Possums Education

When Baby Comes Home...

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Who We Are

- Charitable organisation
- Affiliated with universities
- Evidence-based programs
- Peer-reviewed and published
- Ongoing evaluation

Our Vision For New Families:

To *empower* and *inform* families so that they have the confidence to experiment and live a life according to their own values.

To equip families with *strategies* to deal with difficult times.

Your Baby is unique.
You will be your Baby's expert.

Overview

Your Parenting Values

- The things we care deeply about.
- The things that give meaning and purpose to our lives.
- The things we genuinely enjoy.

The Possum's 5 Domains

- Baby' Health
- Feeds
- Sleep
- Sensory hunger
- Mothers health

Dr Russ Harris – Values Vs Goals

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T-lRbuy4XtA

Values:

Imagine eighteen years into the future and you are looking back to the first six months with your baby. What memories do you want to have?

If you overheard your eighteen-year-old describing you as a parent, what kind of things would you like to hear them say?

Have a talk about your Parenting Values...

Baby's Health

Crying! How much is normal? Why do babies cry? What do we do when they cry?

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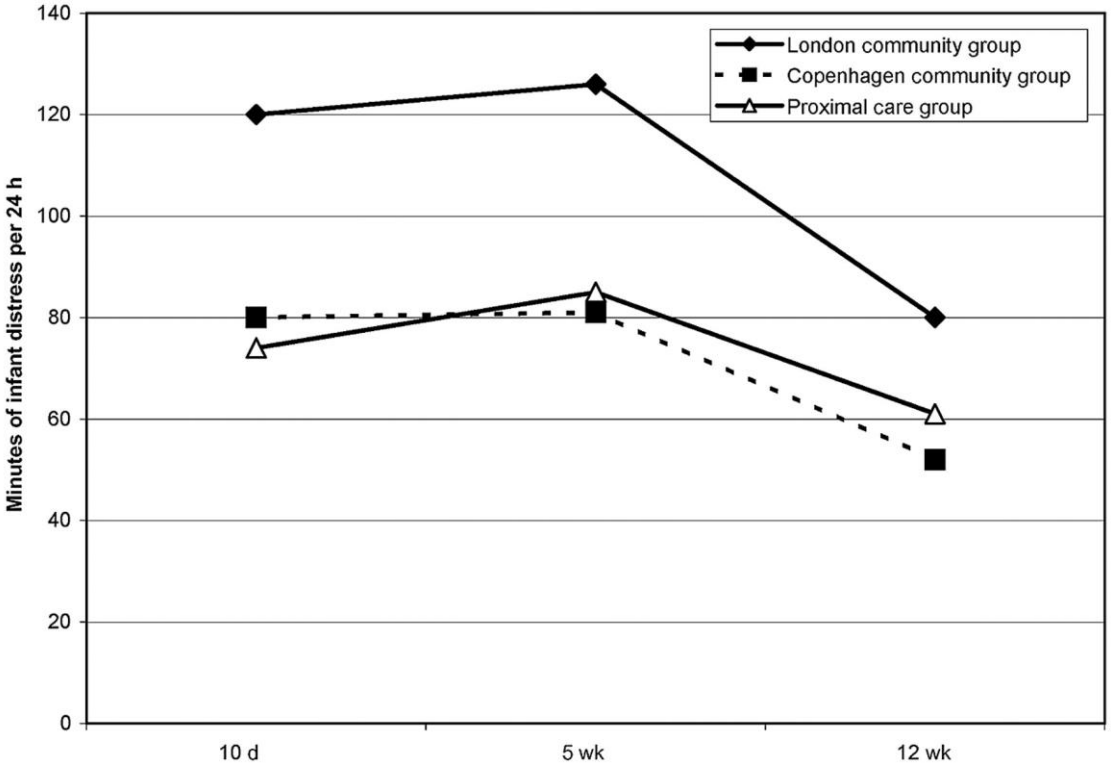
What’s Normal?

Crying

Babies cry on average

- 2 hours a day in the first 6 weeks
- Just over an hour by 12 weeks
- Usually settles by 16 weeks

But, our research shows that there is usually a lot we can do to help your baby fuss up to 50% less.



St James-Roberts I, Alvarez M, Csipke E, Abramsky T, Goodwin J, Sorgenfrei E. Infant crying and sleeping in London, Copenhagen and when parents adopt a "proximal" form of care. *Pediatrics*. 2006;117:e1146-e1155

Why did the babies in Copenhagen cry almost half as much as the babies in London?

