Spoil Your Baby Ep 36 - Brain benefits of Skin-to-Skin and how to do it at any age Transcript

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Introduction to skin-to-skin benefits

my favorite and it's not, not one of the necessarily talked about as much, but babies, there was a study that babies held skin to skin cry 12 times less.

And I just remember when you're a new mom and you know, it is very, can be very overwhelming. You know I wish I had had to do like didn't and I would have made all the difference, But it can very over whelming and to be able to soothe your baby and calm your baby is feels like a superpower.

It really does. Completely increase confidence. I mean, I'm always thinking about the stress system and having baby skin to skin is going to put that baby and mom, dad, whoever is doing it all will be lowered stress connection, growing the bond, right?

Like just endless. Hello everybody. Welcome to spoil your baby podcast. I am so delighted to have Haley Mullins here with us today from Joey band. We're going to get into it.

Welcoming Haley Mullins and JoeyBand

But before we hear everything about it, I just want to say this was one of like the first most exciting products I heard about when I think we're in my doula training.

We might've had the opportunity to have one as new doulas. And I think I've recommended it to every single client. I have, I always have. Um, that I'd given to like family members and get out everybody.

So huge fan. Perfect, I love that. Yeah, you're a big fan. Why don't you, uh, let us know, what is it? Tell us about Joey Band. Absolutely, and thank you so much for that because we, the whole Joey band team, we're such big fans of yours as well and the work that you do.

So that means so But so JoyBand, if your listeners haven't heard of Joy Band or aren't familiar with what it is. So Joy band is a device that's used for skin to skin.

Versus a wrap or a carrier or sling, which are all amazing products for baby wearing. The Joyband came to be when I was a new mom. My daughter, you know, when she was born, she's placed on me immediately for skin to skin, didn't understand the science behind it quite like I do now, but knew that it kept her quiet and happy.

So two weeks today she is born. We were having a beautiful moment. She was asleep on my chest. I took my hands off of her for a split second and she startled and hit the floor, the hardwood floor beside my bed.

And I to this day, 13 years later will not get that sound out of my head. Oh my god, the worst. It happens to almost everybody at least once though, just to like normalize it with the world, but we don't want it to happen.

The accident that inspired JoeyBand

Oh, my goodness. Exactly. So my husband and I, you know, I'm thinking, Oh God, unfit mother. Panic went to the hospital emergency room and the doctor looked at us and was like, this happens all the time.

Which, you know, the statistics are wild. I think I found one study that estimated infant falls are happening at a rate of about one in 165 births and that's in hospital.

Um, so let alone at home where people aren't, you know, necessarily telling anybody because you don't know what, what people are going to say. Exactly.

But so it didn't want us to happen again. Um went home, tried all those wonderful products that already exist, wraps, carriers, um, baby wearing shirts, slings.

And I turned to my husband at a frustration and he said, I just want something that will like support her on my chest as she sleeps on me chest. So developed the Joy Band, which the best way to describe it, it's like a long, soft, stretchy piece of yoga pant material, because what does every mom live in is that soft stretchy yoga pan material and Velcro.

And it wraps around and it supports your baby on your chest in that proper skin to skin position. It's really designed to mimic the womb. and give that baby that nice, snug, close, comfortable feeling while enabling parents to be comfortable and have their baby on them without any pressure on their shoulders, neck, back, no buckles or clips digging into that tender postpartum skin or that delicate newborn skin and make sure that we can really be uncomfortable while practicing skin-to-skin and maximize that time and those benefits that come along with it.

Yeah I imagine it increases the time a lot right because you need to like change positions and adjust and it might be so easy to just kind of give it up if you know have to adjust way too many times right.

Yeah and being able to have your hands back I mean you naptrapped or whatever we used to call it, where you're holding your baby on you because you can't, you don't want to let them go.

You don' want risk any slips or falls. Whereas this gives you your hands back. It's comfortable and it's on and off really quickly, which I think is a really important thing because when you are a new mom and you've got a crying baby and your eager to soothe them, It's really quick, it gives them that deep pressure touch.

They can hear your heartbeat, they can smell you, the can feel your warmth. And it really brings them back to that place of comfort that they spent that first nine months of development in.

