

Better Bedtime

Better Bedtime is a full-service sleep consultancy based in Waterloo Region. Our team offers one-on-one sleep advice for infants and children and self-led sleep programs for busy families. As a member of the Association of Professional Sleep Consultants, adhering to best-practices and keeping abreast on current research is of utmost importance. We offer a developmentally-appropriate approach with proven results. What does this mean? We will not ask you to ignore your baby all night. We can include night feedings for your baby and will work at a pace you are comfortable with. Together we will teach your child to develop the skills to become a healthy, independent sleeper -- a gift they will carry with them as they grow.

Sleep Foundations

1. How does your child fall asleep? If they rely on an external strategy (soother, eating, movement, etc.), you may find yourself closely connected with how they get back to sleep.
 - Try laying baby down awake in their sleeping area – stay close by or walk away for a moment to see if they’ll settle into sleep
2. Consistency
 - We want baby to understand that every time they go to this particular place, it’s for sleeping. Have them in their crib/bassinet for sleep most of the time, if possible.
 - This sends a clear message to baby on what is expected
3. Early bedtime (between 6:00-8:00pm, depending on last nap)
 - a. *“A child wears his fatigue like a suit of itchy, ill-fitting clothing. Putting him to bed with authority and affection may be likened to helping him out of the unbearably uncomfortable outfit and into a pair of well-worn pajamas.”* – Inda Schaenen
 - b. Early bedtimes are best to ensure that children do not become overtired. When a person is overtired, it becomes more difficult to settle down and fall asleep. When sleep does come, it’s often more restless with tossing and turning and more night time waking.
 - c. Bedtimes do not have to be set in stone. You can always move bedtime up a little bit if your child seems tired and cranky. Just try not to make it too much later.



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4. Routines

- a. Bedtime routine is something you can start at a very early age. It's a good habit to get into and is an excellent cue to the body and mind that it's time to settle down and get ready for sleep
- b. Routines should be 20-40 minutes and be in the **same order** every night.
- c. Example of routine
 - i. 6:30 – bath
 - ii. 6:40 – pajamas, feeding
 - iii. 6:50 – Story, song
 - iv. 7:00 – in bed awake

5. Prioritize naps - It's okay if all naps are not at home, but try for one per day at home

- a. A short nap routine can help cue your baby it's time to nap. For example:
 - i. Pajamas, story and song
- b. Avoid skipping naps, as better daytime sleep makes better nighttime sleep
- c. Busy schedule with lots of activities?
 - i. Arrange calendar to put naps as a priority, if possible. Otherwise, embrace that some naps will happen on-the-go.

6. Night feedings - If you suspect your baby is hungry in the night, feed them

- a. Change diaper first. This helps wake baby up to take a fuller feeding. It also keeps them more comfortable throughout the night.
- b. Keep feedings low key and quiet.
 - i. Keep it boring and avoid electronics.



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