Today’s piece was prepared by Annie Weisner, MD, PhD, based on a Time article [This is When Babies Should Start Sleeping On Their Own](http://time.com/4805528/babies-sleeping-sids-risk/).

This TIME article discusses a study published in 2017 in *Pediatrics* which examined sleep duration, quality, and practices in infants sleeping in the same room as their caregivers compared to those in their own room at four, nine, twelve, and thirty months. The author nicely summarizes a few of the main findings of the study, which compared early independent sleepers (infants who transitioned to their own room before 4 months of age) to late independent sleepers (those who transitioned between 4 and 9 months) and room-sharers. At nine months and thirty months, early independent sleepers had longer sleep duration than both other groups, and at four months, the early independent sleepers showed longer stretches of continuous sleep.

The author appropriately references the most up-to-date AAP policy statement on sleep, which recommends room-sharing until twelve months ideally and six months at minimum, and contrasts this with the suggestions from the study authors. The article ultimately seems to favor the study author’s recommendations over those of the AAP, but fails to mention several important limitations to the study. It looked at a very homogenous, English-speaking, primiparous group of mothers, and may not be generalizable across all cultures and home environments. It also relied on surveys, with no objective measures of sleep quality, and mothers of independent sleepers would likely be more likely to underestimate nighttime wakings as compared to room-sharers. The TIME article also implies a causative relationship between room-sharing and unsafe sleep practices such as soft objects in bed and bed-sharing. No such causation is demonstrated in the article; room-sharing was associated with lower SES and education, which is also associated with unsafe sleep practices in other studies. Overall this article is interesting and appropriately calls into question our understanding of best room-sharing practices, but doesn’t adequately address the limitations of the study or bring in alternative resources.

**RESOURCES ON SLEEP:**

[Pediatric Sleep Council](https://www.babysleep.com/) *Validated advice from physicians about sleep, searchable by topic or age*

[AAP: Safe Sleep for Babies](https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/sleep/Pages/Safe-Sleep-for-Babies.aspx) *12-minute video aimed at parents of young infants*

**LITERATURE ON SLEEP:**

* SIDS and Other Sleep-Related Infant Deaths: Updated 2016 Recommendations for a Safe Infant Sleeping Environment. TASK FORCE ON SUDDEN INFANT DEATH SYNDROME

Pediatrics Nov 2016, 138 (5) e20162938; **DOI:** 10.1542/peds.2016-2938

* Mother-Infant Room-Sharing and Sleep Outcomes in the INSIGHT Study. Paul IM, Hohman EE, Loken E, and Savage JS. Pediatrics July 2017, 140 (1) e20170122; **DOI:** 10.1542/peds.2017-0122

And that’s today’s Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics: IN THE NEWS!