

# The chiropractor's role in the treatment of sleep disordered breathing

Kathryn Cantwell and Sharon Vallone

## Narrative

As sleep problems are a common issue for infants, all professionals work with these children with short- and long- term benefits in mind. The purpose of this clinically oriented article is to acknowledge, investigate and provide a professional commentary on some of the key parameters that should be a priority for chiropractors working with children with sleep disorders.



Chiropractors may play a key role in the field of sleep disordered breathing and are often a part of a team to help with nursing issues such as latching, constipation, colic or gastroesophageal reflux disorder. The collaborative network often includes neuro-muscular dentists, orthodontists, paediatric dentists, oromyofunctional therapists, speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, ear, nose, and throat allopaths, behaviour specialists, lactation consultants, midwives, doulas, and naturopaths.

A chiropractic examination can complement most paediatric examinations, evaluating for infant reflexes, evaluation of the suck and cranial-sacral assessment to determine the presence of tension in the dural sheath.

The treatment may include chiropractic adjusting, cranial and sacral work, teaching use of maxillary stimulation devices (*Myo Munchees*) and educating families about environmental and nutritional correlations for quality sleep. This team approach can often be an optimal way to assist our paediatric patients in fully functional feeding and improved sleeping mechanics. Chiropractors can be an important part of this collaborative team treating paediatric sleep disordered breathing to lead to optimal outcomes.

**Indexing terms:** Chiropractic; sacro-occipital technique; SOT; Sleep disorders; dural tension



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*About the practitioners*



**Kathryn Cantwell, DC** is a 1991 graduate from *Western States Chiropractic College (University of Western States)*. She earned her paediatric Diplomate (DICCP) in 1996 and had been in practice in the Chicago suburbs for 24 years. Dr Cantwell is currently practicing in Beaverton, Oregon since 2015. She also is a Certified SOT and Cranial Practitioner (CSP, CSCP) and more than half of her practice is paediatrics and pregnancy. She also co-treats with many dentists treating TMJ and sleep disordered breathing issues.

**Sharon Vallone, DC** is a graduate of *Rutgers University (AB Microbiology 1978)* and *New York Chiropractic College (1986)*. She completed her *Diplomate in Clinical Chiropractic Pediatrics* in 1996 through *Palmer College* and received her appointment as *Fellow in Clinical Chiropractic Pediatrics* in 2003.

Dr Vallone has a private practice limited to high risk pregnancies and challenged children in Connecticut and is currently the Chair of the Board of *Kentuckiana Children's Center* in Louisville, KY and past Vice Chair of the *International Chiropractic Association's Pediatric Council*. She is an international speaker, author, and editor of the *Journal of Clinical Chiropractic Pediatrics*. Sharon brings 33+ years of paediatric chiropractic experience with a primary interest in pregnancy, birth trauma, breastfeeding and problems with infant/toddler neurodevelopment.

