



Early Intervention Clearinghouse

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Healthy Sleep Key to First Few Years

By Rebecca Swartz

You give your toddler a kiss, tuck her in her little bed, and then she cries, “No! No night night! Don’t go!” You hand her a favorite toy bunny, tell her you will be around the corner, and close the door. You hear tiny feet shuffling down the hallway just as you enter the kitchen to finish the dinner dishes. Your toddler is out of bed. You walk her back to her bed. You tuck her in and close the door. She returns a few minutes later. You let out a big sigh and walk her down the hall again.

Tonight’s game of bedtime ping-pong is going strong. Your child is the ball and she’s bouncing between her bed and the kitchen. You are frustrated and tired. You start to wonder whether the bedtime fight is worth your energy. Where is the coach with a pep talk that can keep you motivated in this tough moment so you can help your child sleep? Here are a few reasons to keep trying to win the bedtime game:

Healthy sleep promotes brain development. The brains of infants and toddlers are growing during sleep times. The brain grows rapidly during this time of life. Sleep times during the first three years of life are especially important for healthy brain development.

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SLEEP

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Healthy sleep promotes self-regulation. Self-regulation refers to how the brain and body work together to control emotions, attention, and thoughts. Self-regulation is the foundation of early childhood development. A well-rested child has an easier time coping with big emotions and transitions through the day. Proper rest helps children sustain attention during play. Well-rested children have an easier time learning and exploring new things because of their increased ability to self-regulate.

Healthy sleep is important for physical health. New research indicates proper rest is connected to healthy growth patterns. A well-rested child is better able to fight off illness, maintain a healthy body weight, and have better overall physical health. Certain hormones that help with the repair and growth of cells are only released during deep sleep. Research also indicates that the whole family's health is improved when parents and other adults who live with young children get healthy sleep.

Mindfulness, or being aware of our own feelings in the moment, can be an important way to manage stress. Bedtime battles are stressful for caregivers during all stages of early development.

Challenges can begin from the newborn days with a fussy baby who is difficult to soothe, into the infant stage when your baby stands in the crib crying, and continue to the toddler times when your child keeps leaving his bed for one more kiss or hug.

If your child was in the neonatal intensive care unit or has had health issues that interfere with sleep such as sleep apnea, you may find yourself continuing to worry about your child's health during sleep. Your child senses your stress level, and this can make it hard for a child to calm down. This is because young children and their caregivers are connected through emotions.

As a caregiver, try taking a few deep breaths and saying to yourself or your child, "I'm helping you with sleep so your brain and body can grow." Imagine warm

Bedtime Books for Young Children

Borrow these books from the EI Clearinghouse or your local library.

The Full Moon at the Napping House

By Audrey Wood, 2015
Call # PZ 7 .W846Ful 2015

Where Do Diggers Sleep at Night

By Brianna Caplan Sayres, 2012
Call # PZ 8.3 .S274Whe 2011

A Book of Sleep

By Il Sung Na, 2009
Call # PZ 10.3 .N12Boo 2009

Naptime

By Elizabeth Verdick, 2008
Call # PZ 7 .V492 2008

Pajama Time!

By Sandra Boynton, 2000
Call # PZ 8.3 .B711p 2014

Goodnight Moon*

By Margaret Wise Brown, 1947
Call # PZ 7 .B8163 1992

The Going to Bed Book*

By Sandra Boynton, 1982
Call # PZ 8.3 .B711gi 1995

I Love You Too

By Ziggy Marley, 2015
Call # PZ 7 .M3754 2014

Steam Train, Dream Train*

By Sherri Duskey Rinker, 2013
Call # PZ 8.3 .R48123Ste 2013

Little Owl's Night

By Divya Srinivasan, 2011
Call # PZ 7 .S77414Li 2011



Sleepy Little Yoga

By Rebecca Whitford, 2007
Call # WB 890 .W5801 2007

Don't Let the Pigeon Stay Up Late!

By Mo Willems, 2006
Call # PZ 7 .W65535Don 2006

Available eBooks

Sleep Tight, Little Mouse

By Mary Morgan



Where Do Diggers Sleep at Night

By Brianna Caplan Sayres

The Bunnies Are Not in Their Beds

By Marisabina Russo

* Also available in Spanish

and cozy thoughts. Remember that your children's sleep space is a haven that allows them time to grow and develop.

This mindful self-talk can help you keep focused on your goal of helping your child sleep. Being calm in the moment can help you soothe your child. Talk with your child's health care providers or your EI providers to come up with a sleep plan that is workable for your family.

This issue's EI Note contains ideas for creating a healthy sleep space and routine for your child, and we hope you will find many ideas that will help your family have restful and restorative sleep so you will have energy to play and learn together.

