



GOODNIGHT, BABY



● For new parents, getting baby to sleep through the night can be a draining, stressful experience. A maternity nurse for more than 20 years, UK-based baby sleep expert Jo Tantum has seen the destructive impact of a sleepless baby on family life.

'Parents start panicking and feeling guilty because their baby is crying and screaming, and they don't know why,' says Jo, speaking to New Idea on a short visit to New Zealand.

Jo has used her experience to establish a niche career of going into homes and teaching parents to get their baby into a healthy sleep pattern.

'For the first day, the parent shadows me, watching what I do,' she says. 'Then, for three nights, I'll have a baby monitor in my room and I look after the baby. I tell the parents to put in ear plugs so they have a fantastic sleep and will have the strength to carry on after I leave.'

A common problem, Jo says, is that parents misunderstand their wee one's whimpering.

'What usually happens is that the baby cries and Mum and Dad run in straight away,' she says. 'The baby is actually trying to go to sleep but the

parents are interfering with the sleeping pattern. I try to get parents to only go in when the crying reaches its peak and the baby has become hysterical.'

She says relying on 'sleep props' can prevent baby from learning to settle. 'Babies don't understand how to fall asleep on their own,' she says. 'They think they have to have a dummy, the breast or car rides, because that's what they've come to expect, and they think it's the only way they can sleep.'

Jo's advice has been valuable for parents who have reached the end of their tether. Her book *Baby Secrets* (Penguin, \$27) has been so well received she's considering writing a follow-up dealing with toddlers.

'Parenting magazines say that for the first year of your baby's life you won't sleep,' she says. 'But that's nonsense.'

● For more information, visit www.babysecretsltd.com.

MOTHER'S DAY FUN

● This Mother's Day, celebrate family life by getting active for a great cause. New Idea Run 4 Mums on Sunday May 11 will raise money for The Nurture Foundation, which funds research into infertility, stillbirth, miscarriage, and serious pregnancy complications. The fun run or walk through Cornwall Park in Auckland will be followed by a picnic at One Tree Hill Domain with music, kids' entertainment and spot prizes. Postal entries must be received by May 8. For more information, visit www.nurture.org.nz.

