

SOLVE YOUR
CHILD'S
SLEEP
PROBLEMS

NEW,
REVISED, AND
EXPANDED
EDITION

THE ALL-TIME BESTSELLING CLASSIC

RICHARD
FERBER, M.D.

DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR PEDIATRIC SLEEP DISORDERS,
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL BOSTON



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To my sons, Matthias and Thaddeus.

As children, they taught me how to be a parent.

As adults, they have taught me to remember being a child.

Acknowledgments

I have gone to great effort to make the material in this book clear but not simplistic, rational but not dogmatic, and comprehensive but not encyclopedic. In so doing, I have had the great joy of working closely with my son Matthias. Matthias has taken these goals as his own and devoted considerable energies to the project with an ability far greater than mine. I can say for certain that if you find this book easy to read and understand, clear in its formulations and consistent in its approaches, resistant to misunderstanding, and straightforward to apply, then it is because of his efforts. Any mistakes in content remain my own.

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different treatment (what works well for one problem may be inappropriate for another), and all component causes may have to be treated (a partial solution is no solution at all). In addition, often a number of treatment options are available, some of which fit a particular child's needs or personality and his or her parents' desires better than others. I have tried to present more of these choices so that you, the reader, can find an approach you believe appropriate and are comfortable with, whether you live in a big home or small, sleep separately or together, or have one child or many; and whether your child is nervous or confident, cooperative or difficult, outgoing or shy.

The second reason for this new edition is to better address topics that were discussed inadequately in the original. Questions from parents have helped me identify topics that needed to be expanded, such as co-sleeping, naps, sleep problems in twins, and travel to different time zones. (The omission of co-sleeping from the original version, apart from a regrettably brief reference that only repeated the conventional attitude of the day, was unfortunate, given the importance of the issue to many parents.) This edition covers such topics in the detail they deserve.

Finally, in this revision I have added new information drawn from the last twenty years' experience, study, and scientific discoveries. We now have more accurate information than we did in 1985 about children's sleep requirements, and we know more about the biological clock and its effect on sleep and alertness, about sleep terrors and related problems, and about medical issues such as bedwetting, sleep apnea, and narcolepsy. Through my work with thousands of families, I can now offer a number of new methods for treating a variety of common sleep problems.

How to Use This Book

Sleep problems are rather complex by nature, and to understand and treat them, you need to know a little bit about how sleep works. Although you may be tempted to skip directly to the chapters describing a particular problem of interest to you, I suggest that you begin—regardless of the type of sleep problem you hope to solve—by reading the four general introductory chapters on sleep and sleep rhythms: the three chapters in Part I and Chapter 9, “Schedules and Rhythms,” in Part III. These chapters give you the background information you will need to understand most of what appears in other chapters.

You will be best equipped to understand *any* problem if you also read through most of the remaining chapters. At least skim through them quickly and go back for a closer read once you've identified the most relevant material. Many children have more than one sleep problem, and sleep problems are often interconnected. For instance, although the most common cause of sleeplessness in young children—poor sleep associations—is addressed in a single chapter, you may not be able to treat it successfully unless you take into account material from the chapters on limit setting, fears, schedules, or partial wakings. If your child has sleep terrors, you may need to understand the impact of habits and schedules on your child's symptoms before you can help effectively. And you cannot always deal properly with a problem of limit setting unless you also take into account your child's anxiety or an inappropriate bedtime.

Some more specific suggestions follow.

For a sleepless child (including a child who exhibits sleepwalking, sleep terrors, or head banging):

• In addition to the introductory chapters, read over much of

- In addition to the introductory chapters, read over much of the material from Parts II, III, and IV before deciding what the problem is and embarking on a treatment program. At a minimum, read Chapters 4 and 5 on sleep associations and limit setting, Chapters 10 and 11 on schedule disorders, and Chapters 13 and 14 on partial wakings and nightmares.
- If your child is still feeding at night, also read Chapter 6.
- If your child is frightened at night, also read Chapter 7.
- If your child is colicky or has another underlying medical problem, read Chapter 8.
- If your child is still napping, or should be but isn't, read Chapter 12.
- If your child rocks or bangs his head at night, read Chapter 16.
- If your child snores, read Chapter 17.

For a child who is sleepy during the day:

- Since sleepiness is most commonly caused by insufficient sleep or an inappropriate schedule, start by reading through the same chapters suggested above for dealing with a sleepless child.
- In addition, read Part V.

For a child who wets the bed:

- Focus on Chapter 15

For a child whose main problem is snoring:

- Focus on Chapter 17.

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