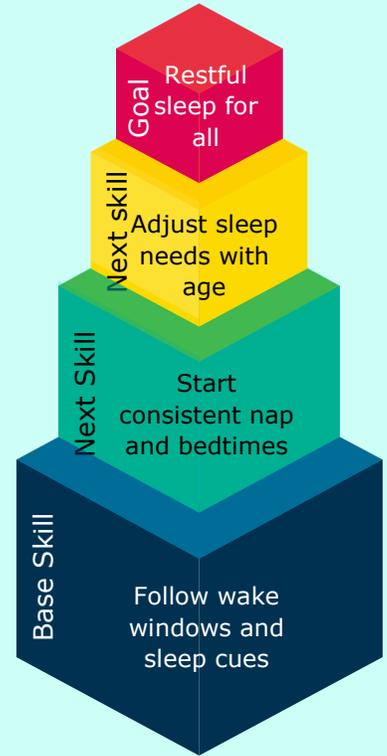




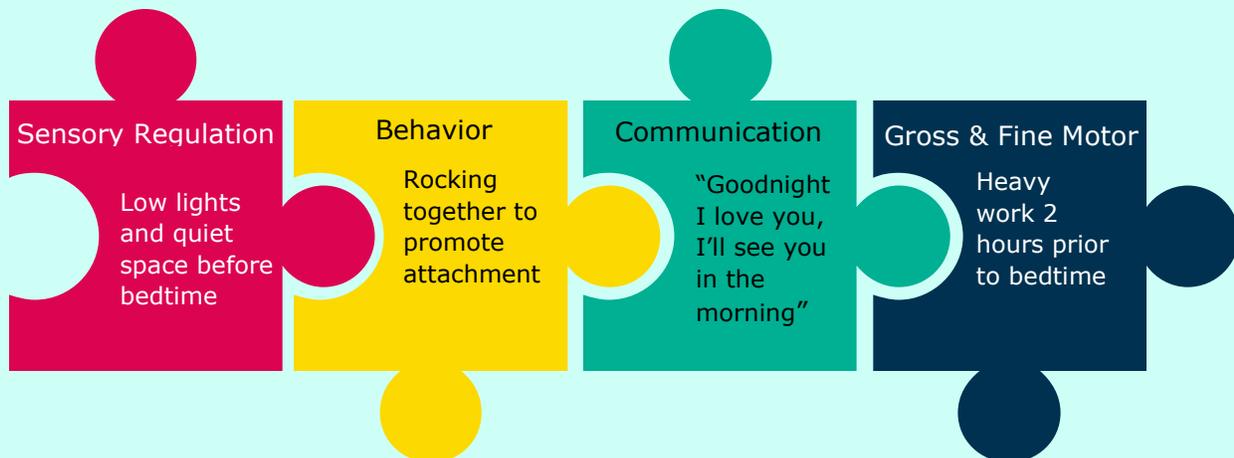
A STEP AHEAD

Making the most of sleep

“Quality sleep – and getting enough of it at the right times -- is as essential to survival as food and water. Without sleep you can’t form or maintain the pathways in your brain that let you learn and create new memories, and it’s harder to concentrate and respond quickly.”



The hierarchy of soothing lays out steps a family can take to work towards getting a child to fall asleep independently. Find the strategy you currently use and try the next one up in the pyramid. Stay consistent for a few days or until you see progress before moving further up the pyramid. Keep in mind that you may go up one and then back down, teaching a life long skill like independent sleep can take time and dedication.



Sleepy cues for infants

Sleepy: red eyebrows, averts eyes, turns head, blank stares

Ready for nap now: yawning, rubbing eyes, pulling on ears, fussy

Overtired: arches back, becoming rigid, making fists, hysterical crying

Troubleshooting tips:

While counterintuitive, babies and toddlers who wake too early or take shorter naps may need earlier bedtimes. Being overtired can cause this.

If you notice the child becoming more energetic after bath, it may be better to bathe in the morning

References:

[The 5 S's - The key to calming your baby's crying ~ My Baby Sleep Guide | Your sleep problems, solved!](#)

[Brain Basics: Understanding Sleep | National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke \(nih.gov\)](#)

The 5 S's for soothing by Harvey Karp, MD

Swaddling: Swaddling helps a baby feel nice and snug and stops all the flailing limbs. And it'll help prevent overstimulation.

Side/Stomach. Holding the baby in this position also helps control the flailing.

Shushing. Shush 2 to 4 inches from baby's ear (not into baby's ear, but past it). Once baby starts to calm, you soften your shushing. White noise machines also help.

Swinging or Rhythmic Movement. Rocking, dancing, baby swings, baby bouncers on vibrate, rhythmic pats on the back or bottom, baby carriers, car rides.

Sucking. Whether it is the bottle, breast, finger or pacifier, babies like to suck. It is extremely soothing to them.

Pieces of a bedtime routine

Limit screen time 1 hour prior to bedtime

Read a book, listen to music, sing a song

Some children enjoy a lovey or pacifier

Bath and pajamas

Keep goodnight's brief, remind them you will see them in the morning

Resources:

[Taking Cara Babies - Taking Cara Babies](#)

[Sleep-and-SI-brochure final.pdf \(thespiralfoundation.org\)](#)

The Sleep Ranch on instagram