



# Early Intervention Clearinghouse

<http://eiclearinghouse.org>

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## Healthy Sleep Helps All

Bedtime battles are stressful for caregivers during all stages of early development. Challenges with a child's sleep routine can begin in the newborn days with a fussy baby who is difficult to soothe. Challenges can continue into the infant stage when babies can pull to a stand to resist going to bed. Mobile and active toddlers may leave their beds for one more hug or one more drink of water.

Sleep routines can have additional challenges for families of young children with disabilities or developmental delays. Families may have worked through difficulties related to sleep apnea or other health concerns. They may need to use additional equipment to keep their child safe at night.

Exhausted parents and caregivers tire of fighting the bedtime battle. However, the rewards for persistently building a healthy sleep routine are worth the fight. Turn to your early intervention team for guidance and support to find a routine that works well for your family. As you work through each challenge, remember that each night of healthy sleep is a step toward physical, emotional, and cognitive well-being for your child and family. Healthy sleep can help you:

**Build a healthy body.** Proper rest is connected to healthy growth patterns. A well-rested child is better able to fight off illness, maintain a healthy body weight,

**Please see SLEEP, Page 2**

## As Your Child Grows, Sleep Habits Change

Here are the changes in sleep patterns you can expect as your child develops.

Birth to 12 months	12–24 months	24–36 months
<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>

## SLEEP

Continued from Page One

and have better overall physical health. Certain hormones that help with the repair and growth of cells are only released during deep sleep.

**Boost brain development.** The brains of infants and toddlers are growing and active during sleep. Sleep is when

the brains of young children are actively working through memories and cognitive processes and even solidifying the underlying brain processes for physical development.

**Support self-regulation.** *Self-regulation* refers to how the brain and body work together to control emotions, attention, and thoughts. A well-rested child has an easier time coping with big emotions and transitions throughout the

day. Proper rest helps children sustain attention when they are exploring new things and learning about their world through play.

**Improve overall family health.** Research also indicates that the whole family's health is improved when parents and other adults who live with young children get healthy sleep. Consider the needs of the whole family for rest when planning a sleep routine for young children.

## Bedtime Mindfulness Activities

After the lights are low and the books are put away, try using a guided meditation to help ease the transition to sleep. Bedtime meditations can be very helpful to calm down the nervous system and decrease a child's level of stress hormones. Tuck your child into bed and gently rub their back or simply stand nearby and use your voice to guide them into slumber. Try one of these guided mindfulness stories at your child's next bedtime:

### The Floaty Boat

For this exercise begin by encouraging your child to imagine him or herself wrapped in a warm blanket in the bottom of a little boat. You might want to place the boat near to the banks of a small river to add a sense of safety, perhaps put yourself in the boat, too. You can begin, “We are snuggled under



a fleecy blanket, in our little boat, under a starlit sky.” Bring different senses into play—the gentle bobbing sensation, a soft breeze, rustling leaves, the murmur of the water as it flows over rocks. Imitate watery sounds with words such as *hush* and *shush* as you gently drift downstream—and your child gently drifts off to sleep.

### Sleepy Cats (or Any Other Snuggly, Sleepy Animal)

Begin by quietly describing and imagining a cat, maybe a small, white sleepy kitten, or a big, silver tabby, using gentle words such as *soft* and *fluffy*, and give it a sleepy sounding name such as “Dreamy.” Then talk slowly about how comfortable Dreamy feels, how she purrs and stretches as she snoozes on the bed. Other cats may also climb onto the bed. Repeating words and phrases suggestive of sleep can be really effective at bedtime. It's a technique used to great effect by Swedish psychologist Carl-Johan Forssén Ehrlin in the bestselling book *The Rabbit Who Wants to Fall Asleep*.

Adapted from “7 Guided Meditations to Help Your Child Fall Asleep” at <https://www.mother.ly/amp/guided-meditations-to-help-your-child-sleep-2559472493>

# 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. Here are some ways you can create good 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.
- Have a set bedtime and wake-up time—even on weekends.
- 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.
- Adjust naps to support your child's bedtime schedule.
- Avoid putting a child to bed with a bottle.
- If sleep problems persist, contact your health care provider because there may be an underlying medical issue.

