

THE DAD SYSTEM



# The Complete Sleep System

Birth to Age 5 · Evidence-Based · Print & Laminate

Bedtime routines produce improvement within **3 nights**.  
Sleep training shows **zero long-term harm** at 5-year follow-up.  
Even 5 lux suppresses **77% of melatonin** in preschoolers.  
**Every tool the science supports.**

★ **Start at ANY Stage – Consistency Is What Matters**

## SLEEP SURFACE PROGRESSION



*From "The Optimized Father" by Darnell Dallas*



**Full Guide + Products**  
[thedadsystem.org/sleepsystem](https://thedadsystem.org/sleepsystem)



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# Phase 0: Pregnancy Sleep Foundations

Third Trimester · Before Baby Arrives

## SLEEP BANKING + PILLOW

**Extend sleep to 9–10 hours nightly**  
Sleep banking is scientifically valid — pre-loading builds resilience. Dad: protect her sleep.

**Pregnancy pillow starting ~week 20**  
By **week 28, side sleeping is medically important** — ACOG: avoid back sleeping late pregnancy. Left side preferred.

**Parent bedtime: 9:00–9:30 PM · Wake: 5:30–6:00 AM**  
Maximizes deep sleep + gives 1.5–2 hrs couple time after baby goes down.

**Naps: 20 min OR 90 min only (1–3 PM)**  
Avoid 30–60 min naps — deep-sleep grogginess.

## CIRCADIAN HABITS (CROSS THE PLACENTA)

**Morning sunlight within 30 min of waking**  
10–15 min outdoors. **Dark climate: 10,000 lux light therapy lamp 20–30 min.**

**Dim lights after sunset · Screens off 1–2 hrs before bed**  
Switch to red/amber bulbs ( $\leq 2,200K$ ). **Even 5 lux suppresses 77% of melatonin.**

## PRENATAL SINGING (START BY WEEK 30)

**Pick ONE song. Sing it to the bump every night.**  
Newborns remember melodies heard in the womb. After birth = most powerful sleep cue. Dad: sing too — baby hears your deeper voice clearly.

## SUPPLEMENTS (SAFE FOR PREGNANCY + BREASTFEEDING)

**Magnesium glycinate (200–400 mg before bed)**  
Safest sleep supplement. AAP: compatible with breastfeeding.

**Tart cherry juice (8 oz, 60–90 min before bed)**  
Natural melatonin. +84 min sleep in one study.

**Collagen peptides (10–15g daily) + Chamomile tea**  
Collagen: safe for pregnancy/breastfeeding. Chamomile: moderate amounts, traditionally safe.

**AVOID WHILE BREASTFEEDING:** Melatonin supplements, ashwagandha, kava, high-dose L-theanine, GABA supplements.

**MOM'S CORTISOL SHIELD** — **DAD'S JOB:** Prenatal therapy ( $\downarrow$ PPD risk). Curate social media. Limit negative news. Nightly massage (back, feet, shoulders). Prenatal yoga together. Nature walks. Elevated cortisol crosses the placenta.

**PRENATAL YOGA + BREATHING:** Cat-cow, wide-knee child's pose, legs up wall. **4-7-8 breathing** (inhale 4 $\rightarrow$ hold 7 $\rightarrow$ exhale 8). Do together.

## TAG-TEAM SHIFTS

**Parent A: 8:30 PM–2:00 AM · Parent B: 2:00 AM–7:00 AM**  
Separate rooms. **Each gets 5+ hrs unbroken — at least one deep-sleep cycle.**



# Phase 1: Newborn Survival Mode

0–3 Months · Safe Sleep + Tag-Team

## SAFE SLEEP ABSOLUTES (AAP 2022)

- Back to sleep EVERY time until age 1**  
Once rolling both ways (~4–6 mo), they can stay. Always PLACE on back.
- Firm, flat surface — bassinet or crib only**  
No inclined sleepers (>10° unsafe). No car seats/swings for sleep.
- Nothing in the sleep space**  
No pillows, blankets, bumpers, stuffed animals, weighted products. **Bumpers: banned (107 deaths).**
- Room-share ≥6 months · Fan in nursery**  
Separate surface. ↓SIDS risk 50%. Fan (not aimed at baby): ↓SIDS risk 72%. Improves CO<sub>2</sub> circulation.

