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Integrative review: Behavioral sleep problems in toddlers

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The purpose of this integrative review is to detail current state of the science of behavioral sleep problems in toddlers without serious co-morbidity. A systematic integrative literature review focused on children aged 12 months through 36 months. A total of 128 articles published between 1978 and 2015 were identified and 68 articles were used. Articles using a quantitative research design using valid, reliable instruments, strong methodology and rigor, survey response rate and adequate sample size were included. Most articles in the exclusion criteria were related to specific sleep disorders such as parasomnias, psychophysiological insomnia and specific populations with co-morbid conditions such as autism, neurodevelopmental delays, specific psychiatric illnesses and chronic medical conditions. Limitations were examined. Study results indicate that behavioral sleep problems are a common parental concern and that between 15% and 35% of toddlers exhibit some type of behavioral sleep disturbance and these exist across all cultures. Maternal depression, co-sleeping and inadequate sleep hygiene have been positively linked to behavioral sleep problems in toddlers. Results suggest that toddlers' behavioral sleep problems are common and persistent despite treatment in infancy. Interventions were reviewed. Current interventions are effective, but each method has its own problems with implementation, some with poor parental compliance.

Biography

Elaine F Martin has been a Pediatric/NICU Nurse/Pediatric Nurse Practitioner/Family Nurse Practitioner for 30 years. She graduated from the University of Connecticut in 2011 with a PhD in Nursing and a teaching degree in the Pedagogy of Adult Nursing Learners. She completed a pre-doctoral GAANN fellowship. Her areas of expertise include pediatrics, behavioral sleep problems in children, perinatal loss bereavement, digital stories and nursing leadership. She teaches Nursing at Southern Connecticut State University to doctoral, master's, undergraduates and accelerated second degree nursing students.

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