 For more information, visit the Illinois Early Intervention Clearinghouse at <https://eicclearinghouse.org>

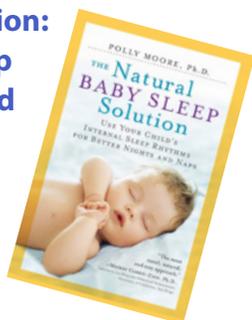
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# Resources for Establishing Healthy Sleep Habits

## The Natural Baby Sleep Solution: Use Your Child's Internal Sleep Rhythms for Better Nights and Naps

Polly Moore  
Workman, 2016  
WM 188 .M7811 2008

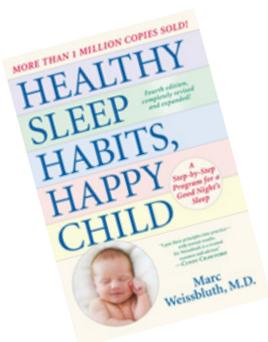


## Sleep Better! A Guide to Improving Sleep for Children with Special Needs

V. Mark Durand  
Paul H. Brookes, 2013  
WM 188 .D931 2014  
Also available as an **eBook**

## Healthy Sleep Habits, Happy Child: A Step-by-Step Program for a Good Night's Sleep

Mark Weissbluth  
Ballantine Books, 2015  
WM 188 .W432 2015

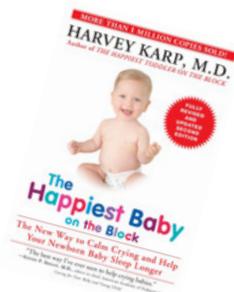


## Pediatric Sleep Problems: A Clinician's Guide to Behavioral Interventions

Lisa J. Meltzer  
American Psychological Association, 2015  
WM 188 .M496 2015

## 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  
WM 188 .K148 2015  
Also available as an **eBook**

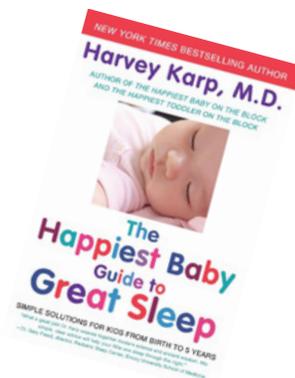


## Mayo Clinic Guide to Your Baby's First Year

Da Capo Press, 2012  
WS 105 .M4545 2012

## Happiest Baby Guide to Great Sleep: Simple Solutions for Kids from Birth to 5 Years

Harvey Karp  
William Morrow, 2012  
WM 188 .K1481 2012



## On Becoming Baby Wise: Giving Your Infant the Gift of Nighttime Sleep

Gary Ezzo  
Parent-Wise Solutions, 2019  
WM 188 .E993 2019



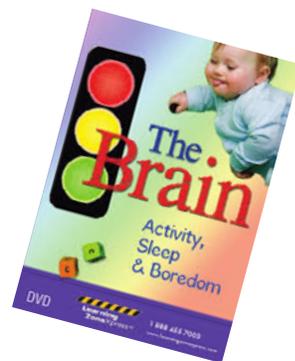
## Videos

### The Happiest Baby on the Block

64 minutes, DVD  
Happiest Baby, 2012  
WM 188 .K148dvd 2012

### The Brain: Activity, Sleep and Boredom

20 minutes, DVD  
Learning ZoneXpress, 2011  
QP 376 .B73asb 2011



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# State Updates When I'm 3, Where Will I Be?

Transitions happen all around us. As parents, bringing our child home from the hospital is the first of many enormous transitions we will encounter. Then there will be transitions into child care, into schools, and between different teachers. The formal transition from early intervention services begins when a child is 2½ years old.