## ENVIRONMENT



- 68–72°F · 40–60% humidity · ≤50 dBA sound 7+ ft away**  
Overheating = SIDS risk. Cool-mist humidifier (no essential oils). Monitor humidity with hygrometer.
- Total darkness (<1 lux) · Red/amber night light only**  
Hand test: if you see your hand, too bright. Blackout covers. ≤2,200K color temp. Ventilate for CO<sub>2</sub>.


## FEEDING + SLEEP


- No fixed schedule yet — feed on demand**  
Expose to light by 7 AM, darkness by 7 PM to begin circadian training.
- Dream feed at 10–11 PM · Nighttime breast milk preferred**  
Baby stays mostly asleep. Nighttime milk has more melatonin + tryptophan. If no improvement after 5–7 nights, stop.
- Swaddle for all sleeps until ANY sign of rolling**  
**Stop swaddling immediately at first roll attempt (~3–4 mo).**

**Wake windows:** 30–90 min (expert consensus, NOT peer-reviewed)

**Total sleep:** 14–17 hrs/24h · Clothing: onesie + swaddle/sack (TOG 1.0 for 68–74°F)

 **GENTLE TOUCH (0–3 MO):** Bicycle legs for gas, gentle knee-to-chest, hip circles during changes.  Warm hand on chest + slow breaths — baby co-regulates. Begin IAIM massage: legs only, 2–3 min. See Page 8.

 **SIBLINGS:** Keep older child's routine EXACTLY the same. Stagger bedtimes. Give them a "big kid" role. One parent per child. Expect 2–6 weeks of toddler regression.

 **4-MONTH REGRESSION:** The ONLY permanent biological sleep change. Brain shifts to 4-stage sleep. Brief awakenings between every ~60-min cycle. Normal, not a setback.



## Phase 2: Circadian Training

3–6 Months · Light, Rhythm & Transition

### MORNING LIGHT PROTOCOL

**Baby outside within 1 hr of waking — 10–15 min indirect light**

Windows filter ~98% of relevant light. Even cloudy days sufficient. **Dark climate: 10,000 lux lamp 20–30 min.**

**Melatonin begins ~9 weeks · Full circadian maturity: 2–3 years**

Cortisol rhythm ~8 wks. Temperature ~11 wks. **This is when training "sticks."**

### EVENING LIGHT SHUTDOWN

**Dim lights 1–2 hrs before bed to <10 lux · No screens**

Children's melatonin ~2x more sensitive than adults'. Red/amber only (>600nm). 5 min of bright light delays melatonin 3 hrs.

### TRANSITIONS & SLEEP SKILLS

**Swaddle → sleep sack when rolling begins**

Love to Dream (zip wings), Merlin Sleepsuit (3–6 mo), Zipadee-Zip (safe for rolling, longest use).

**"Drowsy but awake" · Own room at 4–6 months optimal**

Early independent sleepers: +46 min longer stretches. Room-sharers: 4x odds of bed-sharing.

**Bedtime:** 6:30–7:30 PM · Wake: 6:00–7:00 AM

**Schedule:** 1.5–2.5 hr wake windows · 3–4 naps · 12–16 hrs total

**Evening:** 5:30 feed → 6:00 bath → 6:15 PJs+massage → 6:30 book+song → 7:00 lights out

**BABY YOGA & MASSAGE (3–6 MO):** Tummy-time stretches during wake windows. Full IAIM massage now (10–15 min, coconut/sunflower oil). See Page 8.

**SLEEP TRAINING READINESS:**  4+ mo adjusted  Pediatrician OK  No illness  Swaddle transitioned  Consistent routine 3+ nights  Both parents aligned → Phase 3



## Phase 3: Sleep Independence

6–12 Months · Training, Weaning & Routine

### 🎓 SLEEP TRAINING – GRADUATED EXTINCTION (FERBER)

#### 📄 Works within 3–7 nights · Zero long-term harm

Cortisol DECLINED vs controls. 5-yr follow-up: **zero differences across 20 outcomes.**

**Night 1:** Check at 3, 5, 10, 10, 10 min...

**Night 2:** Check at 5, 10, 12, 12...

**Night 3:** Check at 10, 12, 15, 15... (most babies settled by night 3–5)

⚠️ **12-HOUR MYTH:** No medical org recommends 12 hrs. Median 6–12 mo = 11 hrs. "Sleeping through" in research = 6–8 hrs.

