

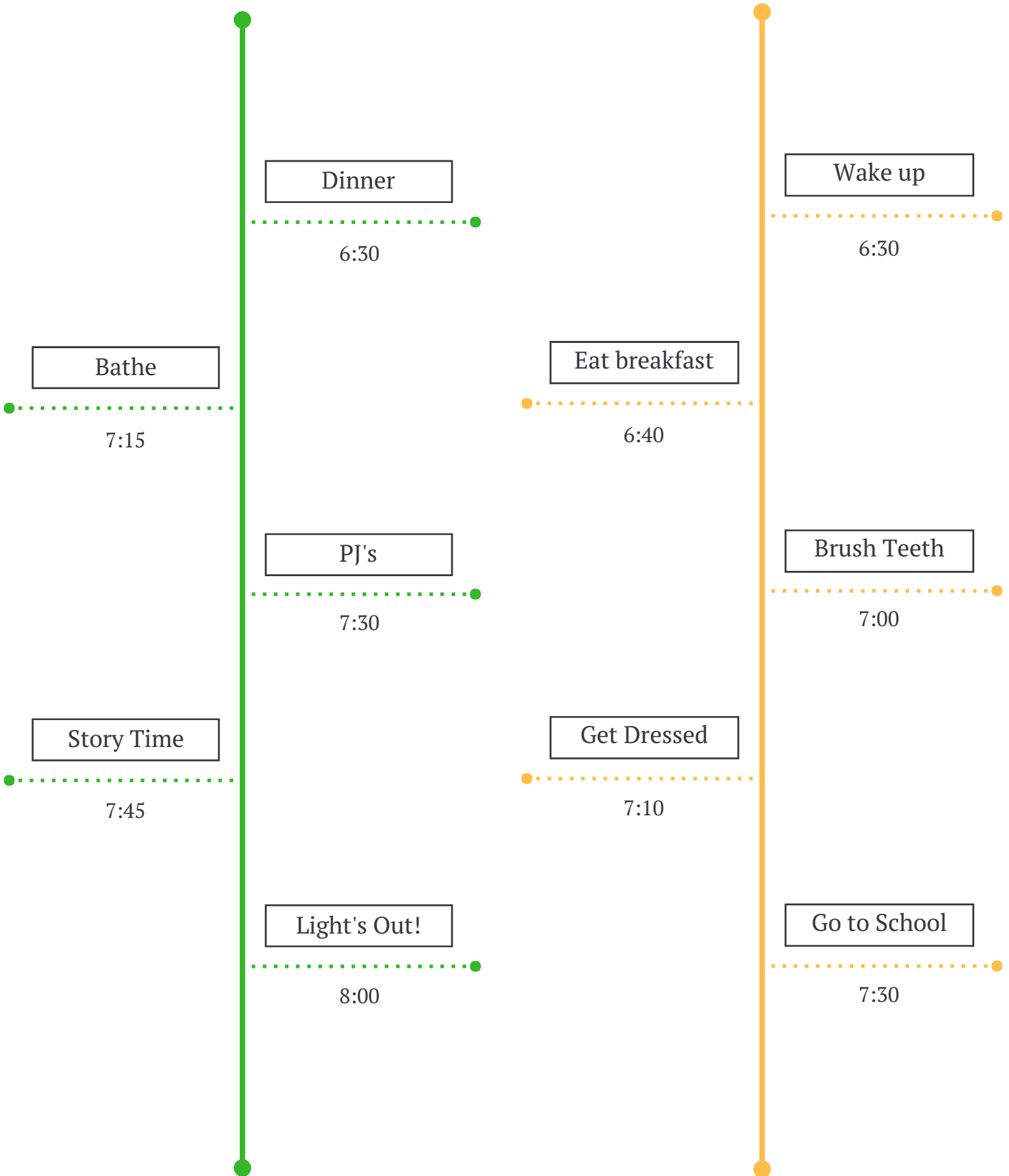
Sleep hygiene for kids



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TO HELP OUR KIDS GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

Schedule Ideas





Moms know that bedtime can be troublesome for children (and their parents) so encouraging our kids to relax and get a good night's sleep is one of our top priorities. Listening while they through issues that worry children can help them to let go of some of those stressors.

Parents know that their children aren't sleeping well at times but are not sure why. Even young children can fret about some things such as being separated from parents, being alone in general, getting along with siblings, irrational fears, friendships and issues at school.

All these things are a normal part of childhood development, but it can also wreak havoc on their sleep hygiene! When our kids don't sleep, we usually miss out on shut-eye as well! As we all know, sleep is a critical part of the process of development in children.

One study showed an association between sleep problems including insufficient sleep and compromised neurobehavioral functioning or other behavioral characteristics including mood and emotion regulation. Sleep is without a doubt a critical part of development for children.

Toddlers who miss sleep are more likely to display behavior problems such as tantrums, aggressive behavior, and hyperactivity.

With this information, you can feel comfortable knowing that you are doing the right thing when you establish good sleep hygiene habits for your children.

MOST MOMS WHO AREN'T GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP INDICATE THE LACK OF SLEEP IS DUE TO THEIR CHILD'S POOR SLEEP HABITS



Even when they insist they are not tired, keep in mind that an early bedtime is essential for their development. According to research an early bedtime, say between 7-8 p.m. works best for babies and youngsters through school age.

