

Overcoming Bedtime Challenges in Young Children

Healthier Urban Families
Outreach Program



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Common Bedtime Issues

Child does not want to go to bed

Child has problems falling asleep

Child wakes during the night

Sleep and Behavioral Issues



Sleepy Child - Impact on Family

- ▶ You are Tired
- ▶ You are Less Patient
- ▶ You are Less Productive
- ▶ Siblings affected by child's behavior



Think of It as an Experiment

- ▶ Change will not happen right away
- ▶ Slowly work towards your goal
- ▶ You can observe and note what works and what doesn't
- ▶ You can make adjustments to the routine
- ▶ You can reward behaviors that are moving towards a good routine
- ▶ You will eventually find a solution that works

Why This is a Good Time to Address Sleep Challenges

- ▶ Children are home all day
- ▶ You are in close quarters
- ▶ It's a good time to establish a routine
- ▶ It is important to have time to yourself



Myths about Young Children and Sleep

- ▶ Young children know when they are tired
- ▶ If you tire them out right before bedtime they will sleep really good
- ▶ If you let young children stay up late, they will sleep longer
- ▶ It's okay to take breaks from the bedtime routine on weekends
- ▶ Skipping an afternoon nap helps a child to sleep better at night

Avoid

- ▶ Asking young children if they are sleepy or ready for bed
- ▶ Using the bed as a timeout or punishment
- ▶ Playing with/entertaining your child when they wake during the night
- ▶ Bringing your child to your bed - unless you are willing to continue the practice
- ▶ Extending bedtime wind down routines- set clear and consistent limits

Is Child's Bedroom Sleep Ready?

- ▶ Comfortable temperature for sleeping
- ▶ Dim lighting
- ▶ Quiet or white noise
- ▶ Toys, tablets and phones put away



The Bedtime Recipe

- ▶ Warning before downtime
- ▶ Reasonable bedtime
- ▶ Use calm voice
- ▶ Soothing activities
 - ▶ Bath
 - ▶ Back rub
 - ▶ Story
- ▶ CONSISTENCY

Bonus of Establishing Routine and Being Consistent





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For additional bedtime routine information visit:
5adayparenting.org/sleep

www.mpsi.wayne.edu