### 🕒 NIGHT WEANING + MEAL TIMING

#### 📄 Formula-fed: wean by 6–9 mo · Breastfed: 9–12 mo

Gradual: ↓ 1–2 min nursing every 2–3 nights. Under 4 min → discontinue.

#### 📄 Front-load calories · Last meal 1.5–2 hrs before bed

Include **kiwi or pistachios** — natural melatonin + serotonin. Introduce solids from ~6 mo.

### 🌙 BEDTIME ROUTINE (START NOW, USE FOREVER)

#### 🛁 Warm bath ~90 min before bed

Shortens sleep onset by ~36%. 40–42°C, 10+ min.

#### 👐 Massage 10–15 min 🧑

Strongest evidence for infant sleep improvement.

#### 📖 Book → Song → Lights out within 30 min of bath

1–2 board books. Parent reads; baby turns pages. Same song every night = sleep cue.

### 👉 BABY SLEEP SIGNS (START AT 6 MO)

#### 😴 SLEEP: hand over forehead → draw down, fingers closing

**BOOK:** palms open like book · **BATH:** fists scrub chest · **MILK:** open/close fist. Signs back ~9–12 mo.

**Bedtime:** 7:00–7:30 PM · Wake: 6:00–7:00 AM

**Evening:** 5:30 dinner (kiwi!) → 6:00 bath → 6:15 PJs+massage → 6:30 book+song → 7:00 lights out

🧘 **BABY YOGA (6–12 MO):** Seated forward fold in your lap, butterfly legs. **Breathing buddy:** stuffed animal on belly — "watch the bear go up... down." 🧑



## Phase 4: Toddler Mastery

12–24 Months · Transition, Independence & Boundaries

### SLEEP SURFACE TRANSITION

- Stay in crib as LONG as possible (2.5–3 yr)**  
Younger toddlers lack impulse control. Transition when railing below chest (~35 in) or climbing out.
- Floor bed (~18 mo+) · Bed rails for toddler/twin bed**  
Firm mattress on floor. **Entire room baby-proofed = the room IS the sleep space.**
- Pillow at age 2+ · Silk pillowcase for textured hair**  
Non-toxic: [Keababies](#) (👶) or [Naturepedic PLA](#) (🏆). [Promeed 100% mulberry silk](#) pillowcase. [Organic crib sheets](#).

### NAP TRANSITION · BEDTIME RESISTANCE

- 2→1 nap: typically 13–18 mo (avg ~15 mo)**  
Signs: refusing one nap 1–2 weeks + tolerating 4–5 hr windows. **At 12 mo, refusal is developmental — don't rush.**
- Bedtime Pass (3–10 yr) — ONE card for ONE exit**  
Unused card = morning reward. **Eliminated resistance in ALL study participants.**
- Excuse Me Drill (2–6 yr) 🧑**  
"I need to check on something" → leave briefly → return + praise → gradually lengthen absences.

**Bedtime:** 7:00–7:30 PM · Wake: 6:00–7:00 AM · Nap: 12:30–2:30 PM


**Evening:** 5:30 dinner (kiwi/pistachios) → 6:00 bath → 6:15 PJs+massage → 6:30 yoga+book+song → 7:00 lights out

**Reading:** Toddler "reads" by pointing, naming, turning pages. Parent reads text.

### TODDLER YOGA (12–24 MO) 🧑

 Cat →  Cow →  Turtle (child's pose) →  Frog squats →  Happy baby. 3–5 min, playful!

**Breathing:** "Smell the flower 🌸 blow the candle 🕯️" × 3–5. **Affirmation:** "I am safe. I am loved. I am sleepy."

 **MOVEMENT IS NORMAL:** Rolling, flipping, ending up sideways at age 2 = completely normal. Usually outgrown by school age. If waking exhausted → check ferritin/iron levels.



# Phase 5: Full Independence

2-5 Years · The Routine Is HERS Now

## 👑 SHE OWNS THE ROUTINE

### Hand over the routine card (Page 10) 📄

She checks off each step with dry-erase marker. "I did my bedtime routine all by myself!"

### Let her CHOOSE within the routine

Which book? PJs? Song? Choice = ownership = compliance. Don't let her choose WHETHER — let her choose HOW.

## 😴 NAP ELIMINATION

### 📊 By 3: ~33% stopped · By 4: ~57% · By 5: ~80%

Replace nap with "quiet time" (30-60 min). Move bedtime earlier when nap drops. Total: 10-13 hrs/day.