It really is a really wonderful tool for helping calm and soothe your baby. Yeah, I love it. So many parents, even like the simplest rap that I recommend, it is so hard to take that information in in those early days and weeks, right?

You might be able to compute a couple months in, but those are like having something that easy is really, really wonderful. Oh my gosh standing in front of like YouTube videos trying to rap and I just I was so frustrated.

How JoeyBand supports safe skin-to-skin

And so what we're really proud that we are doing is we enabling new parents to keep their babies close, comfortable and sort of ease into that baby wearing world where you know you have that simplest form of babywearing and that skin to skin with the Joey band but as you get your footing and as learn this whole parenting thing, it's a bit easier to adjust and move into those other products as well.

Yeah, I really love it that it just also, there's some products that can also just like hold space for something, which I'm really feel like the Joey band does.

Like, It's like, i'm doing my skin to skin. And so because it makes it so much easier and more comfortable and like is an actual kind of ritual like putting it on and having your baby there and maybe setting yourself up with snacks and drinks and a book or a show or, you know, something while they sleep.

We really do get to do the like skin to skin for real, which is, recommended, at least by Kangaroo Care, for atleast three 90-minute cycles a day in those early newborn days, right?

Yeah. And to your point, we live in a world now where moms are encouraged to get back to it. Like, oh, when the baby's asleep, you should be doing this.

It's like, no. You need to recover, and you need take care of yourself, too, because you just went through birth. And even whether you went through birth, whether your not the birthing parent, weather you are an adoptive parent.

All these life changes. And everyone has to slow down. Slow down, exactly. Take that time, bond with your baby, just soak it all in, slow it down and that's what's really great and what we're also proud of is that we force you to because it's not a carrier.

It's for walking around, it is non-ambulatory. you are meant to be sitting, like seated or reclined with your baby and just soaking that contact in. Yeah, it's beautiful.

It creates that oxytocin bath for everybody that I love. And it is also good for partners too. And when my husband did go back to work, the second he walked back in the door, I was like, take off your shirt.

Here's our baby. I will have a shower now. And I think it would be really helpful for non-Birthing parents also to use it. 100%. Yeah. Another adaptive parenting community as well.

Hospital use, C-sections, and NICU care

the simplicity of it. And it's such a simple skin-to-skin when you think of as a practice in itself. It's simple. In theory, it is simple, but it actually not, because you're like this.

You're stuck holding your baby on your chest, which is amazing, But it not necessarily comfortable. So we tried to make that simple act of nurturing your babies through skin to skin, simpler by supporting them physically with the Joey cat.

Yeah, I love it! Well, you also are in hospitals quite a bit. You have a big presence in hospital settings as well. We talk a little bit about how the Joy Band works there, because that's the other thing for people listening is like, this is something you should probably put in your hospital bag, right?

Like it's has a bigger role, definitely in cesarean burst, vaginal burst but also just And NICU, for sure, that's a whole other category, but we've talked about all of them.

But yeah, get it for your hospital bag if you're expecting it. Yeah, absolutely. We're really working hard to change the standard of care. Right now, I mean, not even too long ago, the practice was babies went to a nursery.

They were separated from their mothers and they went into a nursing. That has changed, thank God. So now babies are staying with their moms. And in hospital, you're told, do skin to skin, breastfeed, but don't hold your baby if you are tired.

I hate to break it to you. You're tired for years. This is not like a 24-hour thing. So we're working really hard to make it easy to hold you baby. And I do want to flag that the Joy Band is NOT for co-sleeping.

If you ARE falling asleep and you have drowsy, we do recommend removing your Baby Put in a safe sleep environment or have somebody who can watch you just for obvious reasons.

But in the hospital setting, what we're really finding is that it is a game changer, particularly for C-section moms. So, you know, if you were lucky and you're able to do skin-to-skin in the operating room, it might be for 15 minutes while somebody holds the baby on you physically, because if your having a C-section, your wired, might not have full use of your arms, the positioning is a little bit awkward.

So what's really exciting is that they're laying the Joey dip band down before mom lies down to have her C section and we're wrapping the Baby in a Joey band on mom on the table.

We actually had one nurse reach out to us and say, you know, You just took this from a surgery to a birth. Exactly. It's one simple addition and it changes things.

We had a mother reach and said, it was her third C-section. She didn't have a Joey band for her first two and she was so moved by what the Joey Band did with her 3rd C section.

