16, 2008 at 11:01 am

Hooray for letting your child scream. To respond to two children sharing a bedroom- I blacked out the windows, played music and told my two year old to say, "shhh shhh shhh" to the baby and to cover his head with a blanket if the baby kept on (his own head, not the baby's). It worked really well. Now they're 5 and 2 and I have another on the way. I'm seriously considering putting all 3 in one room together. We will see! I just know that I am incoherent at night so the next one will get to cry it out too.

30. *Nichole* says:

February 16, 2008 at 12:00 pm

I am somewhat surprised that we dont have a bunch of people swearing that we are all bad parents on here. => I, too, let my kid cry it out. We did have a few marathon sessions...and during those, I would occasionally check on her because...THAT SOUND!

Though I will admit that the biggest hurdle between my daughter and a full night's sleep was that she hated the bassinet. I was bedridden for the first 4 weeks of her life (no, not a c-section...my blood pressure was so high that they thought my heart would pop, and being in the hospital was making it higher, so they sent me home) so co-sleeping was the only option at first. I either let her in bed with me or put her in the bassinet a few inches away. The problem was that after getting used to sleeping on Mom's King Tempur-pedic mattress, the bassinet mattress just didn't cut it, and was way too small. I ended up moving her down the hall to her room (and a fancy new mattress) before she was 6 weeks...she has slept through the night since.

31. *Erica* says:

February 16, 2008 at 2:37 pm

I have twins that are now 16 months old. I've used the CIO method for putting them to bed since they were born, because I didn't have the time or energy to rock two babies to sleep. Unfortunately, I didn't have the resolve to use it when they woke up in the middle of the night because they were always so little, so I was afraid they really were hungry, until I weaned them from breastfeeding at 1 year. After that, I didn't get up when they cried because I wasn't going to feed them and they got the message within a week or two. Now, they sleep great!

32. *Amy* says:

February 16, 2008 at 3:52 pm

Our DD was barely 5 pounds & I was told she was about to be put on a feeding tube if she didn't grow, so I fed her every chance I got! Of course, I was breastfeeding (BF) & all the charts are based on formula fed babies, so I don't think she was in as much danger as they said & is now a happy, healthy 32 month old. She slept in her bassinet in our room until she was about 6 months old & I did nurse her when she woke in the night, but I didn't have much choice, I felt. She was in day care so I wanted her to get all of the breastmilk (BM) I could. It was a hard 6 months, but she has only been on antibiotics twice, so I feel like we did the right thing.

After 6 months, I first worked on getting her to fall asleep without nursing to sleep. It only took a few nights of that. Yes, she did cry when I put her down, but I didn't feel like it was right to make her cry by herself. I felt the same way when we moved her to her crib in her own room. She had always napped in there when she napped at home, but I felt like it would have been a lot to change all those things at the same time. After she could fall asleep without the boobie in her mouth, we worked on falling asleep in the crib. First I would stay with her & rub her back or forehead until she fell asleep. Then I would just sit near her crib. Then I just sat in the room. After 2 months she was nursing, put in her crib awake, & would be fine to fall asleep in her alone. Gradually worked toward more independence. She knows she can fall asleep on her own & if she needs us we are there for her. For us, it just didn't feel right to leave her in her room by herself & not respond when she knew we could hear her. She did wake up in the middle of the night for one feeding until she was about 9 months old, but for me, I just told myself that if she was legitimately nursing, which considering she would nurse & be awake for 15-20 minutes, I felt she needed. When she started eating food those times got shorter so I cut them out gradually. I feel like that one year of sacrifice on my part was little to ask. Truthfully, when I was working full time, I cherished those quiet times in the middle of the night where the only thing I had to focus on was my sweet baby. In a very short while, if we do everything right, she won't want much to do with me, so I just try to enjoy her childhood as much as I can for what it is.

33. *Katherine Sullivan* says:

February 16, 2008 at 8:56 pm

I completely disagree. There is a right and wrong way and letting your kids scream is the wrong way and yes it will cause them emotional damage. Perhaps you will notice it when they are teenagers and adults, they will most certainly notice their emotional baggage as adults but will they or you realize the connection to the neglect they went through as babies?

I think it is interesting that you mention that you are doing it for your own sanity therefore prioritizing your own emotional state over theirs. Adults are more capable to deal with emotional stress than babies/children are.

