

SETTLING METHODS (Module 7)

Lesson 1: What is a settling method and why do we use one?

All settling methods are based on the principles of behavioral psychology, which follows this general approach:

1. Identifying behavioral patterns (sleep associations or parent-child interactions that are reinforcing unwanted behaviors)
2. Breaking these connections between cause-effect
3. Creating new behavioral patterns
4. Reinforcing new patterns

By implementing a new settling method you are changing the way that you respond to your baby at bedtime, which enables them to develop new and more sustainable sleep associations. For example, in the past, your child's issues may have been reinforced by your response, which created a learned habit around sleep:

- Child cries out → is nursed
- Child protests in bed → is rocked to sleep
- Child plays in crib → parent interacts
- Child stands up in crib → parent lays child down

If these reactions to certain behaviors are repeated multiple times, it creates a link between the behavior and response and your child will expect the same response, such as rocking to sleep, every time they act a certain way, such as when they protest against bedtime.

A settling method provides you with a consistent and loving way to respond to your baby when they are upset at bedtime and create new behavioral patterns, as they unlearn sleep habits that are not helpful anymore. **The main goal of all settling methods is to ultimately get you out of the room, so that your little one can fall asleep and connect their sleep cycles completely independently.**

This means that regardless of what settling method you use, you will steadily decrease your involvement when putting your baby to sleep in order to encourage independent settling and your child's ability to connect sleep cycles!