

# About the Dunstan System.

## **1. “Do newborn babies really use ‘language’?”**

Babies use sound and gestures to communicate their basic needs. These sounds are not random – they have meaning. That is, they are produced by the body in response to a physical need. If these needs are not met or are ignored, cries usually become louder as the baby becomes more upset.

The sooner parents listen and identify the need, then respond, the less baby will cry. These sounds or ‘words’ form the basis of the Dunstan Baby Language. They have meaning and all parents and caregivers need do is very simple – just listen to their baby and then apply an appropriate settling technique.

## **2. “At what age should I start using the Dunstan System with my baby?”**

Dunstan Baby Language is suitable for all infants from birth to approximately 3 months of age. We encourage parents to first preview the System while pregnant. This will give them a head start when learning to understand their baby’s cries, and therefore enjoy the benefits that this new understanding brings, from Day 1.

## **3. “At what age does my baby stop saying the Dunstan words?”**

At around 3-4 months of age some of baby’s reflexes, such as the sucking reflex start to turn off. However, if the baby’s needs have been met in the first 3 months using on the Dunstan System then baby often continues to make the sounds since their needs are being met. After 4 months the use of the sounds becomes more deliberate by the baby, because when he communicates his parents will respond.

## **4. “Will my newborn say all 5 Dunstan words from Day 1?”**

Some parents observe all five words in their baby within the first few days after birth. For others it may take a few weeks to hear all five. The majority of parents using the System tell us that Neh is generally the first Dunstan word they identify. Remember, all babies are different and they will usually only express those sounds where a particular need remains unmet. For example, if you respond to the ‘Eh’ need (to burp), then it is less likely that you will hear the sound ‘Eairh’ for lower gas discomfort.

## **5. “How do you know that Dunstan Baby Language is actually Universal?”**

Our process of discovery has spanned over a decade of research, including observation of over 1,000 babies in seven countries with over 30 different nationalities of infants. Since 2006 independent studies have been conducted in the USA, Australia and the UK which demonstrate that the Dunstan words are present in babies regardless of ethnicity, nationality or mother-tongue. Recently, we received results and video footage from a university research study done by nurses in the Philippines demonstrating all 5 Dunstan sounds!

## **6. “How is it that the sounds are the same for all babies?”**

The sounds of Dunstan Baby Language are a language of the body, based on predictable, universal involuntary physical responses. A newborn’s body acts on these physical reflexes. The Dunstan System is based on the fact that when sound is added to different reflexes, distinct sounds are produced.

The Neh sound is based on the sucking reflex which is stimulated by the body seeking nutrition. Owh is based on the yawn indicating the body is ready for sleep. Involuntary reflex-like responses also create the Eh, Eairh and Heh sounds. Eh is made by the chest contracting to force the wind up and out. The Eairh sound comes from the tensing of the tummy and intestinal muscles when baby has gas. Heh comes with the wriggling movement of baby’s body as his skin responds to discomfort. Although skin, chest and intestinal muscle movements, even yawning, are not commonly called reflexes, like reflexes, they are spontaneous physical responses by a healthy baby.

## **7. “How effective is the Dunstan System?”**

In our research, 9 in 10 mothers say that the Dunstan System works - and they would recommend it to other parents. As mothers and fathers ourselves, we know that the recommendation of another parent is a strong inducement to trial. Positive word-of-mouth can be a strong marketing tool.

## **8. “Is this anything like the ‘Baby Whisperer’?”**

Not really. The idea that babies cry to communicate is not new. Dunstan Baby Language is the first System that actually teaches parents exactly what each cry sounds like so that its meaning can be easily deciphered. This is a totally unique system in this respect, and currently there are no comparable systems of identifying infant needs via the infant’s cry.

## **9. “What are the main benefits of using the Dunstan System?”**

The biggest benefit to parents from using the System is that it gives mothers and fathers a sense of confidence that they can take care of their baby. Once crying is under control baby becomes more settled and the stress level in the household drops. When baby sleeps so, can mom and dad. Parents can work as a team; both confident in the knowledge that they can understand their baby’s needs and settle her quickly. The Dunstan System takes much of the guesswork out of caring for a newborn.

Importantly, infants especially benefit from calm and responsive caregiving. They feel more attached and secure knowing that their language is understood and that their needs will be met.

## **10. “How have fathers responded to Dunstan Baby Language?”**

The Dunstan System has demonstrated enormous potential to change a father’s experience with his newborn. In research, 7 out of 10 fathers reported a decrease in household stress after using the Dunstan System. One in two fathers also reported a positive impact on their marital relationship.

For the first time, armed with the Dunstan System, a new dad can be on a level footing with mom in understanding their baby’s needs and being able to settle the baby. When mothers and fathers can apply the same skills together—based not on their individual parenting style but on their infants needs — a truly supportive parenting partnership can be achieved.