34. *Katherine Sullivan* says:

February 16, 2008 at 9:08 pm

I thought I'd better back up my comments above that crying it out is definitely harmful to a baby. There are studies that show it is very harmful to a baby brain to cry for more than 5 minutes.

Here are two great articles about the studies that have been done...

please read and rethink the way you are treating your babies!

<http://www.askdrsears.com/html/10/handout2.asp>

http://www.theregister.co.uk/2006/07/14/the_odd_body_crying/

35. *Andrea Frazer* says:

February 16, 2008 at 9:15 pm

Katherine – I don't understand how you can be so positive that letting them cry is wrong. I completely disagree with your hard stance. A parents sanity, IMO, is very very important. Not everyone has the same

support as others. If you're a single mom, and you're not sleeping, and you're freaking out, you simply cannot sprout wings and become Mother Angel and rock and nurse and still get up in the morning and work without snapping. Even if you aren't a single mother but home full time with a husband. It doesn't matter. To actually tell a mother, a lot of mothers on a national website, that they are "wrong" is simply a very very closeminded way of looking at the world and completely unhelpful to those who are coming to this website for support.

As far as causing kids emotional damage in the future that they won't be able to track back to crying? That's a real stretch. All teenagers are cranky. I'm hoping mine will be less cranky because, at an early age, they learned to sleep in their own bed and make some decisions for themselves without being attached to my hip.

Again, my opinion. I'm not saying attachment parenting in any form is wrong. But it is for me.

My beef is comments like yours: That my way is not okay. That is just very very judgemental.

36. [Andrea Frazer](#) says:

February 16, 2008 at 9:16 pm

Sorry, but I have to add one more thing about Katherine's comment: "Adults are more capable to deal with emotional stress than babies/children are." That's unfortunately not true. There's a reason that child abuse exists. Not saying it's right, and I've never abused my kids, but part of the reason I've not abused them is that I put my emotional stability first – not theirs. By being strong and secure, I can be a loving, nurturing mom. I can't do that when I'm exhausted with a child in my bed 24/7. I truly don't feel anyone should feel bad if they're like me.

37. [Katherine Sullivan](#) says:

February 16, 2008 at 9:37 pm

Quotes from an article entitled: "Science Says: Excessive Crying Could Be Harmful to Babies"...

"One study showed infants who experienced persistent crying episodes were 10 times more likely to have ADHD as a child, along with poor school performance and antisocial behavior."

"Researchers have found babies whose cries are usually ignored will not develop healthy intellectual and social skills. 19"

Here is a quote from Stephen Juan, Ph.D.

"Allowing a baby to "cry it out" when it is upset will probably be regarded as child abuse by future generations."

Thanks for your response Andrea. I posted a comment with the above articles listed but it says it is awaiting moderation (prob because of the links that are in it) so that is why I am commenting again with some copied quotes from the articles. Hopefully the comment with the links will show up soon so you all can read them for yourselves.

38. [Sara](#) says:

February 16, 2008 at 9:45 pm

We did the Ferber method with Goose and it worked great. It only took 3 nights (at the age of 4 months) when he was able to sleep all night. He screamed for 2 hours the first night, 1 hour the second night and 45 minutes the third night. After that he was able to get himself to sleep with out all the screaming. My doctor actually recommended it. I figured if it was okay with her it would be okay with me. I intend to use it again on my 2nd child, who is now 4 months old, within the coming week.

I will say that when he was sick I'd get up with him and tend to his needs. Once he was all better we'd have to get him back on track again. He didn't cry this time though. He'd lay there and talk to himself or suck his thumb and look around until he nodded off. It became a habit and he was okay with it.

My new little one, Wubs, has a difficult time falling asleep. He likes to be rocked but once he's tired and cranky there is nothing that I can do to comfort him. (I've tried it all) So off he goes to his crib where he wrestles with his blanket until sleep envelopes him.

Don't knock it till you try it.:)

39. [Stephani](#) says:

February 16, 2008 at 10:16 pm

In response to Katherine's scientific studies, I'd like to see how teaching a child to sleep through the night is "neglect". For both my children (and all the babies that I have had in daycare and babysat in my home) all it takes is a week or less of screaming and then they get the hint. Babies are smart if given a chance and a reliable routine. I'm certainly not the kind to let them cry it out if they skin their knee or get their feelings hurt. What we are talking about here is forming healthy sleep habits, not neglecting their emotional needs. Us being emotionally stable during the day is just another benefit of having children who sleep through the night.

