

dubbed the UK's 'baby guru', and in her 20 years of working with babies has never met one who didn't thrive on routine.

"Instead of snacking all day, a routine-fed baby builds an appetite for regular meals, meaning his tummy is full after eating and he feels satisfied," explains Jo Tantom in her book, *Baby Secrets: How to know your baby's needs*. That means he'll nap better by day, sleep better at night, and feel secure in knowing what is happening and when – babies crave certainty, she says.

But the word 'routine' shouldn't conjure up the regimented, one-size-fits-all methods of old. These often led to errors and extremes, which is why 'routine feeding' is not promoted by New Zealand's Plunket Society or in the UK where the preference is 'cue-based' or 'demand-feeding'. The rule of thumb, says Plunket, is to watch your baby's hunger cues, and feed him/her when they're hungry, not by the clock. Many mums, too, say their babies don't abide by routines, after-all children are as unique as the adults they grow into.

Instead, the routines suggested by Sharlene Poole and Jo Tantom take a bit of the old paired with the new, and amount to scheduled feeds (breast is best) that match your baby's age, size and natural feeding patterns at different stages of his/her early life. And judging by these women's 100% success rate with babies to date, it's fair to say they may know something the rest of us don't.

### THEIR TOP TIPS

These experts have a swag of secrets to help babies sleep better. Topping Jo Tantom's list is:



Sharlene Poole



Jo Tantom

- Don't use sleep props: Always lay your baby to sleep while he's still awake, from the day he is born, so he can do the falling asleep bit by himself. Otherwise, he will not learn to fall asleep without being rocked, cuddled or given a breast.

- If you want to take him out in the pushchair, wait (if you can) until he is asleep in the pushchair before leaving, so that the motion doesn't become a prerequisite for falling asleep.

- By all means rock a pushchair or rocker chair to soothe your baby if unsettled or fretful, but try and stop rocking just before he falls asleep.

- Help your baby differentiate between daytime 'naps' and night-time 'sleep'. Ensure daytime is only for napping, not long stretches of sleep. A newborn baby will be very sleepy, but it's really important to wake him for feeds and ensure he gets a full feed every time. Leaving him to sleep means he won't get enough milk during the day and will be starving at night, wide awake with hunger.

- Ensure he spends his night hours in a quiet, darkened room, and help establish bedtime cues, such as giving >>