

Newmark Alert - Related Services Spring Tips

From Newmark Education <SLevy@newmarkeducation.com>

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Newmark Education Parent Alert

March 4, 2026

Sleep Routines: Recharge for Success

Dear Newmark Parents,

From an occupational therapy (OT) perspective, sleep is a foundational occupation that directly supports a student's ability to learn, regulate emotions, participate socially and manage daily routines. As we transition into the spring season, changes in daylight, increased after-school activities, sports schedules and later sunsets can disrupt established sleep patterns.

From a speech therapy (ST) perspective, there is a lot of research on the importance of nighttime sleep for speech and language development in children. Sleep quality and quantity are important for memory and learning (Antony & Paller, 2017). Both memory and learning ability are essential for language development. There is also research that has found links between deep sleep and children's comprehension skills, their ability to remember new sound combinations, remember complicated grammar rules and remember vocabulary words (Edgin et al., 2015).

The goal of setting up balanced evening/morning routines is to help students wake up fully, transition smoothly, feel regulated and prepared and arrive at school ready to engage.

The recommended amounts of sleep for children of different ages (National Sleep Foundation, 2020)

- Toddlers (1-2 years): 11–14 hours per night; 1–3 hour naps (decrease to 1 nap at 18 months)
- Pre-schoolers (3-5 years): 11-13 hours per night; Usually don't nap after 5 years
- School-Age (6-12 years): 9-11 hours per night ☐
- Teenagers (13-18 years): 8-10 hours per night

Here is a list of some tips to improve sleep habits and to support language and learning during this upcoming seasonal shift:

Screen Guidelines:

- Turn off devices at least 60 minutes before bed.
- Charge devices outside of the bedroom.
- Avoid stimulating content (video games, action shows) at night.

Bedroom Environment:

- Maintain a cool temperature (~65–70°F).
- Dim lights before bedtime and a dark room to sleep (blackout curtains can help!).
- Use white noise if household noise is disruptive.
- Encourage that bed is used only for sleep (no homework or gaming).
- Utilize calming scents, weighted blankets, warm showers, slow stretching or deep breathing to prepare the nervous system for rest.

Create a Relaxing Bedtime Routine: It is important to have a relaxing routine before sleep. A 20 - 30-minute bedtime routine helps to wind down and prepare for sleep. Here are some ideas on how to create a relaxing bedtime routine and nurture your child's language development at the same time:

Talking about the day - Bedtime is when children are most likely to open up and talk. Encourage your child to recall the positive experiences of the day. You could start off by telling your child about the happy things that happened to you that day. Encourage your child to think of 3 of the best things that happened that day. Other questions you could ask your child: "What was the best part of your day?" or "What fun thing did you do today?"

Story Telling - Storytelling and using your child's imagination helps children unwind. There are a lot of ways you can tell stories together, here are a few ideas:

- Talk about your own childhood. Children love hearing tales about their parents.
- Talk about your ancestors. This is a great way to pass down family stories when children are young.
- Talk about the child's childhood. Children love hearing stories about themselves.
- Make up your own stories about your child's favorite characters.

Read a Book - Reading a book with children before bedtime is a lovely bonding time that will create a comforting feeling that promotes better sleep. Story reading also helps in the development of a child's literacy skills, oral communication skills, listening abilities, memory and vocabulary development skills (Dickinson et al., 2012).

We understand that each student's routine may be unique to their family or household, however, keep in mind that consistent, quality sleep across all school ages supports *attention, emotional regulation, immune health, memory and language development, and overall academic performance* — especially during the shift from winter to spring months when schedules and routines are more likely to change! [Learn more](#)

Sincerely,

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