

## Bedtime Basics

A good night sleep is an important part of physical and mental health. Children especially need a good night's rest for their developing minds and growing bodies. But often bedtime can be a struggle for children and their parents. Here are some basic tips to help make the transition a little bit easier.

### Routine-

An important part of bedtime is routine. Try to make bedtime a set time with set activities. Give your child a heads up that bedtime is coming in a half an hour and then again in ten minutes. Have your child go to the bathroom and brush their teeth. Other calming ideas are evening baths and story time. Often a child wants personal time with their parent, away from other siblings. This is a perfect time for this!

It is also important for the child to stay in a room without the distraction of TV or video games. To help them wind down for the night, these devices should be turned off 30 minutes before bedtime.

### Staying in Bed-

Sometimes getting to bed is not the issue. It is staying in bed! Often the child wants to use the bathroom, eat a snack or claim they aren't tired. Be consistent! If a bedroom routine has been followed all needs should be met. You may want to talk with the child about his/her feelings. Is there something that is scaring them or keeping them awake? Reassure the child of safety. Children like monster and night light checks! If your child does protest bedtime, leave the room and check on them in a few minutes. If

they continue to protest, wait a little bit longer each time you check on them. Remind your child that it is time to go to sleep and you will check on them again when they are quiet. Always praise your child the next morning for staying in bed. There isn't a specific set of rules for producing a good sleeper. Providing a consistent routine from early on will help encourage healthy sleeping habits for years to come.

Happy zzzzzzz's

Health Services

Reference- [http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/sleep/bedtime\\_basics.html](http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/sleep/bedtime_basics.html)