Answer:
Cued Care and physical contact

What is Cued Care?

We define Cured Care as a pattern of share characterised by internally and sensibly responding to the baby’s cues.

Doing What Works!

What is NOT Cued Care?

Purposely delaying responses and responding in a way that we know that out baby is not signalling for.

“Preventing setting up bad habits.”

Cued Care

You will come to know your baby best and delay a relationship based on *Respect* and *Trust in each other's communications.*

Positive Hormones Reactions in *Both* Baby and Parents

In Mother and Baby

Decreased:

- SNS ↓
- Adrenaline/cortisol ↓

Increased:

- PNS ↑
- Oxytocin ↑
- Serotonin ↑

In Baby

Increased:

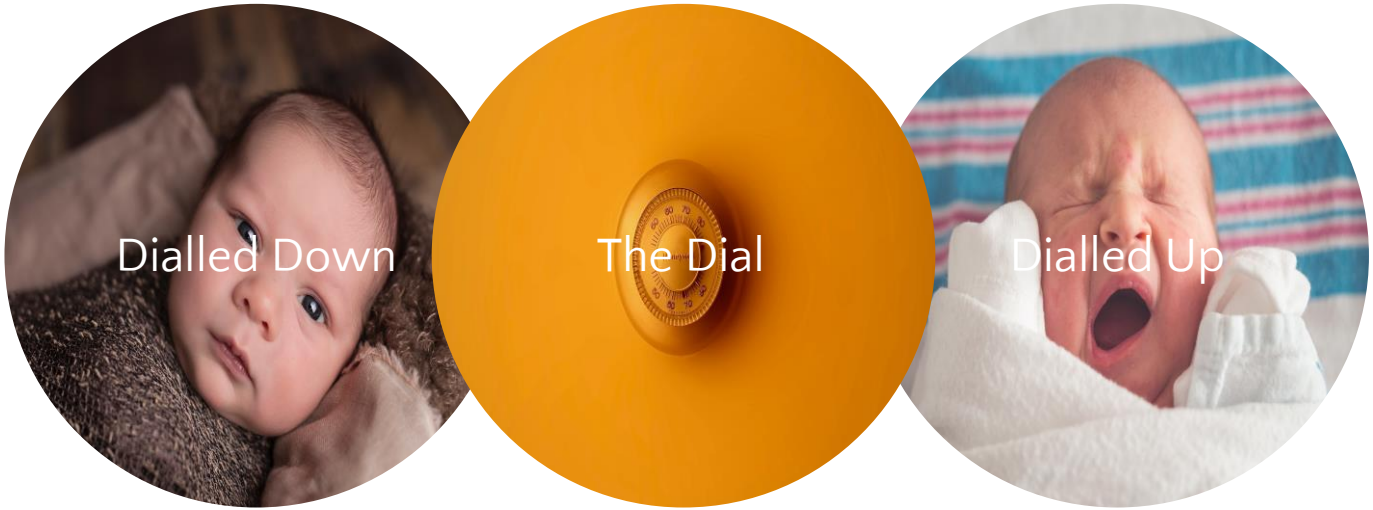
- Chcholecystokinen (CCK) ↑

In Mother

Decreased:

