



A Restful Night's Sleep

Research Proven Sleep Hygiene Strategies to help your child sleep better

East Islip Parent Training

Overview

- Importance of Sleep
- Sleep Hygiene Tips
- Teaching your child to fall asleep alone
- Bedwetting



Importance of Sleep

Lack of sleep in child leads to increased risk of:

- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Injuries
- Poor mental health
- Problems with attention/behavior
- Parent having less sleep, and their own risk of each increases!



Sleep Disorders

Insomnia

Child Insomnia

Short Sleeper

Sleep-Wake Disorders

Advanced Sleep-Wake
Phase

Delayed Sleep-Wake
Phase

Irregular Sleep-Wake
Rhythm

Jet Lag

Non-24-Hour Sleep-Wake
Rhythm

Shift Work

Hypersomnias

Idiopathic Hypersomnia

Insufficient Sleep
Syndrome

Kleine-Levin Syndrome

Long Sleeper

Narcolepsy

Parasomnias

Bedwetting

Confusional Arousals

Exploding Head
Syndrome

Nightmares

REM Sleep Behavior
Disorder

Sleep Eating Disorder

Sleep Hallucinations

Sleep Paralysis

Sleep Talking

Sleep Terrors

Sleepwalking

Breathing Disorders

Central Sleep Apnea

Child Sleep Apnea

Groaning

Infant Sleep Apnea

Obstructive Sleep Apnea

Snoring

Movement Disorders

Bruxism

Periodic Limb Movements

Restless Legs Syndrome

Sleep Leg Cramps

Sleep Rhythmic
Movement

Sleep Starts



Sleep problems are more common in children with ASD and Intellectual Disabilities.

If you are concerned about a specific diagnosis (especially breathing disorders), please consult with your pediatrician and keep a sleep diary ([Adult](#) / [Child](#)).

Sleep Hygiene

The term used to describe good sleep habits!

Depth: the electrical quality of sleep (i.e., REM)

Duration: having a sufficient amount of sleep

Continuity: uninterrupted sleep

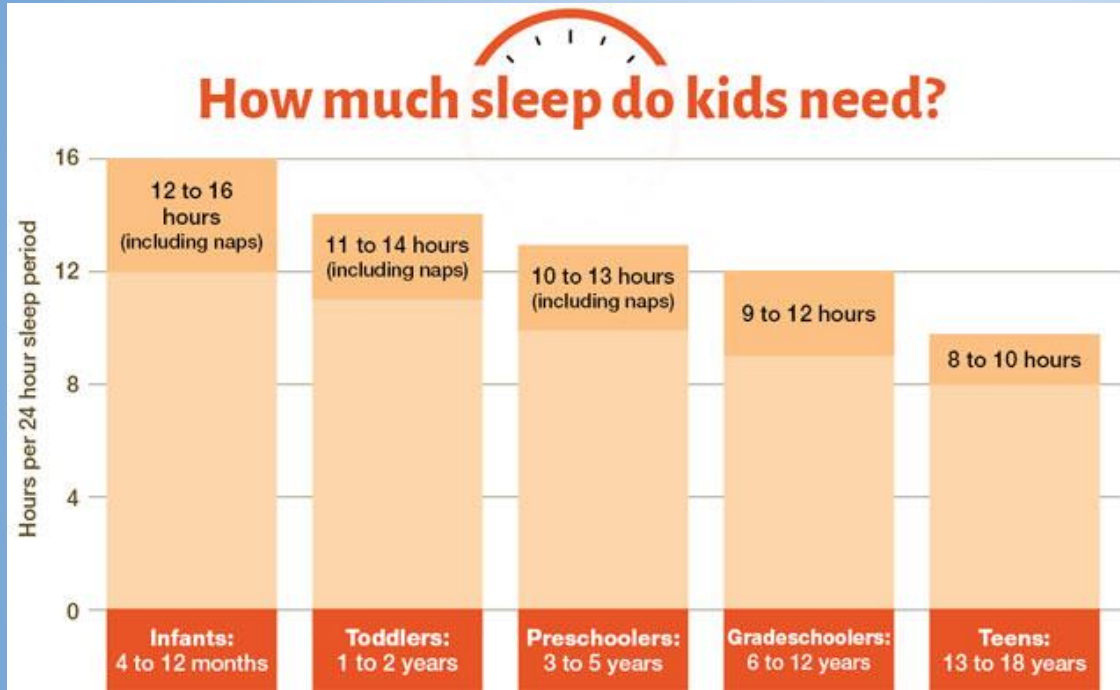
Regularity: falling asleep and waking up at the same time everyday.



Sleep is a skill that can be taught and learned! Behavioral sleep training techniques can help a variety of sleep problems.