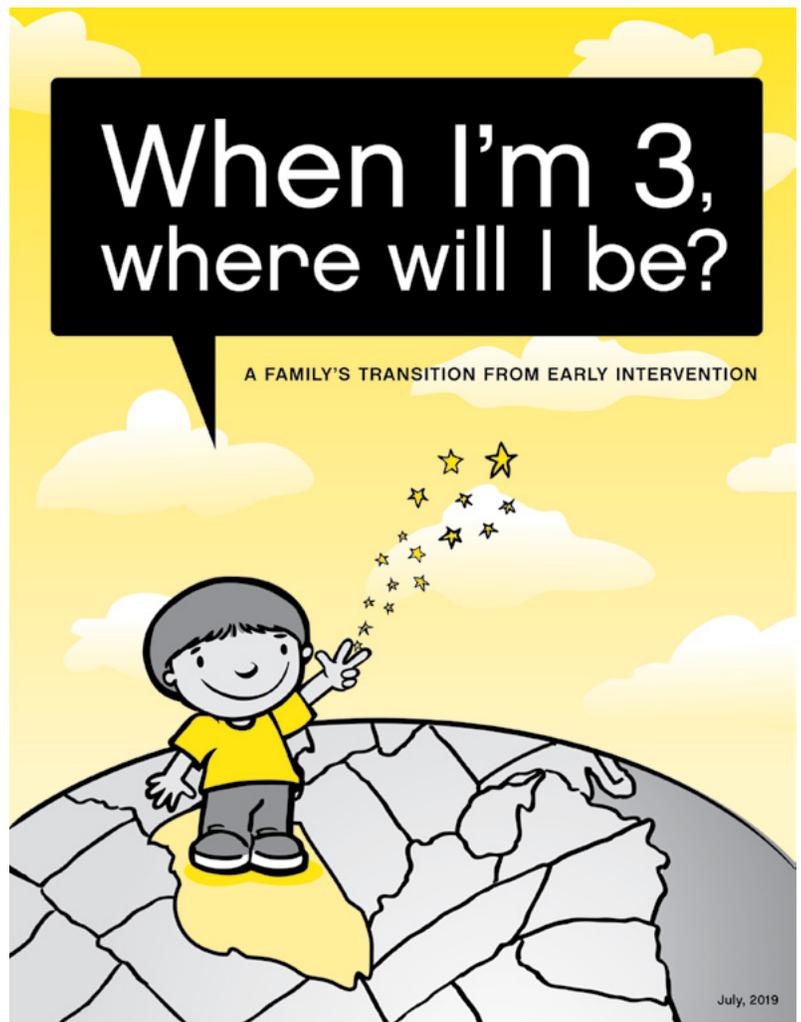
*When I'm 3, Where Will I Be?* is the transition workbook developed by parents and professionals in Illinois to provide information to families who are preparing for the transition out of early intervention services to possibly receiving services through their local school district.

This book addresses only one transition, but this particular one can be scary as young children and their families are moving from a “known” system into an “unknown” system.

This book describes the process, includes checklists to help throughout the process, outlines the transition timeline, and provides tips, strategies, and talking points for families to help with a more smooth transition.

This book can be accessed from the Illinois State Board of Education page at [https://www.childfind-idea-il.us/Materials/transition\\_workbook.pdf](https://www.childfind-idea-il.us/Materials/transition_workbook.pdf).

The book and accompanying resources can also be ordered for free from the Child Find page at <https://www.childfind-idea-il.us/Default.aspx>



## State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Update

As we head into the final year of our SSIP, we continue to focus on family engagement as a way to enhance families' capacity to meet the developmental needs of their infants and toddlers. Our pilot sites continue to improve their capacity to implement family-centered services through growing leadership team capacity and supporting local teams with training and support.

As more teams use coaching strategies that build on family strengths, we get closer to our vision of a system that truly supports families in their efforts to help their children develop and learn and leads to infants' and toddlers' improved acquisition and use of knowledge and skills.

While some of the activities in our plan have unfortunately been delayed, we will continue to move forward when it is safe to do so. Though we could not have anticipated the circumstances, the recent shift in service delivery has *required* interventionists to use coaching skills and support strategy use during families' daily routines. We are hopeful that these opportunities will help families continue to meet their outcomes while staying safe!

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