

Leaflet for parents

## **The Solihull Approach to the disappearing chair routine**

The disappearing chair routine is not intended to be used as a first approach. First you need to try to understand what is happening emotionally and practically for you and your baby. You may find talking to your health visitor or a professional helpful. As part of a way of thinking about helping your baby to settle the disappearing chair routine may be suggested.

As part of helping your child to develop a healthy sleep experience it is important to also think about what happens during the day. Routines are important during the daytime so if you can help your child settle separately from you, this can be practice for your child to separate more easily at bedtimes.

The disappearing chair routine can be used for the child who tries to keep you with them at bedtime, or who wakes during the night.

- Put your child to bed with their usual routine.
- Sit in a chair beside the bed reading a book (pretend if necessary). If your child is very upset you may need to sit on the bed or lie beside her.
- If your child tries to get out of bed or sits up he should be gently returned to the lying down position.
- Every night the distance between you and your child should be increased. This may be sitting beside her if you have been lying beside her or moving the chair gradually towards the door. When the chair is outside the bedroom door you have completed the programme.

This process can take as long as you and your child need, several days to several months.

Be prepared for the problem to get worse for a night or two. In some cases this just means that she is testing you to see if you are really serious.

Making a new sleep routine is best started on a Friday night so that you are not under pressure and can outlast your child's attempts to sabotage the new routine.

## **Solihull Approach Resource:** The first five years

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This is only an outline. Each child is different and changes may need to be made before the routine is totally successful.

It is important to continue to be aware of your child's response to this programme.