## 👹 NIGHT TERRORS VS NIGHTMARES

### 👹 NIGHT TERRORS

Deep NREM (first 1/3 of night) · ASLEEP · Unresponsive · No memory · Ages 2-7 · DON'T wake · Fix: gently rouse 15-30 min before typical episode

### 😱 NIGHTMARES

REM (second 1/2 of night) · Wakes fully · Remembers · Seeks comfort · Ages 3-6 · Comfort + reassure · "Monster spray" (water bottle) OK

**Bedtime:** 7:30-8:00 PM · Wake: 6:30-7:00 AM · Nap: dropping to quiet time

**Evening:** 5:30 dinner → 6:15 bath → 6:30 PJs → 6:40 yoga → 6:50 book → 7:05 song → 7:15 breathing → 7:30 lights out

**Reading:** 3-5 yr: picks book, narrates from pictures. 5+: 10-15 min independent reading before lights-out.

### 🧘 BEDTIME YOGA (2-5 YR) — 5 POSES 📄

1 Mountain 🏔️ "I am strong" → 2 Ragdoll 🧸 "Letting go" → 3 Cat-Cow 🐱 🐮 → 4 Turtle 🐢 "I am calm" → 5 Starfish 🌟 Savasana in bed → sleep

**Meditation (3-5 min):** Body scan OR cloud visualization. End with 3 gratitudes.

**Affirmations:** "I am safe. I am loved. I am brave. Tomorrow is a new adventure."



# Baby Massage for Sleep – IAIM Protocol

Legs → Stomach → Chest → Arms → Back → Face

**IAIM** — gold standard, 72+ countries. Both parents attend 5-week courses. [iaim.net](http://iaim.net) — find classes. **Videos:** [Cosmic Kids Yoga](#) · [Yoga With Adriene bedtime](#) · [Ferber demo](#)

## WHEN & HOW



**10–15 min, BEFORE bath · Warm room, dim/red light**

After massage → bath: [Earth Mama Calming](#), [Burt's Bees](#), or [Mustela Organic](#). After bath → [Earth Mama Lotion](#) or [Burt's Bees Lotion](#).



**Oil:** **Coconut or sunflower · Ask permission first**

Avoid mineral oil, olive oil, fragranced products, essential oils. "Ready for massage?" If baby fusses, stop.

## 6-ZONE SEQUENCE

### **1 LEGS (2–3 min)**

"Milking" strokes hip→foot. Sole circles. Toe squeezes. Bicycle legs for gas. Least sensitive = start here.

### **2 STOMACH (2 min)**

Clockwise circles around navel. "Waterwheel" hands. "I Love U" stroke for gas/colic.

### **3 CHEST (1–2 min)**

"Open book" — flat hands sweep outward. Heart trace from breastbone to navel.

### **4 ARMS (2 min)**

"Rope twist" shoulder→wrist. Palm circles. Finger squeezes.

### **5 BACK (2–3 min)**

Baby on stomach. Long strokes shoulders→feet. "Raking" with fingertips (never ON spine). Most relaxing.

### **6 FACE (1–2 min)**

Forehead center→out. Temple circles. Cheekbone trace. Jaw release. Grand finale — many babies drowsy.

**0–3 mo:** Legs only (2–3 min). Build gradually.

**3–6 mo:** Full 6-zone (10–15 min). Best window.

**6–12 mo:** Use songs to engage squirmy babies.

**12–24 mo:** Let toddler massage a doll alongside.

**2–5 yr:** Back massage during story. Child gives YOU a massage.



# Parent Sleep Recovery Protocol

You Can't Pour From an Empty Cup

## 👉 TAG-TEAM SHIFTS

- Parent A: 8:30 PM–2:00 AM · Parent B: 2:00 AM–7:00 AM**  
Separate rooms. Each gets 5+ hrs unbroken. Breastfeeding: on-duty brings baby, handles burp/diaper/resettle.
- Ideal: bedtime 9:00–9:30 PM · Wake 5:30–6:00 AM**  
Baby goes down 7–7:30 PM → 1.5–2 hrs couple time. Single parent: enlist weekend overnight relief.

