

After a very difficult birth and being consumed with exhaustion as well as the elation of having my new born baby I found she would only stop crying, when I lay her on my chest, cradled in my arms feeling safe and secure. This seemed like the most natural thing to do as it comforted us both and we both slept. Much to my distress, I was rudely awoken by a nurse telling me to put my baby into the crib and not to bed share it was dangerous. When home, I found my baby was restless and with demand feeding I soon found that I was a walking wreck. A sleep programme was given to me by Plunket, this was successful but she still woke at irregular intervals in the night and wanted to be held close to me. However, a safetsleep wrap was introduced thus allowing me to snuggle my babe in a single bed and give her the comfort and security she required. It was not long before she slept all night. As this worked so well for me with my daughter, I decided that when I had my second child I would specifically use a safetsleep wrap to encompass all aspects of safety and a style of bed sharing that suited my family.

With the arrival of my second baby all plans flew out the window and my time was stretched between demand feeding, a jealous toddler and a neglected husband.

My husband would leave for work at 6am arrive at home at 6pm and be in bed at 9.30pm. He did not like little arms and legs poking him and waking him, or having the worry of hurting his baby. He also wanted to spend time with me alone. My toddler would often wake in the night and would want to be comforted as well. With each of their needs in mind, I set about transferring the safetsleep wrap from my babies crib to a single bed and thus transforming our lives.

With his new bed and safetsleep wrap in place it became very easy for my husband to participate in our babies routine for the evening and week ends by giving our baby a snuggle and getting him off to sleep plus creating a special bond of trust that still exists today, whilst I gave my time to our toddler.

When our baby woke for feeding during the night, I did not have to disturb him by moving him, or lifting him, as I could lie beside him in comfort, I could breast feed him on both sides without moving him and was able to wind him gently as he lay on his side. I could even change his nappy whilst he was being blissfully held by the safetsleep wrap knowing that I was near. It also allowed me to lie with my baby, knowing that he would not roll onto me or me onto him if I fell asleep next to him. This system worked very well for us as a family unit, it gave my husband and myself our own bed space and time together privately and it also gave my son and daughter the comfort of bed sharing in their own space. This type of bed sharing gave my children a strong feeling of being safe in bed and bed a place of comfort and peace, which they still feel today. As their Mother I am very proud that I have accomplished successfully the nurturing of safe sleeping with my babies.

By Jennifer de Groen Hutchinson.