You know she had had lot of scar tissue. she told us she's literally throwing up off the side of the table, but her baby was on her and that made all the difference.

In the NICU, to your point about using it across the board, in the NIQ, we know that babies that are doing lots of kangaroo care are getting out of the NCU sooner.

On average, one to one and a half days sooner, which doesn't seem like a lot, but when you just want to get your baby home, that's huge, especially if you're in a country like the United States where you are paying by the day and that daily charge is not anything to laugh at.

that one and a half days can make a huge difference. So just all that kangaroo care that you can get. We've had hospitals that bring it in for like that postpartum period where we want mom and babies together all the time.

And you've got people walking in and out of the room and families coming to visit and they're great, but everybody wants to hold the baby. What the Joy Band does is it actually secures baby to that new parent, new mom, so that we're not removing baby as much We're seeing everything data-wise coming in from everything from increased breastfeeding rates, earlier initiation of breast feeding.

We are seeing babies breastfeed right on the operating room table. Um, we are seen reduced maternal anxiety. we're saying reduced medication used, um, in the pack use.

So less painkillers after C-section, which is huge. When you think about all of the ramifications there, you're just seeing less anxiety in general. um and temperature regulation which you know can be can, be a tough thing when you're in the operating room especially like it's cold in there they have to keep it a certain temperature and we're seeing that that thermal regulation is happening when babies are in The Joey Band um so it there's just so much coming out of this simple.

I bet you could never dream that Because I think again, like when I thought about it in the operating room, and I had a C-section, so I know everything you said.

It also creates, for a better term, hold space for that too, right? Because it can very often be like you, way less than 15 minutes. Often it's like the baby's put on, they like get to kiss mom or like, get the touch for a second.

And it like skin to skin's done. Okay, next, like let's go do all the other things. But we know from all the outcomes you mentioned, right? Baby's health, mom's, health mental and physical healing, all these things.

Um, it's so important to have them together and that birth experience, like baby is expecting to be on their mother after they're born.

How long babies can use JoeyBand

And if not, Like it does create a birth imprint. Like I have. I think I was able to do that, but then I had was separated from my mom needlessly for having low blood sugar, which would have been cured by skin to skin.

Like that's actually the only way to, you know, really. So in the operating room, it just gives doctors and nurses a very easy way, to like, let it happen, right?

Like it boosts the possibility. Yeah and even not just for like mom and baby and I mean that should be enough on its own but you've got staff members.

We had one hospital that brought it in because staff was getting repetitive stress injury from bending over and holding the baby on mom so complaints about wrists, neck, shoulders, back and that's with those brief minutes of

holding baby mom but they knew how important skin-to-skin was so they're holding Baby on Mom And then, you know, they brought the joy band in to leave the pain of their staff.

But then they clicked on it and we're getting an hour of uninterrupted skin to skin after a C-section. Which, I've never, ever heard of that. Yeah, it's um, so which is why like, you know, doulas midway like the whole birthing community we just want to support and we Just want To get the joy van into their hands because we know it makes such a difference So thank you so much for letting me share all this.

I love it and Then the NICU was like a whole other experience. And I experienced that as well. They were not supportive of kangaroo care. I was in a nightmare situation.

But I imagine introducing something like this there or bringing it yourself, it would also increase your chances, right? Whether it was a baby-friendly or not a Absolutely.

We were actually fortunate enough to participate. There was a cardiac ICU, so kangaroo care-a-thon in May that happened. So we're talking about the sickest, most vulnerable babies that are in NICUs.

And so we were able to participant. I think there was roughly 30 hospitals across the USA that participated in me. we provided some joy bands for these families because we know that in the NECU, you know, Regardless of, you know, once baby's been cleared to do kangaroo care, amazing, we want it as much as we can.

We also know that it can be really difficult for parents, it could be intimidating, especially if your baby is on the smaller side or is connected to monitors and wires and tubes and all that.

It is very scary.

Broader benefits of skin-to-skin

Yeah, so we're just, we are trying, really, working hard to change the standard of care to make it that everybody can hold their baby as early as possible, as often as possibly, and for as long as is possible.

And then we want them, you know, if your hospital is, one of our favorites that supports it and sends it home with you, We want that skin to skin, to keep continuing through the fourth trimester at least.

