

Catching some "ZZZZ's"

What do you do if you cannot get your child to sleep?

By Jamie Benjamin, PTA



What do you do if you cannot get your child to sleep? What if you put him to bed and he pops back out? What about not being able to drag her out of bed for school?

Sleep is an important part of our health system. The sleep cycle is when we produce our hormones to help us function during the next day or to get over being sick.

If you listen to what your child wants when they wake you up, these are clues for what their bodies need.

If kids are having a hard time getting to sleep maybe they are not doing enough during the day to make their bodies tired. They could be in stress mode and can not lower their body temperature. It is possible they have eaten stimulant foods or the stress of family problems or school. Or maybe, it is not dark enough.



If your child just will not get out of bed in the morning they could be going to bed too late; their sleep may have been compromised with quality or the amount; or foods loaded with sugar cause a rollercoaster of a burst of energy then fatigue.

One way to assist your child with sleeping is preparing them.

- They need lots of sunshine and exercise during the day. Have them lift soup cans or weighted balls for heavy work.
- As a parent, be aware of environmental stressors at home or at school.
- You want to make sure the room is dark with curtains and no nightlight, if possible.
- The body cools down when preparing to sleep, so keep it cool in the room.
- Their room needs to be for sleeping, so keep toys minimal.

You need to develop a routine with your child.

- They need a consistent and appropriate bedtime for their age.
- They should not watch TV or computer after dinner as these are stimulants.
- Thirty minutes before bedtime, you can give them a warm bath to relax kids and this helps to lower their body temperature.
- Read a book with them, then lights out!



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