## 💊 SUPPLEMENTS + SLEEP FOODS

- Magnesium glycinate (200–400 mg before bed)**  
Safest postpartum supplement. Promotes slow-wave sleep.
- Tart cherry juice · Collagen · Chamomile tea**  
Cherry: 8 oz, 60–90 min before bed (+84 min in one study). Collagen: 10–15g daily. Chamomile: safe for breastfeeding.
- Kiwi (2, 1 hr before bed) · Pistachios (highest natural melatonin)**  
Food-based sleep aids. Include in dinner or evening snack.

⚠️ **AVOID WHILE BREASTFEEDING:** Melatonin, high-dose L-theanine, GABA, ashwagandha, kava.

## ☕ CAFFEINE + NAPPING + SLEEP TRAINING GEAR

- Caffeine cutoff: 12–2 PM · Naps: 20 or 90 min ONLY**  
Best nap: 1–3 PM. Avoid 30–60 min — deep-sleep grogginess. Sleep banking: 9–10 hrs/night pre-birth.
- During sleep training: Loop earplugs for parents**  
Takes edge off crying while still hearing baby. Watch clock, not monitor. Tag-team checks. Crying is temporary (3–5 nights).

## 🧘 PARENT BEDTIME ROUTINE — MODEL WHAT YOU TEACH:

**Stretches:** Forward fold → Legs-up-wall (5 min) → Supine twist → Happy baby → Savasana

**Breathing:** 4-7-8 (inhale 4→hold 7→exhale 8) × 4 cycles

**Meditation:** Progressive muscle relaxation or body scan. Even 5 min works. **Gratitude:** Name 3 things. 🧑

💡 **PPD PREVENTION:** Sleep deprivation = modifiable PPD risk factor. At least one 4-hr protected block nightly. Maternal insomnia: 41% in 2nd year postpartum. If struggling, talk to your doctor.

# My Bedtime Routine



## Bath Time!

Warm water, splish splash 🌊



## Pajamas On

Cozy jammies + sleep sack



## Massage Time 👤

Legs, tummy, arms – so relaxing!



## Stretchy Time ★

Cat, cow, turtle, happy baby!



## Story Time

Pick a book – you choose!



## Song Time

Our special sleepy song 🎵



## Breathing Time ★

Smell the flower 🌸 blow the candle 🕯️



## My Affirmations ★


I am safe. I am loved. I am brave. I am enough.



## Goodnight!

Lights out. Tomorrow is a new adventure. 💖


## 👶 BASSINETS (0-6 MONTHS)

 **SNOO Smart Sleeper** REFERRAL  
~\$1,695 · Rental ~\$159/mo  
FDA-cleared. +1-2 hrs sleep. **Rental wins.**


 **HALO BassiNest Swivel** AFF  
~\$200-400  
Best bedside. 360° swivel.


 **BabyBjörn Cradle** AFF  
~\$300-400  
Minimalist, ultra-portable.

## 🛏️ CRIBS · 🏠 FLOOR BEDS (18 MO+)

 **Nestig Cloud Crib** AFF  
~\$500-700  
Pine, GREENGUARD Gold, 3-in-1.


 **Babyletto** AFF  
~\$299-649  
Widest styles. NZ pine. GG Gold.


 **DaVinci Kalani 4-in-1** AFF  
~\$200-300  
Budget pick. GREENGUARD Gold.

 **Montessori Floor Bed · Regalo Bed Rail** AFF  
~\$25-400  
18 mo-3 yr. Rail for twin.


## 🛏️ MATTRESSES (NEVER BUY USED – SEE PAGE 14)


 **Naturepedic Organic** AFF  
~\$269-499  
GOTS organic, waterproof. Best.


 **Newton Baby** AFF  
~\$250-300  
100% breathable + washable.


 **Avocado Organic** AFF  
~\$329-449  
Coconut + latex + wool. Natural.

## 👶 SWADDLES & TRANSITIONS


 **SNOO Sleep Sack** AFF  
~\$30-36  
For SNOO. Arms-up secure.


 **Baby Merlin's Magic Sleepsuit** AFF  
~\$40  
Dampens startle 3-6 mo.

 **Zipadee-Zip** AFF  
~\$37-43  
Safe for rolling. Toddler+.

 **HALO SleepSack Swaddle** AFF  
~\$25-35  
Hospital std. Arms in/out.

## 👶 SLEEP SACKS BY TOG · 0.2 WARM · 1.0 YEAR-ROUND · 2.5 COOL

 **Kyte Baby** AFF  
~\$45-65  
Bamboo-viscose. Soft.

 **Woolino Merino Wool** AFF  
~\$109-129  
Self-regulates all seasons.

 **HALO SleepSack** AFF  
~\$24-40  
Budget. Cotton/fleece/organic.

## Product Guide · Environment, Monitors, Air & Parent Support

### SOUND · BLACKOUT · RED LIGHT · LIGHT THERAPY



#### Hatch Rest

AFF

~\$70  
Sound+light+app. Red mode. Versatile.



