

Principles of Sleep Hygiene in Children

1. Have a set bedtime and bedtime routine for your child.
2. Bedtime and wake-up time should be about the same time on school nights and non-school nights. There should not be more than about an hour difference from one day to another
3. Make the hour before bed shared quiet time. Avoid high- energy activities, such as rough play, and stimulating activities, such as watching television or playing computer games, just before bed.
4. Don't send your child to bed hungry. A light snack (such as milk and cookies) before bed is a good idea. Heavy meals within an hour or two of bedtime, however, may interfere with sleep.
5. Avoid products containing caffeine for at least several hours before bedtime. These include caffeinated sodas, coffee, tea, and chocolate.
6. Make sure your child spends time outside everyday whenever possible and is involved in regular exercise.
7. Keep your child's bedroom quiet and dark, a low level night light is acceptable for children who find completely dark rooms frightening.
8. Keep your child's bedroom at a comfortable temperature during the night (about 75°F)
9. Don't use your child's bedroom for time-out or punishment.
10. Keep the television set out of your child's bedroom. Children can easily develop the bad habit of "needing" the television to fall asleep. It's also much more difficult to control your child's viewing if the set is in the bedroom.