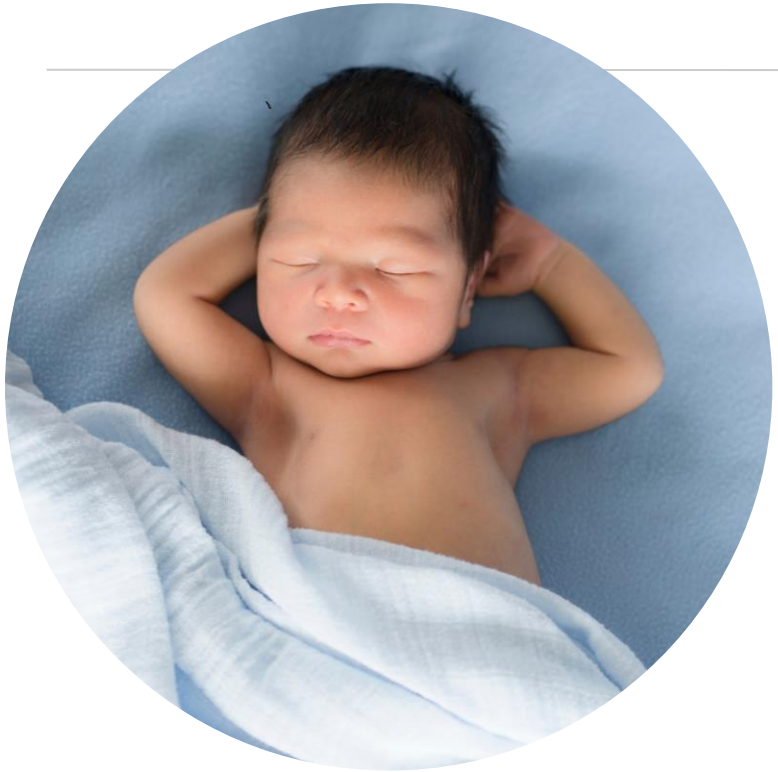
- Prefrontal cortex ↓ amygdala

The Dial



The Dial

You can use your baby's and your own "dial" to experiment with the range of advice you may be given.



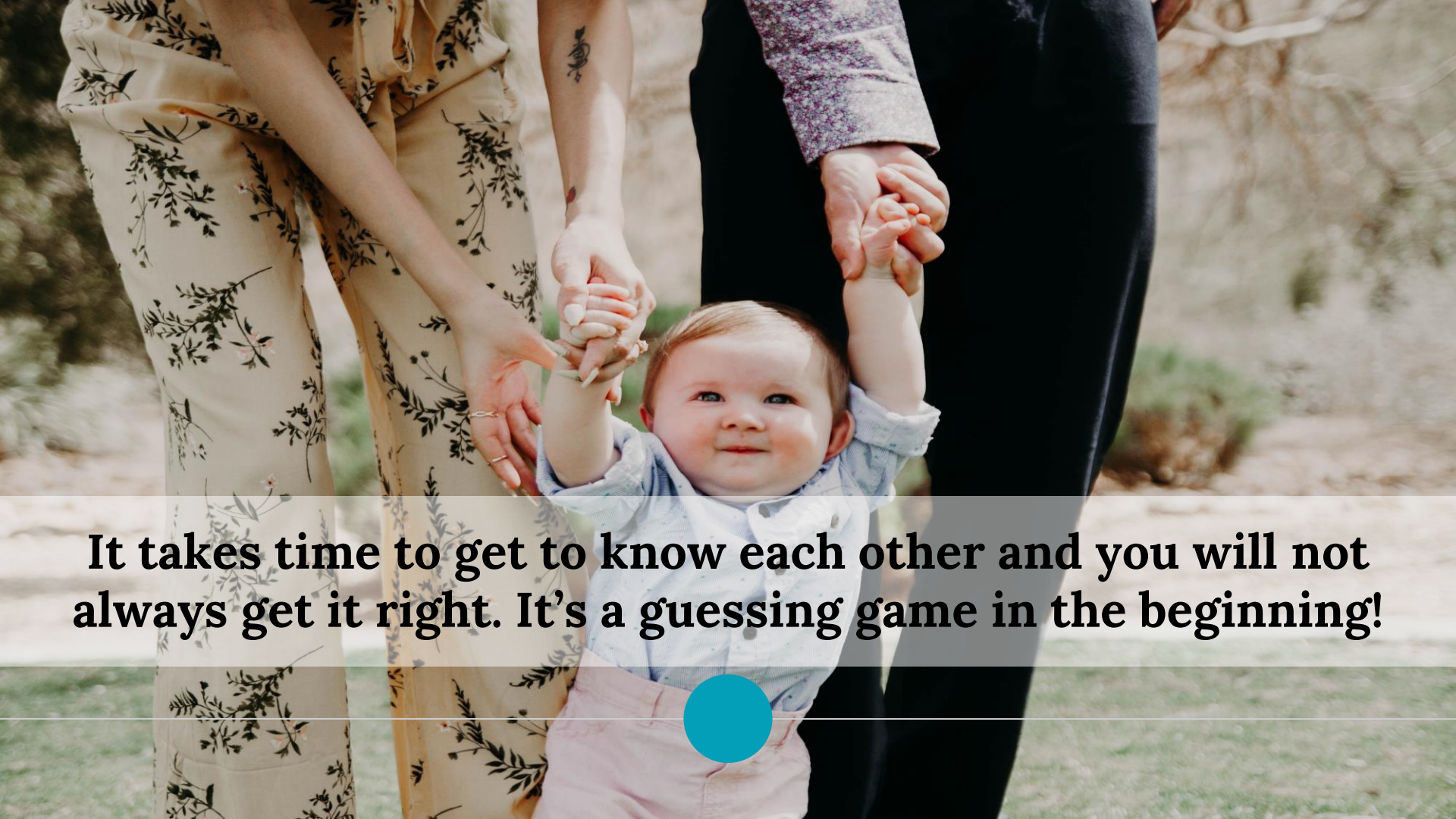
Physical Contact:

- Physical contact helps babies “dial down”.
- Babies will “dial up” whey they feel alone or vulnerable.
- Signalling for their parent is a survival instinct to get them back to safety.

