

## Cari's Professional Book Club Notes

Book Title: Sleep-Wrecked Kids

Author: Sharon Moore



---

Week 7: February 23, 2020

Chapter 6: Should We Work with a Specialist?

### Important Take-Aways:

1. This chapter is all about the benefits of getting expert help to find solutions to treatable sleep issues. With expert help, an official diagnosis can be made, and the best treatment options can be provided.
2. The big question is this: Who are the specialists who can help with sleep disorders? An overview of this question is provided in the final chapter of this book. Here's a summary:
  - a. General medical practitioner/pediatrician: The family doctor/pediatrician can help identify the early signs of upper airway problems and may be the first to refer to an ENT, sleep specialist, feeding specialist, speech language pathologist or myofunctional practitioner. The thing to be cautious of is the "wait and see approach" which many GPs use. But how long do you wait? That's why knowing the red flags that can lead to abnormal breathing should be shared with the doctor.
  - b. Sleep specialist: A sleep physician or specialist will decide if your child needs a sleep study (polysomnography). The sleep study provides important diagnostic information. A child who gasps, chokes or snores heavily is a candidate for a sleep study. The sleep study is the "gold standard" for accurately determining what is happening during sleep.
  - c. Dental specialist: Pediatric dentists can identify red flags in growth of the mouth and face and any compromise this may pose on the airway.
  - d. Orthodontist: This is the dental specialist who aims to prevent, diagnose and treat facial and dental irregularities, but its philosophy is aligned with good airway development as well.
  - e. Ear Nose and Throat Specialist: An airway focused ENT will consider the jaw size and shape, signs of swelling or obstruction, signs of teeth grinding, tissue restrictions, otitis media, reflux, and allergies.
  - f. Allergist: This specialist will try to find out if the causes of blocked nose or airway issues are allergy related.

- g. Gastroenterologist: This specialist will examine the digestive system to see if there are any gastrointestinal issues (it is not uncommon for kids with airway issues to have gastro issues – they are often interrelated).
  - h. Surgeon: This specialist can help determine if there are any craniofacial disorders or anatomical anomalies that need to be addressed surgically.
  - i. Myofunctional practitioner: This is the specialist who performs a detailed assessment and diagnosis of the functions of the mouth, face and throat. A program can be designed to correct oral rest postures, improve the strength, tone and range of movement of the muscles of the face, mouth and throat, correct head and neck posture, and address all orofacial functions and eliminate harmful habits like thumb or finger sucking.
3. The author outlines other specialists who may play a role in supporting children with non-medical sleep issues as well.
4. The key is for the team to work together to determine the exact issues and appropriate treatments for children with sleep disorders (medical) or disordered sleep (non-medical).