

The Family Bed



In our last column we explored the pros and cons of the quality of rest you get when sleeping with a pet(s). This month we want to take a look at sharing your bed with your human children.

Co-sleeping with babies and even children is a hot button issue in North America. While European and Eastern cultures have been advocates of a family bed for centuries, North Americans are largely divided. And while most people still tend to have separate beds for themselves and their children, the number of parents who have taken to co-sleeping is very much on the rise.

The Canadian Pediatric Society (CPS) has provided numerous studies which indicate that co-sleeping

increases the rate of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). The society believes that it is safer to have a baby sleep in its own bed which can be in the parents' room, until the baby is at least 2 year old.

However many doctors including prominent pediatrician and author of more than 30 parenting books, William Sears or Dr. Bill as he is known on television, is a strong proponent of co-sleeping.

Co-sleeping makes night time feeding easier, especially if mothers are breastfeeding. Parents who are separated from their children while at work can make up for that time at night. Babies tend to fall asleep faster and for longer periods when co-sleeping with a parent and parents tend to get more sleep as their babies are not



waking them up as much.

While you can't dispute the studies cited by the CPS there are some things you can do to make it safer to co-sleep with your child.

If you decide to co-sleep then one of the most important factors is the condition and type of bed you are sleeping in. First it has to be large enough to accommodate you, your spouse and a baby. A seven pound sleeping baby has no chance if either parent decides to roll over in a too small bed during the night. The best is to

choose a mattress that has a smooth firm surface. Older mattresses with dips and depressions are also not safe as babies will easily roll into the depression as you shift

your weight during the night. Waterbeds and the egg crate type of foam mattresses are not safe and bed rails are encouraged to stop falls. Fill in any gaps around a headboard, footboard and wall with pillows so your baby can't slip

into those spaces and make sure cords from blinds, curtains and lamps are out of reach. Make sure to childproof the room as babies will soon become mobile and when awake can quietly get out of bed to explore.

The most important consideration whether sharing a bed or not is to ensure that the baby sleeps on his or her back as studies have proven the risk of SIDS is greatly reduced.

At Sleep Experience we can help you choose the best bed for the entire family so that everyone gets a good night's sleep!

Jim Conlon

Sleep Experience
BETTER SLEEP BEGINS WITH YOUR MATTRESS
www.sleepexperiencesudbury.ca

BRANDSOURCE

1965 Lasalle Blvd. 705-524-7533
Cedar Point Plaza 705-523-0595