An increase in physical contact from six hours to ten hours within a 24 hour period can halve the total amount of crying.

“

St James-Roberts I, Alvarez M, Csipke E, Abramsky T, Goodwin J, Sorgenfrei E. Infant crying and sleeping in London, Copenhagen and when parents adopt a "proximal" form of care. *Pediatrics*. 2006;117:e1146-e1155



It takes time to get to know each other and you will not always get it right. It’s a guessing game in the beginning!

Feeds

Getting off to a good start. More than just the transfer of milk.

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Feeds are a time when the “dial” is turned down by the release of “feel good” hormones.

Feeds

- For your baby, the breast becomes his world outside the womb.
- He goes to the breast for hunger, thirst, medicine and comfort.
- It is a time of sensory nourishment with plenty of “feel good” hormones.

Breastfeeding is Hardwired

Your baby will be born with primitive feeding reflexes.

These reflexes help the baby search and find the breast.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0KVAOUILFq0

Skin to Skin

Stimulates baby's feeding reflexes and your "milk making" hormones

Released "feel good" hormones so helps the dial

Captures the ideal "learning" moments when baby is dialled down and feeding reflexes are switched on

Language of Breastfeeding...

Latch?

Cupped Tongue?

Attachment?

Gape?

Flanged Lips?

Fit and Hold

How your baby fits and is held to your body to be *stable* and have a *big mouthful of breast.*

Gestalt Breastfeeding.

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Stable Hold

Big Mouthful of Breast

Human Bodies are Highly Variable!

Both areola and breast shape very. There's no "one size fits all".

You'll know it's "right" when:

- Comfortable and pain free
- Baby is relaxed — fists are uncurl
- Jaw movement and swallowing
- Calm or sleepy eyed at end of feed
- Adequate wet and dirty nappies.

Use Micro-movements

- Painful
- Baby is restless — fists are curled
- Nipple looks squished or flat
- Mother can hear slurping or sounds

Remember — we don’t need to take baby on or off!

Flexibility, experimentation and practice over time is required to work out a comfortable fit.

Fit and Hold

- It is normal for feeds to feel clumsy at first. These are the first steps to learning a new skill!
- The first few weeks are all about feeding. It will get quicker and easier when we lay down the right learning patterns.
- Patience is our friend!

Feeds

- Engorgement is “ween the milk comes in.”
- At around day 3-4 breasts can change shape and become full and tight.
- “Reverse pressure softening” can help improve elasticity of the areola and enable baby to get a big mouthful of breast. This also avoids nipple damage.

Feeds

Fit and hold problems are often not picked up and cause:

- Crying and fussing
- Marathon feeding
- Excessive waking
- Nipple pain and mastitis

The symptoms of poor fit and hold are often overlooked.

Babies are often treated for reflux, allergy or tongue-tie when in fact there is a lot that can be done with fit and hold at the breast.

Paced Bottle Feeds

https://possumsonline.com/video/renee-keogh-demonstrates-paced-bottle-feeding

Remember: “Dialled up” feeds have a butterfly effect.
Early support is best.

Sleep

What is normal? By understanding the biology of sleep we can identify the obstacles of sleep and remove these. What can families to do optimise manageable nights?

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Sleep needs are highly variable between babies, and can very in any one baby from day to day.

“

Galland BC, Taylor BJ, Elder DE, Herbison P. Normal sleep patterns in infants and children: a systematic review of observational studies. *Sleep Medicine Reviews*. 2012;16:213–222.

Babies Sleep Needs are Incredibly Variable

- One baby may need twice as much sleep as the next baby in a 24 hour period, and they both are normal.
- Babies can be trusted to self-regulate sleep in the context of satiety of feeds and sensation
- We can't make our baby sleep, but we can remove the obstacles that get in the way of easy sleep.

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Obstacles to sleep:

- Turned up stress hormones, AKA the dial.
- Huger for milk
- Hunger for sensation
- Circadian clock disruption

Daytime is for living

Night time is for sleeping

Daytime is for living...

