

Tips for Better Zzz's for Kids & Teens

Sleep plays an important role in the development of children and teens. It affects growth, mood, alertness, attention, cognitive performance, resilience, learning, and memory.

Recommended Total Daily Hours of Sleep by Age

- 0-3 months: 14-17 hours
- 4-11 months: 12-15 hours
- 1-2 years: 11-14 hours
- 3-5 years: 10-13 hours
- 6-13 years: 9-11 hours
- 14-17 years: 8-10 hours
- 18-25 years: 7-9 hours

Getting the Most out of Your Bedtime Routine

1. Keep the same bedtime routine each night, even on weekends.
2. Start your bedtime routine before the actual bedtime.
3. Pick 4-5 steps for the bedtime routine to do each night, such as bath/shower time, pajamas, brush teeth, reading, sing a song, etc.
4. Remember that kids can shift their bedtime by 20-30 minutes at the most and still stay on track with a consistent sleep schedule

The Scoop on Naps

- 3-4 months: Your baby's nap schedule will start to develop.
- 6 months: Many babies start to take 2 longer naps (one in the morning and one in the afternoon) totaling about 3 hours of daytime sleep.
- 15-21 months: Most babies drop the morning nap and just take a slightly longer afternoon nap.
- Most 3-year-olds still nap, some 4-year-olds still nap, and most 5-year-olds no longer take naps.

Remember, every child is different! Don't stress if what works for your child is slightly different than what is listed here!

→ Why is my toddler or preschooler... ←

Coming in my bed in the middle of the night?

One of the most common reasons has to do with what your child needs to fall asleep. If a parent or caregiver stays with their child until the child falls asleep, the child now associates the parent or caregiver with falling asleep. All children wake several times in the middle of the night and if they associate parents and caregivers with falling asleep, they will either call out or crawl into bed with their parents or caregivers. This usually occurs when kids are 2 to 4 years old, but can last until older ages as well. Most children will learn to fall asleep on their own by kindergarten. If you would like to help your child achieve independent sleep sooner, you can try: 1) gradually phasing out your presence by moving farther away from your child at bedtime or briefly checking in on your child at longer intervals (e.g., 5 minutes, 10 minutes, 20 minutes). 2) Removing your presence all at once, sometimes referred to as the "cry-it-out" method. OR 3) The Bedtime Pass (see instructions on the right).

Protesting or delaying sleep?

There are many reasons for bedtime delays. Bedtime fears, separation anxiety, and boundary testing are 3 of the most common reasons. Here are some tips to help:

- Give Transition Time - Do quiet activities at least 30 minutes before bed to start winding down
- Give Reminders - For example, tell your child, "After one story, it's time for bed."
- Stick to the Plan - If you give in and read one more story, your child will demand it each time.
- Turn Imagination from Fear to Bravery - For example, let your child's favorite stuffed animal have super powers to protect against monsters or let your child use "monster spray" before bed.
- Bedtime Pass - Once you say goodnight, your child can have 2 "passes" (e.g., penny, pom pom, slip of paper with a drawing on it) to cash in for one last request (hug, drink of water, etc.). When the passes are used, that is it for the night. Some kids do well with a small reward in the morning for any passes not used. If your child comes out after they run out of passes, quietly walk them back to bed.

Check Out These Resources on Sleep!

- Johnson's bedtime app
- www.babysleep.com
- www.sleepfoundation.org
- www.healthychildren.org
- **Toddler 411: Clear Answers & Smart Advice for Your Toddler by Brown & Fields**
- **Sleeping Through the Night by Mindell**

Tips for Teens

- Use your bed only for sleep
- Remove electronics from your room
- Use an alarm clock instead of using your phone for an alarm
- Decrease or eliminate caffeine
- Keep your bedroom dark at night and bright during the day

References:
Sleep for Young Children by Mindell
Toddler 411 by Fields and Brown
www.babysleep.com