#### Yogasleep Dohm Classic

AFF

~\$45-55  
52 dBA max. Mechanical.



#### Sleepout · BlackoutEZ

AFF

~\$30-80  
Suction or Velcro. Zero gaps.



#### SomniLight Amber · Red Bulb

AFF

~\$8-50  
<1.5 lux baby level.  $\leq$ 2,200K.



#### Carex Day-Light · Verilux HappyLight

AFF

~\$40-100  
10,000 lux. Circadian boost.

### BABY MONITORS (USED OK WITH BATTERY CHECK – SEE PAGE 14)



#### Owlet Dream Sock

AFF

~\$299 · Duo ~\$399  
FDA-cleared. Pulse + O<sub>2</sub>.



#### Nanit Pro

AFF

~\$299 · ~\$100/yr sub  
Best video. AI analytics.



#### Eufy SpaceView

AFF

~\$130-190  
Best value. No WiFi. Long battery.

### AIR QUALITY · PURIFIER 24/7 · HUMIDIFIER AS NEEDED



#### Coway Airmega · Levoit Core 300

AFF

~\$100-200  
HEPA. Crack window for CO<sub>2</sub>.



#### Levoit LV600S Humidifier

AFF

~\$60-80  
Cool mist. 40-60%. No oils.

### MASSAGE OILS · BATH & SKIN · PARENT SUPPS · TODDLER BEDDING · DIY



#### Coconut · Sunflower Oil

AFF

~\$8-15  
Evidence-based. No mineral/olive.



#### Earth Mama · Burt's Bees · Mustela

AFF

~\$9-15  
Non-toxic wash + lotion.



#### Magnesium · Tart Cherry · Collagen

AFF

Parent recovery  
Mag 200-400mg + cherry. BF-safe.



#### Keababies · Naturepedic PLA · Promeed Silk Pillowcase

AFF

Age 2+  
Organic pillows. Silk for 4a hair.



#### Laminating Pouches · Dry-Erase · Loop Earplugs

AFF

DIY Kit  
Print → laminate. Loop = essential.

★ BEST VALUE

### Huckleberry

Free · Plus \$60/yr · Premium \$130/yr

~85% anecdotal accuracy. Good for pattern recognition.

### Little Ones

~\$49 one-time · Harvard endorsed

Dynamic schedule. Gentle methods. 1/3 the price, no subscription.

### Taking Cara Babies


















~\$90 newborn · ~\$179–319 older

Repackaged Ferber + Karp on video. Effective but expensive.


















### 💡 SEVERE SLEEP ISSUES

See a certified sleep consultant — Family Sleep Institute, IPSP, or IPHI (\$200–\$1,500+). Field is unregulated; verify credentials before booking.


### DO

-  Back to sleep EVERY time until age 1
-  Room-share ≥6 mo, separate surface
-  68–72°F · humidity 40–60%
-  Total darkness (<1 lux) for sleep
-  Sound machine ≤50 dBA, 7+ ft away
-  Red/amber only at night (≤2,200K)
-  Morning sunlight within 1 hr of waking
-  Consistent bedtime routine
-  Warm bath ~90 min before bed
-  Massage before bath (IAIM)
-  Crack window — CO<sub>2</sub> ventilation
-  Front-load calories daytime
-  Tag-team shifts (4+ hr blocks)
-  Caffeine cutoff by 12–2 PM
-  Last meal 1.5–2 hrs before bed
-  Affirmations bedtime + morning
-  Start at ANY stage — consistency wins

### DON'T


-  Inclined sleepers (>10° unsafe)
-  Crib bumpers (banned — 107 deaths)
-  Weighted sacks or swaddles
-  Pillows before 2, blankets before 12 mo
-  Sleep on sofa/recliner with baby
-  Bed-share after alcohol/drugs
-  Essential oils in baby's room
-  Warm-mist humidifier (burn risk)
-  Sound machine at crib level
-  "Warm white" 2,700K for night light
-  Screens 1–2 hrs before bed
-  Melatonin while breastfeeding
-  Expect 12 hrs — median is 11
-  Swaddle after ANY roll attempt
-  Toddler bed before 2.5 yr
-  Polyester satin — use real silk
-  Rush it — consistency > speed

# Buy It Used First – Sleep Gear Edition


 **WHY IT MATTERS** — Sleep gear depreciates fastest of all baby items. Heirloom-grade gear sells used at **50–70% off** with <10% function loss. **BUT sleep gear has unique safety landmines** — recalls, hygiene, banned products.

