

Parents often need after-hours child sleep advice

October 21 2012

Many parents have questions about their child's sleep problems, primarily after 6 p.m. when professional assistance is not readily available, according to an abstract presented Oct. 21 at the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) National Conference and Exhibition in New Orleans.

The abstract, "An iPhone Application for Infant and Toddler Sleep: Characteristics and Concerns of Users," reviewed information from nearly 8,000 users of a free iPhone app designed to aid sleep in young children. Of those users, 365 (4.6 percent of 8,000 users) submitted a question to an "Ask the Expert" feature over a three-month period. The app users were typically mothers (69 percent) with an average age of 28. Their children were primarily infants (68 percent of children were age 3 to 11 months), followed by toddlers (2- percent of children were age 12 to 36 months) and [newborns](#) (12 percent were age 0-2 months).

The most frequent questions involved night wakings (22.7 percent), sleep problems (22.2 percent) and general sleep (21.9 percent). Less frequently, questions related to napping (15.3 percent), [bedtime](#) (13.4 percent) and sleep safety (4.4 percent). Questions were most frequently submitted between midnight and 6 a.m. (37 percent) and 6 p.m. and midnight (22 percent).

"Our results found that the most common questions that parents ask pertain to [sleep problems](#) and night waking," said study author Jodi A. Mindell, Ph.D. "These questions are most often submitted in the evening

and even overnight – times when professional help is typically not available."

"Research has shown that behaviorally based interventions are highly effective for infant and toddler [sleep disturbances](#), and yet they do require [personal contact](#) with a trained professional," Mindell said. "As a result many children go untreated."

While the [iPhone](#) application provides widespread access to some assistance for families, the study supports the need for greater accessibility to health, and in particular, sleep-related information.

Provided by American Academy of Pediatrics

Citation: Parents often need after-hours child sleep advice (2012, October 21) retrieved 11 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-10-parents-after-hours-child-advice.html>

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