Rebecca Swartz, Ph.D., is an early learning specialist with the Illinois Early Learning Project at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Establishing Healthy Sleep Habits

Healthy sleep habits can help a child feel safe and secure. A baby's sleep patterns are constantly changing as a result of his or her development.



	Birth to 12 months	12–24 months	24–36 months
What to expect	<p>Most newborns will fall asleep easily. They sleep 16–18 hours per day, but may only sleep 1–2 hours at a time. Their sleep pattern can be very unpredictable.</p> <p>By 3–4 months, babies may start sleeping through the night. Their sleep may appear restless, with a lot of movement, twitching, noises, smiling, and sucking. But don't worry—this is normal.</p>	<p>The need for sleep decreases during this time. Most toddlers need between 12 and 14 hours of sleep, including naptime.</p> <p>Children may begin asking you to read, and reread, a favorite book or books.</p> <p>By 12–18 months, many children begin to give up the morning nap and transition to a longer afternoon nap.</p>	<p>Toddlers need about 13–14 hours of sleep throughout a day, including a nap.</p> <p>A toddler may be ready for a bigger bed.</p> <p>Toddlers may try to delay bedtime by requesting drinks, asking for more hugs and kisses, or “just one more” book.</p>

How can you establish healthy sleep habits?

- Have a predictable sleep routine that might include a bath, feeding, diaper change, songs, and books. The nap routine will be shorter and less involved. This signals to your child that the time to sleep is approaching.
- Always put a baby down to sleep on his or her back on a firm surface with no pillows, comforters, crib bumpers or soft stuffed animals.
- Put your baby to bed drowsy, but awake. This helps her learn to fall asleep on her own.
- Wait a few minutes to see if he can go back to sleep if he wakes during the night. If not, check on him but leave the lights low. He may be hungry or wet.
- Consider using a dim night-light to help your child feel more secure.
- Create a quiet, dark, and not too warm sleep environment. Keep TVs, computers, and mobile devices out of children's rooms.
- Have a set bedtime and wake-up time—even on weekends.
- Adjust naps during the day to support your child's bedtime schedule.
- Avoid putting a child to bed with a bottle.

For more information on health sleep habits, see the Illinois Early Intervention Clearinghouse Web site at <http://eiclearinghouse.org>.

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Illinois Department of Human Services, Bureau of Early Intervention.



Resources for Establishing Healthy Sleep Habits

Books

Pediatric Sleep Problems: A Clinician's Guide to Behavioral Interventions. Lisa J. Meltzer. American Psychological Association, 2015. (Call # WM 188 .M496 2015)

This book presents behavioral interventions for common pediatric sleep problems. Step-by-step instructions show readers how to clinically assess and treat children from toddlers to teenagers, and case examples apply the instructions to real-life scenarios.

The Science of Mom: A Research-Based Guide to Your Baby's First Year. Alice Callahan. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015. (Call # WS 105 .C1304 2015)

In this friendly guide through the science of infancy, the author explains how nonscientist mothers can learn the difference between hype and evidence. *The Science of Mom* is a fascinating, eye-opening, and extremely informative exploration of the topics that generate discussion and debate in the media and among parents.



The Happiest Baby on the Block: The New Way to Calm Crying and Help Your Newborn Baby Sleep Longer. Harvey Karp. Penguin Random House, 2015. (eBook catalog link:

9780804179973)

This fully revised and updated book includes the latest insights into infant sleep, bedsharing, breastfeeding, swaddling, and SIDS risk.

Sleep Better! A Guide to Improving Sleep for Children with Special Needs. V. Mark Durand. Paul H. Brookes, 2013. (Call # WM 188 .D931 2014)

From bedtime tantrums to bedwetting, sleep problems can be one of the biggest sources of worry and frustration for parents of children with special needs. Help is here in this down-to-earth, nonjudgmental guide packed with widely tested, easy-to-use techniques that work for all children, with and without disabilities. (eBook catalog link: 9781598574661)



Happiest Baby Guide to Great Sleep: Simple Solutions for Kids from Birth to 5 Years. Harvey Karp. William Morrow, 2012. (Call # WM 188 .K1481 2012)

This book offers tips on how to help your newborn, infant, or toddler get the rest they need while also debunking some of the most widely held myths about babies and sleep.

Sleepless in America: Is Your Child Misbehaving or Missing Sleep? Mary Sheedy Kurcinka. HarperCollins, 2006. (Call # WM 188 .K96s 2006)

Based on the personal experience of parents as well as up-to-date scientific research, this book focuses on the topic of sleep deprivation and its solutions as a way to look at child behavior and development issues.

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4. Search for and check out your desired book.