40. [Katherine](#) says:

February 16, 2008 at 10:19 pm

I'm the eldest of eight. (my parents have had multiple marriages so we don't all live together at once) I used put two of the boys to sleep by reading or singing to them. They shared a room. My father was firm about the cry it out method during the day, but at night he would put them in my bed if they wouldn't stop crying. My first child is on the way now, and after having tried both methods, I've got to say that cry it out is so much more effective, IF you stick to it. Now the boys still don't sleep through the night and usually move to the floor in my dad's room during the night now that I'm not there.

41. [Katherine](#) says:

February 16, 2008 at 10:21 pm

Sorry should have clarified that I'm a different Katherine. Refer to last post.

42. [Meg](#) says:

February 16, 2008 at 10:38 pm

I look at it this way. If you can't be bothered by a child crying at night for fear of abusing them, you'd best

not have them at all!

43. *Stephani* says:
February 16, 2008 at 11:04 pm

Helpful AND positive.

44. *sara m* says:
February 16, 2008 at 11:08 pm

Baby was sleeping through – that is, from about 10pm until 5 or 6am – from about 4 weeks. Problem we always had – and are still having at the age of 6 mths old – is that every time we put him to bed he cries, sometimes for only a few minutes, but often for up to 30 minutes. Question for those people who allowed their babies to cry themselves to sleep, have their babies now progressed to the stage that they don't cry before falling asleep and if so, when did that occur?

45. *Pam* says:
February 16, 2008 at 11:19 pm

Meg, There are a lot of people who might be reading that have lives a bit more complicated than yours. Perhaps someone might be going through a divorce, laid off, struggling to keep their house, struggling with chronic illness, struggling with the needs of disabled children or aging parents, emotionally exhausted single parents, etc. What is wrong with a person knowing their limitations emotionally or physically and making plans accordingly? While you might not agree with CIO, can't you have some flexibility of thinking for the benefit of those who have difficult daily struggles? Getting very little sleep night after night could send already-struggling people off the deep end. How about a little grace? Life is never smooth all the time and things can change in the blink of an eye, even for you.

46. *Brooklann* says:
February 17, 2008 at 12:12 am

Katherine Sullivan, you crack me up.

You pretty much know when your baby is tired. Mine rubs her eyes and that's when we put her down. She doesn't cry; once in a while she gets fussy but never for more than 10 mins.

Once my mom tried unsuccessfully for 4 hours to give my daughter a nap. She said the baby kept crying and didn't want to be in her playpen. Well, I put my daughter in her playpen and shut the door and she was asleep in 5 mins. My mom wasn't allowed to complain about my parenting techniques after that, and I had the satisfaction of earning my smugness. To each her own.

47. *Brooklann* says:
February 17, 2008 at 12:14 am

Addendum: We do put our daughter down to bed around the same time every night, not just when she's rubbing her eyes, as well as for naps. It's for everyone's own good: hers, ours as parents, and the daycare because it helps keep her on a schedule.

48. *funduval* says:
February 17, 2008 at 12:55 am

I combined bits and pieces of methods...until about the age of 10 months, I went to my daughter everytime she cried, but EVERY TIME I put her right back down. I kept my comforting heartfelt but brief, and I repeated it as many times as I had to throughout the night, sometimes several times in the same hour, always putting her back down & telling her she had to sleep...it was almost like a Monty Python sketch in its ridiculousness, what with the opening & closing of doors, lights on & off, and the repetitive dialogue.

Over time, I began to discern a "protest cry" from a "despondent and terrified cry" or a "hungry cry" and soon began to let her completely alone during the protest cries, however long they lasted (and they were screams!). The terrified cries and hunger cries I still catered to.

Eventually the munchies and the night terrors went away, because she realized, through repetition, that Mommy was serious about a strict bedtime, but not deaf to her woes. I ended up with a great sleeper who sleeps 12 hours a night plus a 2-3 hour nap during the day. She seems to crave bedtime, and will sometimes hold hands & lead me to her room in anticipation of it. She looks forward to the routine, which is very very structured and predictable. So, I guess I truly believe that the only discipline babies respond to is repetition. I don't think someone who needs 7 hours uninterrupted sleep can accomplish this method, because, in the first 10 months, I awoke a lot. As an on-demand nurser (weaned at 9 months), I was used to the waking. In the end, I was really glad I did it this way.

