

Sleep Strategies for your Child

Toddler through School Age

- Have a **consistent bedtime** and wake-up time for your child.
- Have a regular **night-time routine**, such bath-time or shower, brushing teeth, going to the bathroom, and reading a book together.
- **Turn off all screens two hours before bedtime.** Screen-time is stimulating, and affects our circadian sleep-wake cycles. Remove electronic devices from the bedroom.
- Your child should have **their own room or sleep space** separate from yours. Your child's bed and sleep area should only be for sleep.
- Have a blanket or stuffed animal that is special for sleep times.
- Make sure their bedroom is quiet, and not too warm or too cold.
- Make sure your child gets **lots of physical activity every day**, preferably 1-2 hours playing outside.
- If your child wakes at night and calls out to you, keep your visits **"brief and boring"**
 - Comfort and reassure your child, and remind them it is bedtime/night-time.
 - Avoid giving milk, snacks, or lots of attention during these visits.
 - If your child is anxious, let them know that you will come back and check on them in 5-10 minutes.
 - If your child is awake after bedtime, they can play quietly or read a book but must stay in their room.
- Consider
 - Night lights (including on the route to the bathroom for potty-trained children).
 - White noise (such as a fan or white noise machine) or soft music. If this is used, it should be left on all night to soothe them if they wake up in the night.
 - A wake-timer light that changes colors when it is time to get out of bed in the morning.



- More information: www.healthychildren.org