



Establishing a Bedtime Routine

Preschoolers need to sleep about 10 to 12 hours during each 24-hour period. , but there's no need to be rigid about which 10 to 12 hours these are. It does not have to be consecutive, although some children's bodies do work this way. Naps are a great way to break it up and recharge during the day. The most important thing is to help kids develop good habits for getting to sleep.

A bedtime routine is a great way to ensure that your preschooler gets enough sleep.

Here are a few things to keep in mind when establishing that routine:

- Keep consistent playtimes and mealtimes.
- Set fixed times for going to bed, waking up, and taking naps.
- Avoid stimulants, such as caffeine.
- Limit food and drink before evening bedtime.
- Include a winding-down period during the half hour before bedtime. This is a great time to read a book to your child.
- Stick to a bedtime, alerting your child both half an hour and 10 minutes beforehand. Make the bedroom quiet, cozy, and conducive to sleeping.
- Use the bed only for sleeping — not for playing or watching TV.
- Allow your child to choose which pajamas to wear, which stuffed animal to take to bed, etc.
- Consider playing soft, soothing music, and avoid having them fall asleep to the TV.
- Tuck your child into bed snugly for a feeling of security.