Recommended Reading

Note: Since Preparation for Parenting is a religiously-based program and Babywise is a secular presentation of the same material, these recommended books reflect both religious and secular perspectives.

- Granju, Katie Allison, Attachment Parenting (Pocket Books, 1999).
- Leman, Kevin, Ph.D. Becoming the Parent God Wants You to Be, (NavPress, 1998).
- Tamaro, Janet, So That’s What They’re For (Adams Media, 1998).

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Did you know...

That Babywise and Preparation for Parenting ("Prep") have been criticized by hundreds of professionals in pediatric medicine, human lactation, psychology, anthropology, child development, and theology? Or that problems have been associated with these programs—cases of slow weight gain, failure to thrive, depressed babies, even hospitalization?

Consider These Risks

Hungry Babies

Breastfeeding your baby on a schedule may reduce your milk supply and contradicts the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), which has stated, "The best feeding schedules are the ones babies design themselves. Scheduled feedings designed by parents may put babies at risk for poor weight gain and dehydration." The AAP recommends that newborns "be nursed whenever they show signs of hunger....approximately 8 to 12 times every 24 hours..." and states, "Crying is a late indicator of hunger." Babies also need to go to the breast when they are thirsty, are in need of comfort, or don’t feel well.

Clearly Babywise’s and Prep’s recommendations are not compatible with the AAP’s guidelines, despite claims that they are.

Stress & Low Weight Gain

Allowing your baby to "cry it out" increases his levels of cortisol, a hormone that indicates stress—which affects the baby’s ability to self calm. Excessive crying in the newborn interferes with normal bodily functions in every way, including gut tensing, heart pounding, increase in blood pressure, labored breathing, and disorientation. It can also affect weight gain through burning too many calories or becoming too fatigued to nurse effectively.

Crying & Colic

Babies do not have the cognitive ability to understand why they are left alone to cry during scheduled sleep times or before feedings. Some may actually "shut down" and stop attempting to communicate even basic needs such as hunger, because they feel it is hopeless. On the surface, these may seem like "good" babies; in fact, they may be undernourished and/or depressed, with potential long-term negative effects on the relationship between parent and child.

Crying babies who are consistently responded to within ninety seconds end up crying 70% less than babies whose parents allow them to cry for longer periods of time. This can certainly impact whether or not your baby develops "colic."

Healthy Parenting

Healthy, mature parenting is responding to your baby, meeting your baby’s needs, in a way your intuition tells you is right. A high-touch, attentive approach to parenting is enjoyable because it builds both confident parents and loving, sensitive, and connected kids. These babies are likely to become more securely attached to their parents and appropriately independent at the right developmental stage.

There may be good points to be gleaned from Babywise and Prep. However, these good things may also be found in other, medically sound sources. The things that are unique to Babywise and Prep are not good—for either parents or babies.

References

9. Though a pediatrician is named as co-author of Babywise, its text is largely unchanged from Preparation for Parenting, which the Ezzos authored earlier.