- Get up at the same time each day
- Sunlight
- Daytime naps amidst daylight and noise
- Healthy biopsychosocial rhythms: meeting now social, physical and occupational needs.

Night time is for sleeping...

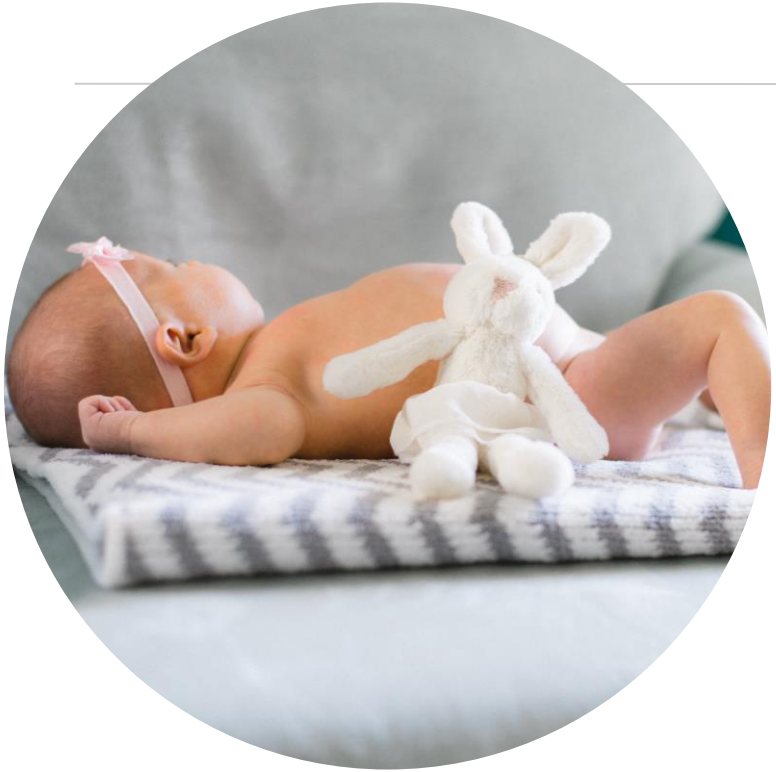
- Bedtime at night closer to parent's bedtime
- Relaxed and lazy night time response with minimal light

Important Note:

Marathon feeds and excessive night-waking signal a feeding problem.

Sleep

- You don't *have* to teach your baby to self-settle.
- You don't *have* to worry about "bad" sleep habits.
- You *can* allow your baby to fall asleep with your feeds.



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Safe Sleep

- The safest place for Baby to sleep DAY and NIGHT is in the same room as the care giver.
- Sleeping with Baby on your chest when you are feeling sleepy is risky.
- Sleeping with baby on the lounge is risky.
- Falling asleep while sitting up to breastfeed your baby is risky.

Bed sharing safely may be a safer option for some. Every family should know what it is!

Sensory

What is sensory hunger? Why is it important?

