

Sound sleeping for infants

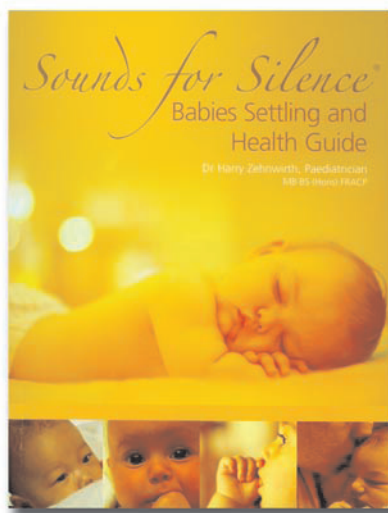
Sounds for silence. Babies settling and health guide + CD-ROM. Harry Zehnwrith. Melbourne: OKIDokie, 2005 (105 pp, \$39.95). ISBN 0 646 45384 X.

CRYING AND SETTling problems are among the most common reasons new parents present to health professionals in the first few months of their baby's life. Managing these problems can be a bewildering and exhausting process.

This guide and CD, developed by Harry Zehnwrith, a Victorian paediatrician and father of four, are excellent value for money. The CD is a compilation of "white noise" and "environmental sounds" designed, when played loudly, to distract a baby from crying so they can then self-settle. Clinical experience suggests this is a cheap and almost certainly harmless approach to managing infant crying.

The guide provides a sensible, practical and easy-to-read approach to sleep, crying and health in the first year of life. It covers normal patterns of sleep and crying, myths about causes of irritability (eg, wind), strategies for managing irritability, ways to encourage a baby to self-settle, and postnatal depression.

Unlike other sleep and settling guides, this book covers a baby's general health and development. One excellent section



covers common parental concerns such as gastro-oesophageal reflux, skin blemishes and sticky eyes, and a section on "scary episodes" reassures parents about breath holding and choking. A separate section (titled "alarm bells") provides clear signs for parents to identify an acutely unwell baby or a baby with possible developmental delay. There is great humour flowing throughout the book (for instance, the only stool colours to worry about are those of the St Kilda footy club — that is, red, white or black), and the text is complemented by bright photographs.

The final pages include a trouble-shooting table in a question and answer format (eg, could cows milk protein intolerance be irritating your baby?), other sources of help (such as parenting centres and web-based resources, including <http://www.soundsforsilence.com.au>), and a behaviour diary to chart a baby's sleep and crying patterns and response to intervention.

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