

Creating good sleep habits for your child

bostonchildrens.org/sleep | 781-216-2570

Lack of sleep can affect your child's health and well-being, so creating healthy sleep habits is important for the entire family. Below are guidelines for getting a good night's sleep.

Sleep tips for families of young children

- **Keep your child on a regular schedule** (bedtime, nap times and mealtimes) starting at age 3 months. With a consistent routine, most babies are able to sleep through the night by 6 months.
- **Always place your baby on his or her back for sleep.** Once he or she can roll over independently, you can let your baby position himself or herself.
- **Stop overnight feedings by 6 months of age.** Do not put your child to sleep with a bottle. This can cause ear and teeth problems. Also, if your child depends on a bottle or pacifier for sleep it can increase nighttime wakings.
- **Follow a regular bedtime routine** with dim lights and calm activities (books, songs, etc.) for 10 to 20 minutes. End by putting your child down in the crib or bed.
- **Consider offering your child a favorite toy**, such as a teddy bear or doll, starting at about 1 year of age. This can provide comfort and help the transition to bed. Let your child pick his or her own bedtime transition toy as long as it is safe to sleep with.
- **Have a "screen-free" bedroom.** Don't let your child fall asleep watching TV because it interferes with a good night's sleep.

Sleep tips for families of teenage children

- **Use the bed only for sleep.** Avoid doing homework, playing computer games or texting in bed. The bedroom should be a quiet place that promotes relaxation.
- **Encourage your teenager to go to sleep and to wake at regular times.** Sleeping late on weekends can make it hard to fall asleep at night and very hard to wake up for school.
- **Encourage your teenager to get daily exercise**, but avoid very hard exercise a few hours before bedtime.
- **Avoid heavy meals a few hours before bedtime.**
- **Turn off electronic devices and consider keeping them out of your teen's bedroom.** Your teen will have much better sleep if the cell phone, TV and other devices are off until morning.

About The Sleep Center

The Sleep Center sees children of all ages with a variety of sleep problems at clinics in Boston, Waltham, Lexington, North Dartmouth, and Peabody. The Sleep Center was established in 1978 as the world's first comprehensive center dedicated to the management of sleep disorders in children, from newborns to adolescents.



Amounts of sleep needed by age

| AGE | TOTAL HOURS OF SLEEP (TYPICAL) | NIGHTTIME HOURS OF SLEEP | DAYTIME HOURS OF SLEEP |
|-------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 0-3 months | 14-17 | varies | varies |
| 4-11 months | 12-15 | 11-13 | 2-4 |
| 1-2 years | 11-14 | 11-12 | 1½-2 |
| 3-5 years | 10-13 | 10-11 | 1 |
| 6-13 years | 9-11 | 9-11 | 0 |
| 14-17 years | 8-10 | 8-10 | 0 |

These amounts are guidelines. The amount of sleep children need varies with age and varies between children.

To make an appointment at any Sleep Center location, please contact us:

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Hours: Mon.-Fri., 8 am-5 pm