How much sleep is needed?



[Bedtime Calculator](#)

Some research shows children with ASD may need less sleep, so think the lower end of the continuum.

Trying to put your child to bed earlier to “get more sleep” may actually make falling asleep harder.



Start with the environment



- Beds are for sleeping **only: we want your child to associate bed with sleeping.** Lying on a bed and completing other activities (i.e., using a tablet, watching TV) teaches your brain your bed has other associations.
- Comfortable environment:
 - Temperature
 - Quiet
 - Dark
- Your child's specific sensory needs:
 - The fit of pajamas
 - Texture of blankets
 - Sensitivity to household noises



Healthy Habits - Build a routine

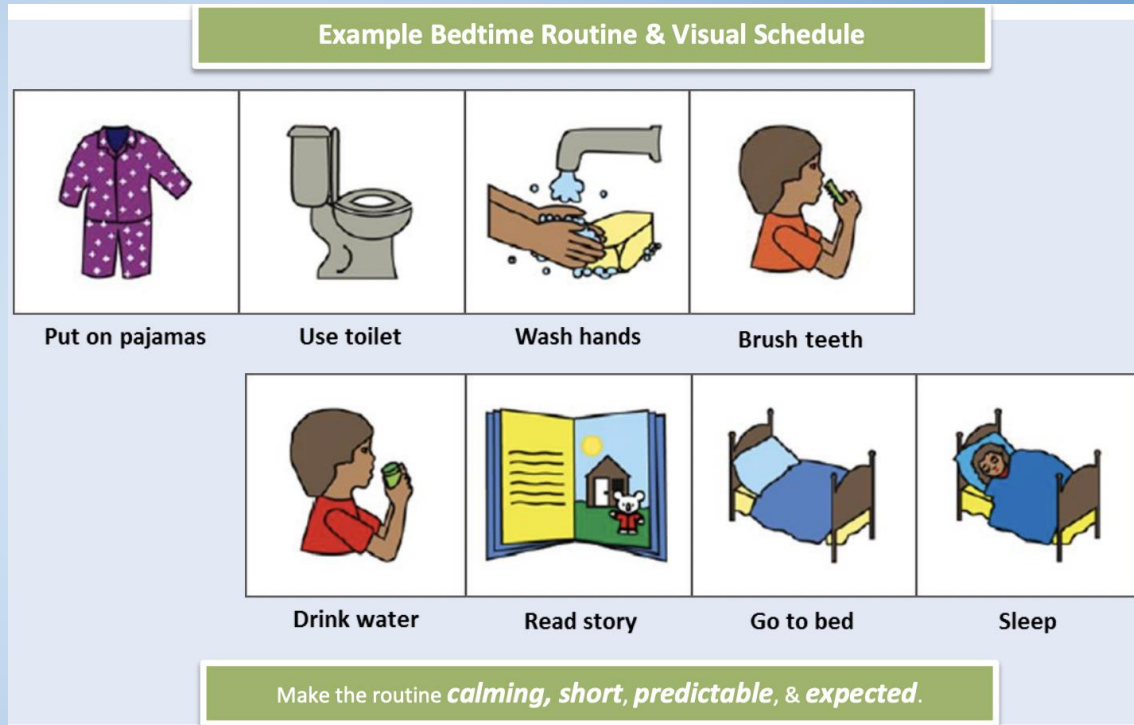
- For 1 hour before bed, **avoid**: screen-time, TV, video games, physical activity, caffeine (check your desserts)
- Incorporate physical activity: exercise/physical activity during the day improves sleep quality at night.
- Stick to the same bedtime and wake time every day, even on weekends.
 - Staying up late on the weekends or trying to “catch up” on sleep can throw off a sleeping schedule for several days
 - For older students, try to not have their schedule change by more than 1 hour on the weekends
 - If the child goes to bed late, keep the same wake time (or do not delay more than 1 hour). You want your child to sleep the next night!
 - Avoid naps (especially after 4 PM)
 - Ensure all caregivers follow the same routine





Bedtime routine

- Schedule the time you want the bedtime routine to start, so desired bedtime occurs
 - Recommended time 15-30 min
- Work towards the bedroom
 - Avoid going back/forth between bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, etc.
 - Once you're in the bedroom, stay in the bedroom
- Should be positive (but calming) activities.
 - Reading a book, singing lullabies, gentle massages
 - A light snack with carbohydrates may help your child fall asleep



Teach your child to fall asleep alone

- Children and adults will naturally wake up many times each night. Each time we wake up, we check our sleep environment and return back to sleep. These are so brief you may not remember them
- If your child does not know how to fall asleep alone, each time he/she wakes up, it is hard to return back to sleep without your help
- Learning to fall asleep alone will help your child (and you) receive more sleep and wake more rested
- This is a skill you can teach!