But as long as your baby will snuggle on you, the Joey band will support them. And we know that there's so many benefits that go on with that extended continued skin to skin care.

Yeah, what is the like max age that people are using it? Yeah. So because it's not a carrier, it is not weight bearing. It's more like a soft stretchy hug.

You know, up to the first year, really, there's no weight limit. Your baby is going to grow it developmentally before they grow physically. We even had one twin mom who had her babies in there while she was tan and feeding and they were 11 months.

Wow. Yeah, so you're going get your use out of it. Once baby stops using it for skin to skin, you can use it in other ways. Added support. in a chair, if there's no high chair around, you can support them from armpit to belly button with the Joey band.

It's one of those products that you're going to want it for those early days, but you going keep using it through your babies. I love that as a connection tool as they get bigger too.

This probably came later, it just came up in my mind, so I'll just share it. My son, during the early years, under three, and maybe later. He just, he wanted to always pretend he was in the womb again.

I think some of it was in acting, trying to recreate a vaginal birth, like he tried to like, he birthed again and like have

agency over it because he was taken out of the C-section.

So he would always want me to, to wrap him in blankets and hold him really tight. And then he like birth himself out. I feel like that would be such a cool experience for like the under ones as well, right?

To kind of feel all wrapped up and contained and have heartbeat and smell and touch and all those things. I love that. So you touched on a bunch of the benefits of skin to skin.

Are there any others to add? I mean, I think we could go on forever. We absolutely could go on forever. And I think, you know, yes, we did touch on them, breastfeeding, temperature regulation, babies gain weight faster, their brains develop quicker.

Like, there's just so many. They eat their food, like they absorb their foods, right? Like they don't just move better, but the food actually gets absorbed into their bodies better.

That's why they leave the NICU faster and why the grow better at home and all that kind of stuff too. So cool. Yeah, it's magic. But my favorite, my favorite, and it's not, it' not one of the necessarily talked about as much, but babies, there was a study that babies held skin to skin, cry 12 times less.

And I just remember when you're a new mom, You know, it is very, can be very overwhelming. Um, you know I wish I had how to do like didn't and I just, I would have made all the difference, but it can very overwhelmed.

And to be able to soothe your baby, um, and calm your babies feels like a superpower. It really does completely increase confidence. I mean, always thinking about the stress system and having baby skin to skin is going to put that baby and mom, dad, whoever, is doing it all will be lowered stress, connection, growing the bond, right?

Like just endless. And I mean, I think I have a reference list of benefits of skin to skin. That's like three entire pages of just like one word, you know, benefit.

Regulates every system in the body for adult and baby. But it grows the brain in the conditions that it wants to be growing in, right? That high oxytocin, low stress.

And also, when you were saying that too, I also was thinking it also like the rest is so important, what kind of forces rest, but it takes the put the baby down myth out of the picture as well.

It kind of, you know, gives parents that, puts them on that path of like, this is where my baby belongs, like this, is this the best place for my. Yeah, yeah.

You are their natural habitat. Like you are, their home. Um, Yeah. No, it's, I always say it is magic.

Where to buy JoeyBand and closing

And it s one thing that every new parent needs to be doing and especially, Yeah, the bonding and just being in tune with your baby, like I said, feels like superpower.

It does. Well, yeah, I love it. I Love it, thank you so much for coming to talk to us about it so I mean, i feel like i mean i do still give it as a gift to people when they're expecting and i Feel like all of the things we mentioned in this episode you could write on the card you can just be like This will give you and your, baby all, of these gifts Absolutely.

I love it. Amazing. So for anyone curious of learning more and checking it out, where should they go take a look? So you can go to our website, which is joeyband.com.

And we do ship worldwide. We do make it in Canada. So we are, you know, tear free and whatnot, if that's a consideration. But we manufacture it locally in Toronto, in Which again, we're also really proud of that as well.

And let's do a discount code for your listeners. Great. Yeah. We'll post that. Yes. Perfect. So I'll get that set up. Then when you post the podcast, put it in your show notes, and we are excited to share our discount with your listener.

Amazing. Well, thank you so much, Haley. I will stay in touch and hopefully have you back soon. Absolutely. Would love that Awesome. Thank you.