

Welcome to the ACES Newsletter for 2012.

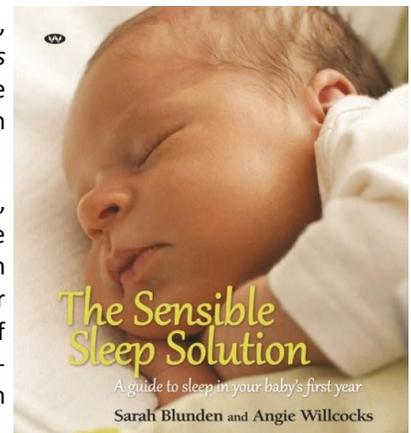
## Book Launch of “The Sensible Sleep Solution: A guide to sleep in your baby’s first year”

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In April 2012, after many months of writing and planning, *The Sensible Sleep Solution: A guide to sleep in your baby’s first year*, co-authored by Dr Sarah Blunden and Angie Willcocks, was launched at Mary Martin’s bookshop, in Adelaide South Australia by Wakefield press.

Whilst there is no shortage of advice about baby sleep, this book is based on a middle road of baby sleep advice that lies somewhere between the extremes of giving in (i.e. having your baby share your bed when you’d prefer not to) or leaving your baby cry for increasing periods of time (controlled crying). The book aligns with the objectives of ACES by focussing on prevention and education about sleep problems in babies under one year.



This book is for parents who:

- want to know *factual* information, based on evidence from research on the how and why of baby sleep in simple language
- want to have the knowledge and understanding about their baby’s sleep so they can make their *own* decisions about how they settle their child.
- don’t want to leave their baby to cry in distress
- want to understand where their baby is at developmentally over the first year and the importance of *self-soothing* for baby’s sleep
- would like their baby to be sleeping well in their own bed, in their own room (or in a room with a sibling) by the age of 12 months.

A recent independent review from BubHub, an Australian parenting website, said:  
“WOW this book is just amazing. And I thank you for writing it as my baby is now in his own bed, something which I could not achieved by myself, without this extra knowledge!!  
Thank you both so very much! From one, happy, rested mummy!”

# Collaborative sleep education projects

2012 has seen the cementing of several international and cross institutional collaborations in sleep education.

1. The University of Birmingham has undertaken a sleep education trial utilising the ACES senior school program. The study has been trialled in one Birmingham middle school during early 2012 in order to assess its feasibility for English middle school students. Data collection is currently underway.
2. The ACES sleep education programs are being utilised in two trials. One an RCT of sleep education in 12 schools and the other a **free** online adaptation of the ACES junior school program, sponsored by Philips (see below).
3. The Australasian Sleep Association and the Tasmanian Government of Population Health have teamed with Dr Sarah Blunden from ACES and Central Queensland University in submitting a proposal to include sleep education

## Online Sleep Education Module

The online version of the ACES junior school module (sponsored and adapted by Philips international for the Simply Healthy @Schools program and supported by the World Congress of Sleep Medicine) has been trialled in a pilot study of one year 4/5 class junior school classroom in Adelaide, South Australia [(n= 26) [mean (SD) age 9yrs 6mths (2mths)]. The program, delivered to a school under the jurisdiction of the South Australian Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS), is available free of charge ([www.simplyhealthy@schools.com](http://www.simplyhealthy@schools.com)).

The sleep education module program was adapted and modified by the teacher so it could be included into existing areas of school curricula (e.g sleep diary data in mathematics, see over). Self report sleep duration at T<sub>1</sub> was compared to sleep duration at 4 weeks from baseline (T<sub>2</sub>) and again in a subset (n= 10) at 12 weeks from baseline (T<sub>3</sub>).

Preliminary data analysed at T<sub>2</sub> suggests significant improvements in sleep duration but also suggest that these were not sustained at T<sub>3</sub> ( $p > 0.05$ ). The majority of parents and children suggested this should be included into existing curricula.

**Table 1: Descriptive responses to sleep education module**

Outcomes at T <sub>2</sub>	Students (n = 26)	%
	Parents (n= 7)	
Increased total sleep time	24	92.3
Students wanting sleep education in curriculum	25	96.1%
Parents wanting sleep education in curriculum	7	100%



These preliminary data suggest that the combination of online modules and embedding the sleep education into curricula may be a promising avenue for sleep education in the future.