Teach your child to sleep alone: Bedtime fading

Good for children who take a long time to fall asleep

How to:

- Temporarily move your child's bedtime later while they learn to fall asleep on their own
- Move bedtime back 30-60 minutes
- Once your child can fall asleep within 15 minutes of bedtime 2-3 nights in a row, move the bedtime back about 10-15 minutes closer to previous bedtime
- Keep a consistent wake time
- Avoid naps



Teaching your child to sleep alone: Camping out

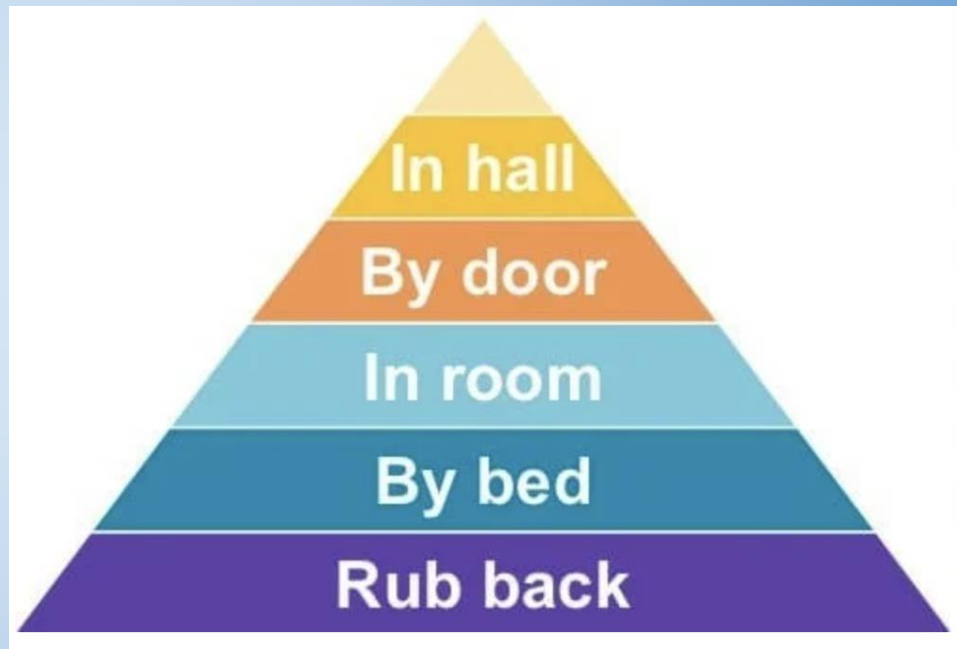


Gradually withdrawing your presence over time.

Have a script you repeat each time your child looks to you for guidance. “I love you. It’s time to go to sleep, Good night.”

Fade yourself back after 2-3 nights of success.

Be patient!





Teaching your child to sleep alone: Excuse Me

Good for children who have some language and abstract thinking skills

Parent says “Excuse me, I need to step out and _____ for a second. I’ll be right back.” (The excuses don’t matter!!)

At first come back **very** frequently (every few seconds the first times). When you come back, **praise** your child for looking cozy, staying in bed, etc.

Over several nights, reduce frequency of check-ins and create more time in between. You are teaching your child to build the tolerance to stay in bed alone.

As time increases of you out of the room, the hope is your child will learn to fall asleep alone

Teaching your child to sleep alone: Bedtime Pass



Good for children who seek their caregivers frequently during the night.

Create a card or designate an object a child can use **once** if they awake during the night.

Determine what your child can “trade” the pass for in the middle of the night. Once the pass is used it is given to you. Return to the child the next night.

If the pass is not used, the child gets a **morning present**, or a token towards a sticker/behavior chart.



Bedwetting



- 1) Limit fluid intake before bed - but ensure they drank plenty throughout the day
- 2) Have your child urinate twice before bed, 20-30 min apart
- 3) If the child knows/awakes when they are wet, use a schedule and timer(s) to awake the child and bring to the bathroom before you expect your child to have an accident.
- 4) Bedwetting alarm/alert: teaches the child when they are wetting during the night
 - Sense wetness and alerts parent/child when wetting is happening
 - Choose an alarm that is compatible with your child's sensory needs
 - Clear instructions: trigger the alarm to teach your child what the alarm will be and what it means
 - When alarm goes off during the night, immediately bring the child to the bathroom to teach this is where to urinate
 - After 14 dry nights, discontinue the alarm
- 5) Reinforce for dry nights! Don't punish for wet nights.



Keys of Sleep Training

C - Consistent

P - Patient

R - Reinforce