That's it. For more detailed instructions and a downloadable instruction sheet, please visit the Illinois Early Intervention Clearinghouse Web site.

Mayo Clinic Guide to Your Baby's First Year. Da Capo Press, 2012. (Call # WS 105 .M4545 2012)

This book provides a guide to the first 12 months of life with a new baby, including information on feeding, immunizations, development, sleeping, and medical care.

Videos

The Happiest Baby on the Block. 64-minute DVD. Happiest Baby. 2012. (Call # WM 188 .K148dvd 2012)

The Happiest Baby reveals a stunning new discovery . . . the calming reflex. It's almost an "off switch" for crying that all babies are born with. Within just days you'll boost your baby's sleep one to three hours every night.

The Brain: Activity, Sleep and Boredom. 20-minute DVD. (Call # QP 376 .B73asb 2011)

Physical activity and quality sleep are both vital for healthy bodies. Studies suggest that doing "nothing," and even being bored, is actually very important to how we process the world around us and is key to creativity.

Web Resources

SIDS: Back to Sleep

<http://illinoisearlylearning.org/tipsheets/sids.htm>

Losing a baby to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is a tragedy that grieves parents, family members, friends, and others who care for the child. The good news is that all of those who provide care for an infant can help reduce the risk of SIDS. Also available in Spanish and Polish.

Director's Corner

Dear Families,

Did you know that each state sets its own rules for early intervention services? If you are planning to move to another state, be sure to discuss your move with your service coordinator. Find out what the requirements are for services in your next state by calling the state agency that provides early intervention. Ask if your child will be eligible and what you need to do to start services again. Be sure to ask for copies of your child's evaluation, Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), and service plan notes so that you can share this with your new providers.

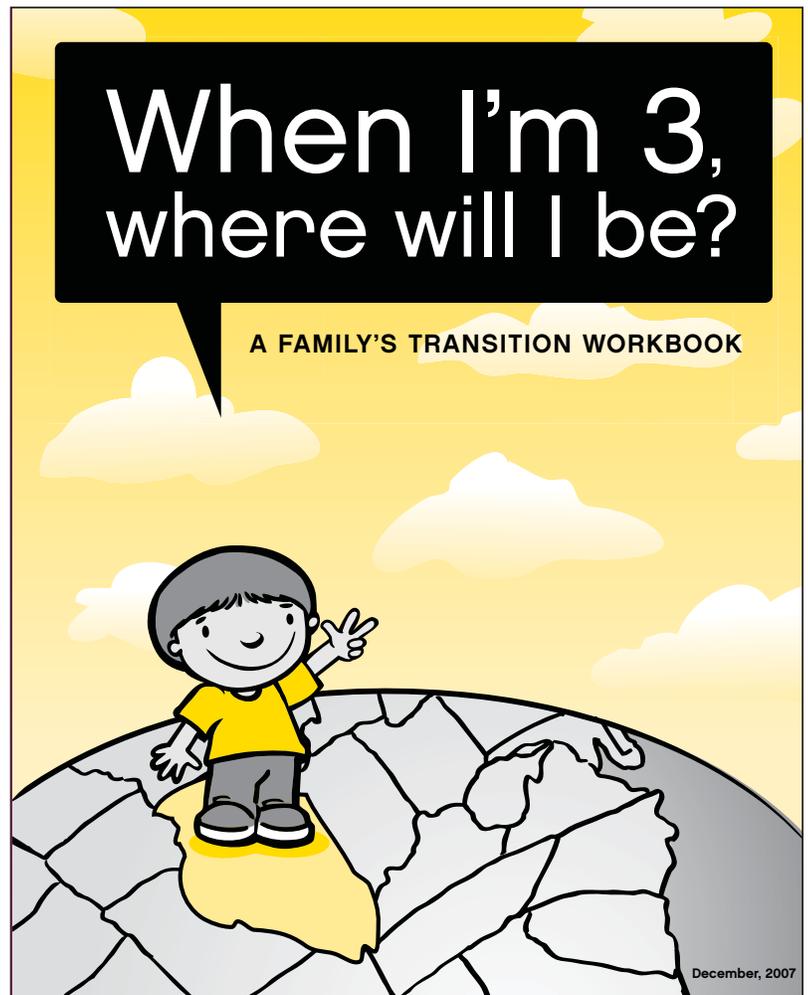
Early intervention services in all states end on your child's third birthday. If you plan to move when your child is 30 months or older, be sure to have a transition planning meeting with your Illinois EI team before you go. You can find out about the types of services likely to be available for children at age 3 and be ready to look for services in your new home. A helpful resource for you is *When I am Three, Where Will I Be?* Find it at our website under state of Illinois publications. It contains information that can help you plan whether you live in Illinois or move to another state.

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