



## q&a: sleep consultants

Following this issue's theme of sleep we asked three sleep consultants to share with us their backgrounds and how they work with families. We then provide two mum's perspectives on employing sleep consultants to improve their multiples' sleep habits.



Samantha Krukerink  
Child Sleep Consultant

[www.babysleepconsultant.co.nz](http://www.babysleepconsultant.co.nz)



### **Can you tell us about your background and how you became a baby consultant?**

My background is in Early Childhood Education and I have worked as a nanny. After having my own children I realised how important sleep was and what a struggle it could be. In the quest to fix my own children's sleep issues I did a lot of research to find what would work for my family. Later on I came across Baby Sleep Consultant and I loved their science-based yet holistic approach that worked alongside parents to help them learn more about what their child needed and how they could support their needs. I did some intense training through Baby Sleep Consultant to become an infant and child sleep consultant. I learnt a lot about the science of sleep, a child's developmental needs and how to guide a child to reach their sleep potential as well as working with different

parenting styles.

### **Can you tell us a little more about how you work with your clients, particularly in the Bay of Plenty?**

I am available for a range of consult options such as email and phone consults as well as a number of home consult options to support and guide parents. As part of home consults, I am able to go to their home to help parents and demonstrate in a hands on capacity. This usually increases people's success rate too. Having the direct one on one help is a huge asset to tired and stressed out parents and it is great to see the confidence that they gain by having me there to support them.

I deal with a variety of different sleep issues from newborns to four year olds.

### **When should parents contact a sleep consultant for help?**

When they feel that what they are doing is not working for them or that they are not happy with their situation. You need to do what feels right for you, your family and your child.

### **Do you have any tips or tricks for parents of multiples?**

Routine will make everything more predictable for you and your babies. Some parents find that spacing sleep times 15 minutes apart for each baby works well, as well as feeds if you are not tandem feeding, allowing you to concentrate on one child at a time.

If you have older children utilise them – they can make great little helpers and including

them makes them feel special.

Your multiples will quickly get used to each other's noises, don't panic if they are waking each other up - some white noise will help them if they are struggling with the noise.

Take time for yourself too. Housework can wait, put your feet up while you can!



Sharlene Poole  
Postnatal advisor  
[www.sharlenepoole.com](http://www.sharlenepoole.com)



**Can you tell us about your background and how you became a baby consultant?**

After training at a private college in Christchurch for 3 years I moved to the United Kingdom for a year and worked as a nanny. While I was there I heard about the career 'Maternity Nursing', which is a British occupation where you live and work for a family who have a newborn baby, working 24 hours a day, 6 days a week for the first 6-9 weeks of a newborn's life. While I was too young, I was in love with the idea of working

with newborn babies full time. After the year nannying I moved home to New Zealand and ended up as a supervisor of a private early childhood centre in Auckland for 4 years.

Deciding that I needed to have another trip overseas for experience I ventured back to the United Kingdom in 2000 and started working as a Maternity Nurse. It was not long before I fell in love with the job and for the next 5 years travelled around the United Kingdom and the world working for British and European families.

In 2005 I wanted to come home, but thought my career as a maternity nurse would end and that I would return to teaching. It was upon arriving home 10 years ago this month that I soon found out, while helping friends with their newborns, that there was a need for private help and advice. So I launched Little Miracles Postnatal Care Ltd and before long had a few clients and for the next 3 years I slowly stopped my overseas work as the demand and my reputation in New Zealand grew.

**Can you tell us a little more about how you work with your clients, particularly in the Bay of Plenty?**

It is not often I come to the Bay of Plenty; most of my work is in Auckland or over the phone and Skype! However, when I do, I come into the family home, observe and listen to the mother and sometimes father, discuss their questions and help them understand what their baby(ies) are telling them or how we should look at changing habits that have formed.

**Do you help parents of sleeping children beyond newborn phase?**

Yes indeed! My business is from 0-1 year of age generally but now that I have been working in NZ for 10 years in this field, I am advising quite a lot with ex-clients and their toddlers or preschoolers - not always regarding sleep, some

is for general behaviour.

**When should parents contact a sleep consultant for help?**

I believe that as soon as a new parent is feeling anxious, confused or is not enjoying their parenting journey. Or of course if they have a baby that is not happy and after trying the basics still is not the happiest you believe they can be.

**Do you have any tips or tricks for parents of multiples struggling with sleeping multiple babies and children?**

Where do you start?!!!!!! The list is endless but I think the most important is being organised. If you are organised within the home, the day and where possible with support, it will make each day and week that much easier. I do believe in routine with multiples and that can be hard to set up in the beginning but once you reach their baby stage (4 months plus) all the hard work pays off.



Vicki Kirkland  
*Baby Sleep Consultant*  
[www.vickik.co.nz](http://www.vickik.co.nz)

**Can you tell us about your background and how you became a baby consultant?**

I come from a Post-Natal care background with over 10 years health care experience. During this time I recognised a growing need for at home post-natal care as a direct result of lessening public health care and the stressful



lives we now lead.

As well as working in Post-Natal care and in a Postnatal Ward, I have worked extensively with children that have special needs. I also loved being a nanny for two families in Rotorua. I have worked in a rest home for seven years. I am also a Student Doula and continuing training through Birth Works America.

I'm also a mum and have two children of my own, Amy (18 years old) and Matthew (now 15), who both suffered from reflux, asthma and allergies.

**Can you tell us a little more about how you work with your clients, particularly in the Bay of Plenty?**

I offer a range of packages to suit your needs. My Packages start at \$99 and I start all my consultants with an initial 15 min consultation to discuss you and your baby's needs. I provide at home consultations followed up by personal telephone support. I also offer Hush Baby Sleep Cottage where you can come and spend the day with me, supported by follow-up phone support. I also provide Skype consultations to my clients in New Zealand, Australia and the United Kingdom. All consultations are followed-up with phone calls.

**Do you help parents of sleeping children beyond newborn phase?**

I provide consultations to families before birth, to help parents feel more comfortable and confident in the early days of parenthood, after birth and up to the age of seven years old.

**When should parents contact a sleep consultant for help?**

If you start feeling overwhelmed as a parent, confused or alarmed at your babies' crying or would like to feel more confident and empowered as parents it might be time to consider contacting me.

**Do you have any tips or tricks for parents of multiples struggling with sleeping multiple babies and children?**

- Share and take advice from families that have twins and multiples. Remember that having twins and multiples is completely different than having one child.
- Take all the help that family offer - you are not failing. This is one way to make them feel important and helpful, and it's such a help for you.
- If your babies are premature, always remember by how many weeks. Don't compare your babies to full term babies. Also always remind professionals of your babies' gestation at birth.
- Some families find that waking both babies at same time at night really helps them have more sleep. That is a personal decision. It can sometimes be really difficult, feeding and settling one and the other wakes. But you do what feels right for you and your family.
- And remember you can never spoil a baby.

- I believe in the first 12 weeks babies are in their fourth gestation. They are adapting and learning about their big new world. Parents are learning about becoming a Parent:)
- Most of all let me tell you, you are doing AMAZING!!!, remember your babies are not worried about you being a perfect Parent. Only you are :). All they want is LOVE, FOOD and care :) and lots of cuddles

**How do parents contact you for assistance?**

When working with families of multiples, I only charge for one baby or child. That's my gift to families with multiples.



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