

5 SIMPLE IDEAS FOR BEDTIME ROUTINES

1 Say “good night” to screens as early as possible in the evening.

Avoid screens at least 30 minutes before bedtime. Screens interfere with the brain’s ability to settle down and go to sleep.

2 Do your bedtime routine in the same order each night.

Young children love knowing what to expect. It helps them feel safe and secure. Over time, having an order to your bedtime routine (bath, pajamas, brushing teeth, a bedtime story) signals to your child’s brain and body that it’s time to go to sleep.

3 Create a calming environment.

Turning off screens, quieting your house, and focusing your attention on bedtime (instead of your phone) helps your child to relax and prepare for rest.

4 Make sure part of your bedtime routine feels like a reward for your child.

Snuggles, a bedtime song, a favorite book to read aloud – these are some of the best gifts you can give your child at the end of the day. They will begin to look forward to this special time with you and you can be grateful for the cuddles.

5 Don’t build an entire routine at once.

Start with one new thing at a time. If you don’t have a consistent bedtime routine, just choose one new thing (like turning off screens earlier) at a time. Once you and your child have gotten used to this, add in another thing (like an earlier bedtime) the next week. Keep going until you have a successful routine that works for your family.

Did you know that most kindergartners need 10-12 hours of sleep daily? Early and consistent bedtimes can help make your child happier, healthier, and better prepared for school success!

Learn more at SCFirstSteps.org

