

# BABY MASSAGING A WAKE-UP FOR SLEEPLESS MUMS



Midwife and baby  
massage therapist  
Jane Powell  
with her  
eight-month-old  
son yesterday.  
Picture: Justin Lloyd

## LISA MAYOH FAMILY REPORTER

IT'S a nightmare for sleep-deprived new mums — a colic or reflux-suffering baby screaming endlessly.

So tens of thousands of parents are taking matters into their own hands — literally. Baby massage is a booming art, with 60,000 Aussie mums learning how to rub down their bubs in the past year — a whopping growth of 6000 per cent from five years ago, when only 1000 mums took the course.

Mother of two and massage

therapist Heidi McLoughlin founded the Infant Massage Information Service 15 years ago and said demand had increased due to positive results for inducing sleep and improving conditions like wind and reflux.

"It is certainly becoming more popular," she said.

"We are struggling to keep up with the demand, as there are only 825 registered trainers across the country, and many of them only teach casually, so we really need new teachers — at least 100 more in NSW alone over the next 12 months."

Ms McLoughlin said baby massage

was not only relaxing for mother and child but also proven to increase sleep, improve moods, reduce wind-related pain and stress levels, as well as boost immunity and improve eczema.

The organisation teaches parents how to best massage their babies and also conducts training courses for those wanting to become instructors — who can earn up to \$435 for a one-hour class.

"It's great for mums to do too because it is flexible so you can structure the classes around your baby sleep times — that's what I did when my kids were little and it worked so well."