Sharing a Sleep Space

• The process of getting your child to sleep alone can be hard. There are two ways to help your child fall asleep in their own room. For additional information on these processes see:
  • Graduated Extinction
  • Parental Fading

Simple Tricks for Sharing a Room

• Make sure each child has their own dedicated sleep space and stay consistent
• Try different bedtimes, which allow for special one on one time and prevents sibling playtime
• Try a room divider—a curtain or panel to divide the room, giving each child their own space
• Siblings waking each other up? Try a signal clock that lights up when it is ok to wake up their sibling or leave the room in the morning
• Get ready outside of the bedroom—Start the bedtime routine or prepare outside the bedroom. Such as putting on PJs, reading a bedtime story, etc

Sleeping in Different Locations

• A child’s bedtime routine, bedtime, and wake time should remain the same no matter where they sleep
• Transitional objects can help your child fall asleep like a stuffed animal or blanket
• A child should fall asleep in their own space, not moved to their bed after they fall asleep
• Sleep space should be kept different from awake and play space

Noise and Sleep

• Noises, even at low volumes can cause sleep problems in children

Quick tips

• Calming music at a low volume, preferably without words is ok, as long as it is a consistent part of your child’s bedtime routine
• Once you child has fallen asleep it is best to turn the music off
• Keep windows closed. Outside noises are unpredictable and beyond your control
• If your child is sharing a room with a noisy sleeper you can try a sleep divider, fan, or white noise machine
• The white noise machine should not be right next to the bed and the volume should be low enough to be heard “like standing outside the bathroom when someone is taking a shower”

Bedtime Routine

Having a consistent bedtime routine helps the body know when it is time to sleep

Some strategies include:

• 2 hours before bedtime turn off all electronics
• Engage your child in calming activities such as reading books, drawing, yoga, or a bath
• Help your child brush and floss their teeth
• Read a book, or two
• Get to bed at a regular time each night

Quick tips

• Don’t wait for your child to start rubbing their eyes or yawning bedtime
• If you are having difficulty getting your child to bed, try 15-20 minutes earlier
• Your young child will need help brushing their teeth to make sure they do a good job

Highlights

• Electronics before bed wake up the brain and make it hard to wind down for the night
• Violent, noisy or scary content can also alert the brain and make sleep difficult
• Children sleep best in a space that is consistent, comfortable, quiet, and free of clutter with an ideal temperature between 60-67 F
Compliments of:

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Additional resources for childhood sleep issues:
- nationalsleepfoundation.org
- sleepforkids.org
- healthychildren.org

AAP Program “Brush, Book, Bed” is available at:
- http://www.seattlechildrens.org/clinics-programs/sleep-disorders/resources/

Quick tips
- At least two hours before bedtime, turn off electronics and read stories or perform calming activities such as yoga or drawing.
- Model good electronic use at night.
- Move all electronics out of your child’s bedrooms and into shared spaces including TVs, phones, tablets, and computers.

Why is Your Child Not Sleeping?

Did you know—poor sleep can affect: concentration, behavior, school performance, health, risk for chronic diseases, and your child's overall mood?

This handout was designed to help address some common issues parents encounter regarding their child’s sleep environment.

Electronics, Light, Sound, and Sleep

One of the biggest sleep challenges parents face revolves around electronics.

- Most electronics and lights affect your child’s internal sleep clock and their ability to sleep well.
- Electronics within 2 hours of bedtime wakes the brain and prevents children from falling asleep.
- When a child falls asleep with electronics in the room, they can become dependent upon them and need them to sleep or fall back asleep.
- When electronic devices are in the room, the child is in control of what they are viewing.
- AAP recommendations that children watch no more than 2 hours of electronic media screens a day.

Additional information on each of the topics covered is available from your provider upon request.