## **11. “Mothers have been raising babies for thousand of years without this System. Why do they need this now?”**

It is our belief that this baby language was once known in earlier societies. However this understanding has been lost to the western world over many generations. In days past when new mothers were surrounded by parents and extended family, “baby wisdom” was passed down from mother to daughter. Today many moms are more isolated, living far from family members and relying on the internet, books and DVDs to learn about baby care. We often meet nurses, midwives and other infant care experts who intuitively know these sounds and what baby needs. It is an intuition they have honed from a career of working with babies every day. The value of the Dunstan Baby Language is that it is the first System to recognize and formally articulate this knowledge and make it accessible to new parents so that they can learn it for themselves.

## **12. “Why has no one else discovered this before now?”**

Decades of traditional scientific research on baby cries has predominantly focused on the loud siren stage of the cry, and was based on quantitative measures such as pitch, duration and frequency of the cry. Priscilla focused on the sound patterns in the pre-cry stage (or ‘babble’), before the distressed crying begins. This is when a baby is just starting to communicate and before she gets upset.

## **13. “Isn’t this another textbook solution that undermines mothers’ intuition?”**

To the contrary, the Dunstan System was founded on one mother’s intuition. By teaching parents how to tune-in to their baby, and how to decipher their baby’s cries, the Dunstan System enables both mothers and fathers to better apply to their own intuition when caring for their infant.

## **14. “Help! I’m finding it difficult to hear some of the ‘words’?”**

It’s common for some parents to hear some of the words more easily and take longer to distinguish others. Encourage parents to stop, look and listen. When they stop, they can take a deep breath and focus on listening. When they look, they can be alert to baby’s face and other physical cues – such as the round mouth of “Owh” – and consider the context and time of day. In listening, they should try to determine the distinctive sound of the cry – such as the hard “N” in Neh, or the breathy “H” of Heh. Changing the baby’s position can often help parents to discern the word. If baby is already distressed, the word can be harder to hear so parents should try to settle the baby as they normally would and then try to listen again the next time. Parents often tell us that they need to watch the DVD a number of times to tune their ear to each distinctive cry sound.

## **15. “Can Dunstan system help my baby with colic?”**

Colic is usually defined as hours and hours of unexplained crying, however there is little consensus among professionals about what causes colic. Parents who are worried about how much their baby cries should consult their doctor. With the Dunstan System, a framework is created for identifying what baby’s cries mean, allowing parents to meet that need. It is by using the System that professionals will be able to better understand all aspects of baby crying.

## **16. “What is your perspective on controlled crying?”**

With the Dunstan System, parents do not need to let their baby “cry it out.” Dunstan Baby Language teaches parents to know precisely what their baby needs when they cry, enabling them to meet baby’s needs faster and avoid the stress of long periods of unexplained crying.

## **17. “Can my baby learn Dunstan Baby Language and Baby Sign Language?”**

Of course. Dunstan Baby Language is relevant for 0-3 months. Sign language is usually for babies six months and beyond. The Dunstan System should be seen as a compatible to whatever infant practices you care to adopt with your baby.

## **18. “Does this System work for autistic babies or premature babies?”**

Our research to date has not included any preterm or autistic babies. We are currently supplying the program to several mothers of premature babies to learn how the program relates to these babies.

## **19. “Does this System help my baby to sleep better?”**

When infants are happy and content they will sleep better. By following the infant's sounds and acting on what is needed by the baby, he will become relaxed and settle more easily. In research approximately one in two mothers reported that their baby slept better and that they got more sleep using the Dunstan System. Quite a godsend for many tired mothers!

## **20. “I am tone deaf - will I be able to understand the different baby cries?”**

The Dunstan Baby Language System is designed so that parents can tune their ear by listening to many examples of babies making the different cry sounds. Being tone deaf should not be a barrier to hearing the baby cries. If parents are having difficulty distinguishing the sounds they should go back to the DVD and listen again to the differences in the cries to help tune their ear.

## **21. “How do we answer parents who say the Dunstan System didn't work for them?”**

Every new parent is doing the best they can. Sometimes parents find that they are unable to tune-in and decipher their baby's cries and so find that the Dunstan System is not for them. Just letting parents know that their baby's cries have meaning can help ease the pressure and give them a greater sense of control.

If parents are reporting their baby isn't making the pre-cry sounds and is only crying hysterically the issue may be that the baby is more sensitive and escalates quickly into siren crying. This does not mean that the pre-cry sounds don't exist in the baby, it may be that mom and dad are just missing them. Use of a baby monitor may be a simple solution to assist parents in differentiating the pre-cry sounds. If persistent unexplained crying persists advise parents to consult their doctor or pediatrician.