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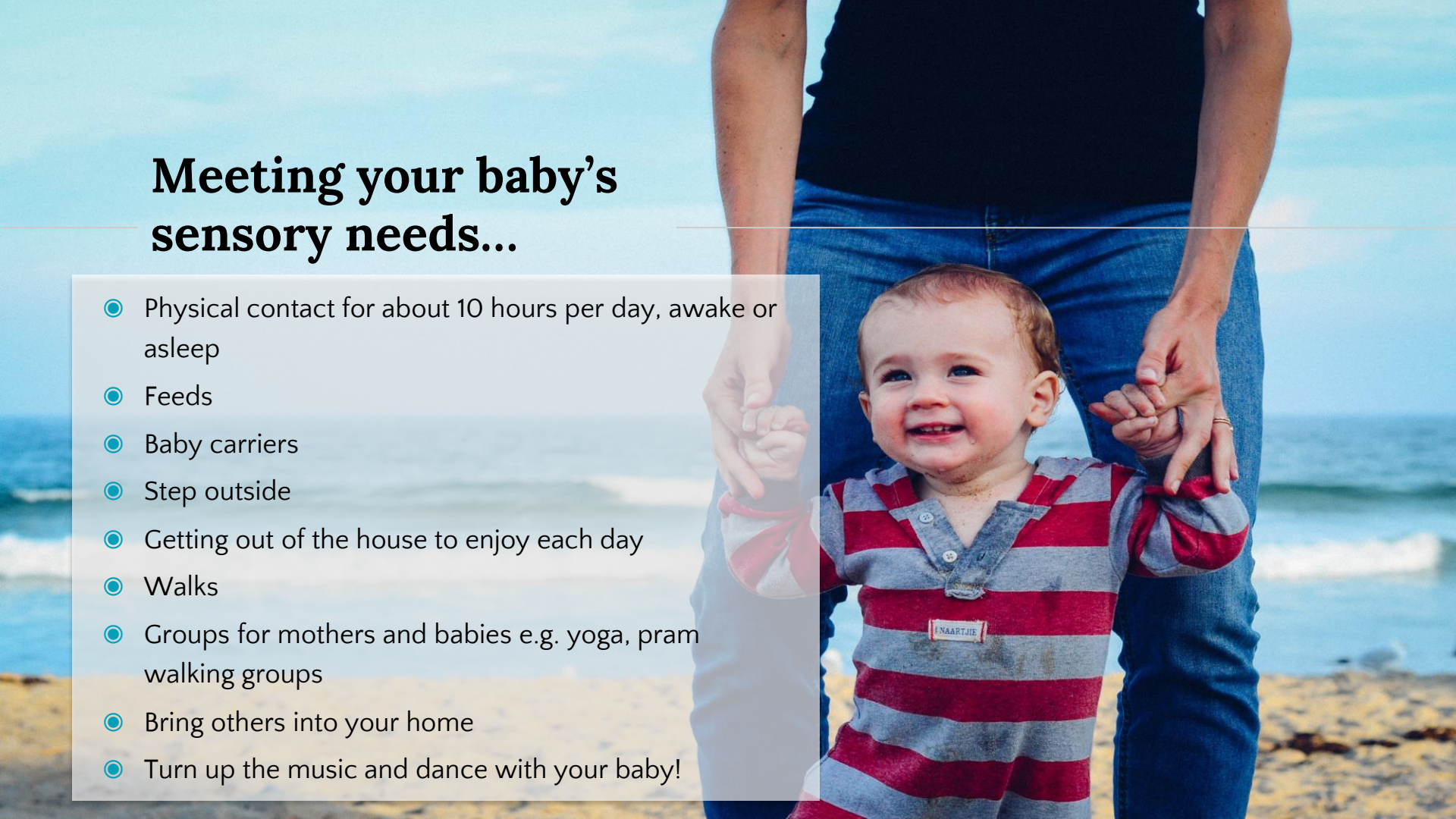
Babies have a hunger for sensory input: touch, smell, taste, sight, sound and movement.

A baby's sensory diet is provided by the environment in which they live.

A baby will cue for a change in sensory experience the same way they cue for other needs

Meeting your baby's sensory needs...

- Physical contact for about 10 hours per day, awake or asleep
- Feeds
- Baby carriers
- Step outside
- Getting out of the house to enjoy each day
- Walks
- Groups for mothers and babies e.g. yoga, pram walking groups
- Bring others into your home
- Turn up the music and dance with your baby!



Mothers's Health

Strategies to optimise mental health, mindfulness and ACT.

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During the perinatal and the postnatal period, women are uniquely vulnerable, particularly in relation to their **mental health.**

It's normal to feel a range of things when your baby grizzles and cries...

- Increased heart rate
- Racing, or anxious thoughts
- Anger
- Resentment
- Despair
- Worry
- Overwhelming fatigue

Parenting brings a range of emotions, thoughts and memories that we often don't expect.

Sometimes these thoughts and feelings may direct our actions and care for our baby. These actions may not be in line with our values.

ACT: Acceptance and Commitment Therapy

Mindfulness allows us to “tune into our baby”

Committed actions allow us to respond to our baby’s cues according to our values.

What is Mindfulness?

“A mental state achieved by focusing one’s awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one’s feelings and thoughts.

Mindfulness

Initially, “mindful moments” will be a deliberate task, but with lots of practice it becomes a quick and simple exercise.

Integrate Mindfulness into your day through:

- Feeds
- Nappy Change
- Walks
- Bedtime

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Allow for Self Care

Important note!

Make sure to distinguish between “Self-Care-Time” and the time “when baby is asleep.”

In a nutshell: Don't follow the rules. Follow your baby and your joy!

In a nutshell: Don’t follow the rules.
Follow your baby and your joy!

Thanks!

Any questions ?

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Possums Evidence Base

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Possums Evidence Base

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