# Embedding sleep education into the school curricula

The ACES programs have now undergone, or are still undergoing, 6 separate trials. Ongoing evaluations are necessary to ensure the ACES programs continues to be relevant and engaging for both students and teachers.

One aspect has been consistently reported by all teachers in the ACES trials and which is, we think, of **paramount importance**. This is the necessity to embed sleep education into existing school curricula.

## WHY?

Curricula are overloaded, and teachers struggle to add in other content and in addition, schools are already expected, at least in Australia, to include other health content (such as government mental health and physical activity content, and media and cyber safety programs). How is it possible to add in more?

The secret may well be to embed sleep education into already existing curricula. In the trial of the junior school (free) online sleep education program, noted above, this is exactly what was undertaken.

## HOW?

As noted previously, sleep education content was embedded into the following South Australian Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) learning and curriculum areas:

Literacy activities: writing sleep journals, interpretation of content on

sleep websites, the importance of sleep was explored in genre writing classes

Reflection and evaluation activities: parental discussions, reflected writing,

Constructing meaning from peer discussion, critical enquiry skills advanced in group projects on sleep

Poetry and creative writing: writing poetry or songs about sleep

Art: using creative ways to give the message about sleep

(e.g sleep pillows pictured)

Mathematics: research abilities and analysing sleep data, use of graphs and tables, means and comparisons.

See [www.sleepeducation.net.au/sleepeducation\\_services](http://www.sleepeducation.net.au/sleepeducation_services) for more details of embedding sleep into curricula



## Recent and upcoming national and international conference presentations

Australasian Sleep Association (ASA) annual scientific meeting, Darwin, Australia. October 10-13<sup>th</sup> 2012

- The sleep health of Australian indigenous and non indigenous children in both urban and rural centres. (S. Blunden)

Generation next and Health ED professional seminars around Australia: Sydney; Perth; Brisbane; Adelaide 2011-2012.

- "Teens, Screens and Sleep"

International Pediatric Sleep Association (IPSA) annual scientific meeting. Manchester, United Kingdom. December 5-8<sup>th</sup> 2012.

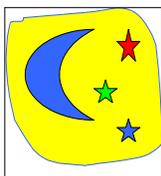
- "Is online sleep education better than traditional delivery?"

# Latest publications of interest

1. Blunden SL. (2012). Sleep in school aged children: preventative education to ensure optimal wellbeing. *Principal Matters* (submitted)
2. Samson R, Blunden S, Banks S (2012). The Characteristics of Sleep and Sleep Loss in Adolescence: A Review. *International Review of Social Sciences and Humanities* (in press)
3. Blunden S, Kira G, Hull M, Maddison R. (2012). The Australian Centre for Education in Sleep (ACES) program: sleep education trials for middle school students in Australia and New Zealand. *The Open Sleep Journal* **5**, 12-18
4. Cooper, P, Kohler M, Blunden S. (2012). Sleep and academic performance in Indigenous Australian children from a remote community. *Journal of Paediatric Child Health* doi:10.1111/j.1440-1754.2011.02059.x
5. Blunden SL. (2012). Behavioural sleep disorders across the developmental age span: an overview of causes, consequences and treatment modalities. *Psychology Online* 3 (3), 249-256
6. Matricciani L, Olds T, Blunden, S, Rigney, G, Williams, MT. (2012). Never enough sleep: A brief history of sleep recommendations for children. *Pediatrics* 129 (3), 1-9.
7. **Brindal, E, Hendrie, G, Thompson, K, Blunden, S. (2012). Understanding children's perceptions of healthiness from a behavioural perspective. *Health Education* 15(5), 61-66**
8. Blunden SL, Milte CM, Sinn N. (2011). Diet and sleep in children with ADHD: Preliminary data in Australian children. *Journal of Child Health Care* 15 (1) 14-24

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## Paediatric Sleep Clinic

**The Paediatric Sleep Clinic has participated in two trials this year;**

1. "Parental Perceptions of Controlled Crying", in conjunction with Central Queensland University, Australia and Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada
2. "Sleep Deficits and Traumatic Brain Injury in Children and Adults", in conjunction with Monash University, Melbourne, Australia
3. The Paediatric Sleep Clinic has been approached to develop, in conjunction with Disability SA and Families and Community Services SA, a sleep education group program specifically for parents of children with Autism.