49. *Lisa Kathleen* says:
February 17, 2008 at 1:17 am

I feel really sad when I hear about babies or toddlers "crying for hours". Physically, mentally, and emotionally, babies (especially breastfed babies) are not designed to sleep through the night. The years from 0-6 are very, very intense growth periods, and many, many things happen that wake a child at night. I, personally, am there for my little girl when she needs me. She rarely cries, day or night, and some nights we both get more sleep than others. I respond to her sleepy signs and that's when we go to bed. She naps on the days she is tired and not others. She's up later when she naps.

The reason that moms need to have dad do it when it comes to crying it out is that mothers are naturally, and for a very good reason, attuned to their babies' cries. If you look back into human history, babies or toddlers left away from their parents would probably be eaten by wild animals. Children cry because they need their parents, not because they are manipulative. I have never had a bedtime struggle. My girl goes to sleep easily 95% of the time. The other nights, we cuddle for an extra half hour and then fall asleep happily together. I slip out after that to do what I need to do.

I hope that my little girl grows up knowing when she is tired, knowing when she is hungry, knowing when she needs a hug, and being confident that she knows what she needs better than anyone else does (her peers, her boyfriend, her boss).

The whole concept of forcing a child to learn to "self-soothe" seems a bit crazy to me. Research shows that children who are forced to self-soothe, rather than depending on their parents to soothe them, self-soothe when they're teenagers, too, and in some pretty scary ways. We can teach our children gradually to self-soothe, or we can force them to do it. We can let them know we will always be there for them if they can't

handle it yet, or we can leave them on their own to give up on us, our love, and our willingness to be there when they need us.

There is a tonne of research that indicates that there are many, many, physical, mental, and emotional reasons NOT to leave a baby to cry uncomforted. I recommend the book "The Science of Parenting" by Margot Sutherland for the research, and "The No-Cry Sleep Solution" by Elizabeth Pantley for alternative methods.

There are other ways to help your baby learn to sleep longer. And there are lots of reasons to arrange your life differently, when possible, to be able to support a baby or toddler when they wake at night.

By the way, to the person who says we need to cut people some slack – I have had a pretty interesting last two years, a messy divorce, and lots of reasons that I could have chosen to do things differently. I recommend finding a parenting group that will support you in being a responsive parent. I am a member of a parenting group that has had "sleep angels" who volunteered to help out exhausted moms in whatever way they needed (childcare, housecleaning, dropping off frozen meals) so that they could respond to their child's needs when necessary. A child involved in a family full of stresses needs more parental involvement, not less. If you seek out people who respect your desire to parent in a more responsive way, you are likely to also find friends who will support you when you need it. After all, women have worked together in this way, and taken care of each other, and each other's children, for millenia. Maybe we need to look at some cultural changes to support a parenting style that is more scientific, rather than pragmatic.

All that said, I am going to crawl into bed with my 2 1/2 year old, who will tuck her toes into my legs, nurse for a few minutes, then roll over and fall back to sleep while I breathe in the smell of her skin and listen to her breathing until I fall asleep, too. That is, if I can sleep, thinking of all the other babies in North America "screaming" themselves to sleep, uncomforted.

Lisa Kathleen

50. [Andrea Frazer](#) says:
February 17, 2008 at 1:33 am

Lisa Kathleen, and other moms against the crying it out thing – I just want to be clear. I don't think any of us non-attachment parenting moms are about throwing a kid in a crib and letting them scream for no reason. If my child is sick, or my child had a bad dream, I'm right there. I'm literally talking about the idea that at the end of a long day, a child needs sleep. Not with me. Not next to my husband. But in their bed. It's never an issue, nor a struggle, because I've enforced this from six months on. We had one week of crying crying crying and then it was fine. My child is very very content. I'm not worried about self-soothing in awful ways. That's like me telling you that your child will self-soothe due to your divorce. That's just not the case. I'm sure you have very good reasons for your divorce, just as I and many others have very good reasons for letting our children cry it out. It's not a good or bad thing. It's what works for the parent so that the parent can be the best parent possible for their child.

Does that make sense? This does not have to be war. I wish you the very best for your baby. Clearly you're doing a great job with her and care very much, as we all do. Good luck.

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