

Some Tips for Sweet Zzzzs...



At 3 - 5 years of age, children typically sleep between 11 and 13 hours each night. Most still need an afternoon nap, though this usually ends by age 5.

During these years of development, young children will commonly experience nighttime fears and nightmares as their imaginations continue to develop. Sleepwalking and sleep terrors can sometimes occur and are normal.

A consistent nighttime routine that includes the child sleeping in the same environment each night can help to establish and continue healthy sleep practices.

Sleeping in a room that is cool and dark and that does not have a TV or other electronics is recommended. Research has shown that the light from electronic devices such as TVs, computers, and tablets/smartphones interferes with the brain's ability to prepare for sleep, and should be avoided within 90 minutes before bedtime.

A regular bedtime routine will help children to wind down and prepare for sleep. Children thrive on knowing what to expect, so a bedtime or nap time routine helps a child to relax and be ready for sleep.

The National Sleep Foundation recommends the following for a typical bedtime routine:

1. Have a light snack.
2. Take a bath.
3. Put on pajamas.
4. Brush teeth.
5. Read a story.
6. Make sure the room is quiet and at a comfortable temperature.
7. Put your child to bed.
8. Say goodnight and leave.

Reading a bedtime story is one of the very best ways to help your child unwind and get ready for sleep. Children of all ages benefit not only from the literacy development that reading out loud to a child promotes, but also the closeness and family bonding that comes from sharing a good book.