You may be wondering how much sleep children need. Just how much is contingent on the age of your child. The standard recommendations from experts seem to be pretty consistent.



HOW LONG SHOULD MY CHILD SLEEP?

Birth through about two years: 12-18 hours. A newborn is more likely to sleep and wake throughout the day because they haven't yet established sleep cycles. Sleep patterns will be established as baby nears toddlerhood.

Toddlers: 11-14 hours. Toddlers approaching midway to their second birthday will most likely drop down to one nap per day, generally lasting from 1-3 hours. Therefore they will need to increase the hours they sleep at night.

3-5 years: up to 12 hours. At this age, sleep challenges arise as children are actively using their imagination and often start having bad dreams

5-12: about 11 hours. Adequate sleep is still necessary at this age even though interests are increasing which creates a temptation to stay awake past their bedtime.

Teenagers: up to 10 hours. Essential typically need around 10 hours sleep a night. It is important for young adults, however, to maintain good sleep hygiene by logging no less than eight hours per night.





It is preferable to schedule children's naps earlier in the day as opposed to later in the afternoon. Offering a long afternoon nap can be detrimental to your bedtime routine, as many a young mom has discovered!

While many adults rarely can obtain the much-needed eight hours of sleep it may seem like we are expecting too many hours of slumber for our children. However, sleep is crucial for their development.

Not only does inadequate sleep affect a child's energy levels the following day but also the development of their brains. Sleep helps maintain the brain. Lack of sleep has been shown to contribute to attention problems, learning disorders, depression, anxiety, obesity, and lack of good judgment.

Our body needs sleep for every system to function properly. Human growth hormone production is optimal in children who get an adequate amount of sleep. One question parents often ask is, how do I get my kid to sleep and to stay asleep?

A tried and true method for most young children is reading books! Children who are first establishing good sleep hygiene are also expanding their ever growing imaginations. So take advantage by reading to them at night. Not only is it relaxing for them it is also a way to get quality time in with your child and create memories that will last a lifetime. Not to mention, it's educational!

Kids thrive on routine. One of the best ways to eliminate bedtime struggles is to stick to a bedtime. Tucking your children in at the same hour, after the same routine, night after night is good sleep hygiene and will create healthy habits that last well into adulthood.

Another important aspect of good sleep hygiene for kids is to keep their bedroom dark and quiet. If your child is disturbed by noises from outside that scare or keeps them awake, utilization of a white noise machine can be helpful. It is most advisable to keep televisions and all electronics out of children's bedrooms.



Most parents tend to worry that kids will be too cold at night. However, it is best not to allow the bedroom to get too warm either. Room temperature of about 65 to 68 degrees Fahrenheit is the best for sleeping. Dress your child in a single layer of long pants and long sleeves. It might feel a bit cool, but studies have proven that a lower temperature is safe and may help them sleep better. While it is tempting to keep the room warm doing so increases the risk of SIDS among young infants.

If necessary, put a room thermometer in the bedrooms to make sure that you can keep it at the optimal temperature. Knowing for sure what the temperature will keep you from worrying all night. If your child's hands and feet look discolored, this is an indication that your baby is too cold.

Using a fan can decrease the risk of your baby contracting SIDS by 72% according to a study by California-based healthcare providers Kaiser Permanente.

Bedtime stories are essential for the development of children and can help them get a good night's sleep. When you read bedtime stories, you are giving your child something to dream about while also inviting them to expand the horizons of their imaginations.

Storytelling has been around as long as humans. Sitting down with your child to read a story or tell them a story of your own will develop their emotional understanding. Reading bedtime stories is just one element of a good bedtime routine.

Instilling the love of stories in your child will broaden their reading selections later in life, and thus their knowledge will grow. However, education is not the only benefit. Bonding happens while reading a good bedtime story. Reading to your child each night gives you quality down time together.

As you take note of the types of stories and books your child likes to hear you will gain a better understanding of your child. Discovering what they are passionate about is a bonus when it comes to reading bedtime stories.



GOOD SLEEP HYGIENE CHECKLIST FOR KIDS

1. Children should follow a predictable bedtime routine that includes going to bed and waking at the same time each day, including the weekends.
2. Activities leading up to bedtime should be calm and quiet. Children need to wind down and relax so they can get ready to sleep. Showers and baths can help children to relax.
3. Try to put your child to bed when they start to get drowsy rather than waiting until they have fallen asleep.
4. Create a room that is cozy and that your child will feel comfortable in alone.
5. Beds are for sleeping; try to help your child avoid doing homework, playing, or just hanging out on the bed.
6. The temperature of children's rooms should be on the cool side. Generally between 60-68 degrees Fahrenheit.
7. Children who exercise or play outside tend to fall asleep more easily than sedentary children.
8. A security blanket or favorite snuggle buddy plush or doll can be just what your child needs to fall asleep alone.
9. Bedtime stories are beneficial for helping children to become drowsy or fall asleep and can also serve as an excellent bonding time for parent and child.

AVOID before bedtime

1. Caffeine from sodas and chocolate.
2. Use electronics including television and video games.
3. Difficult conversations about grades, misbehaviors, or other stressful issues.
4. Naps