## ALWAYS SAFE USED (HARD GOODS + HARDWARE)

 **Cribs (post-2011 ONLY)**  
Post-2011 only. Slats <2 $\frac{3}{8}$ ". Check recalls.


 **Wood Furniture**  
Dressers, gliders, shelves. Wood = gold.


 **Baby Monitors**  
Owlet/Nanit/Vava. Reset firmware!


 **Lighting + Blackout**  
Bulbs, curtains, Hatch (reset first).


 **Bassinets (post-2019)**  
HALO, BabyBjörn, refurb SNOO.

## NEVER BUY USED (SAFETY + HYGIENE CRITICAL)

 **Mattresses (any kind, brand)**  
Mold undetectable. SIDS risk 2x higher.

 **Open-System Breast Pumps**  
Backflow. Closed-system rentals OK.

 **Pre-2011 + Drop-Side Cribs**  
Federal ban. 32+ deaths. Walk away.

 **Inclined Sleepers · Rock 'n Plays**  
Banned 2019. 100+ deaths. NEVER.

 **Bumpers · Positioners · Weighted**  
AAP: NO. Bumpers banned 2022.


## SOURCE ORDER (FREE → VETTED)

 **Buy Nothing Groups**  
Hyper-local. Family areas = gold.

 **Friends + Family**  
Best provenance. Check recalls.


 **JBF · Once Upon a Child**  
Pre-screened consignment events.

 **Marketplace · OfferUp**  
Set alerts. Inspect in person.


 **GoodBuy Gear · Rebelstork**  
Inspected. 30-day return.


## BRAND-DIRECT TAKE-BACK + BUYBACK

 **Nestig Crib Buyback**  
Return for credit. Refurb 2024.

 **SNOO Rental (Happiest Baby)**  
\$159/mo vs \$1,695. Refurb resale.

 **IKEA Buyback & Resell**  
Nursery → credit. As-Is resale.

 **Pottery Barn · Crate & Kids**  
Outlets + registry. 40–60% off.

 **THE RESELL LOOP** — When she outgrows it: clean, photograph, resell where you bought it. Recover 50–70%, fund the next stage. The crib that held her can hold someone else's baby.



# Legend, Sources & Companion Systems

From "The Optimized Father" by Darnell Dallas

## Legend

- Dry-erase checkbox
- Dad + child step
- Optional add-on
- Top pick · Budget pick
- [AFF]** Amazon Associates link

## How to Print

1. Find your phase — start where she is now
  2. Print Page 10 → laminate → mount at eye level
  3. Dry-erase markers · wipe nightly
  4. **Be consistent** — most improvement in 3 nights
- Chrome → Ctrl+P → Margins None → Bg graphics ✓**

## Video Resources

- Baby massage:** [iaim.net](http://iaim.net) — IAIM gold std
- Baby yoga:** [Cosmic Kids](#)
- Parent stretches:** [Yoga With Adriene](#)
- Ferber:** [Parents Channel](#)

## Key Research

Mindell 2009 (3-night threshold) · Cooper 2015 (cortisol) · Hiscock 2012 (no long-term harm) · Akacem 2018 (5 lux = 77% melatonin suppression) · Tappin 2002 (used mattress + SIDS) · AAP 2022 Safe Sleep

## Companion Systems from The Dad System



### Afterschool Routine

Ages 5–18 · 3–8 PM window  
[thedadsystem.org/afterschool](http://thedadsystem.org/afterschool)



### After Daycare Routine

Toddler · 4–7 PM window  
[thedadsystem.org/afterdaycare](http://thedadsystem.org/afterdaycare)



**SCAN: FULL GUIDE**  
[thedadsystem.org/sleepsystem](http://thedadsystem.org/sleepsystem)



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