

## **Primary Bed Time routine**

It sometimes seems like children gain more energy as the day goes on, but often “hyper” or over-activity is a sign of fatigue and a warning to parents to help the child find calm and quiet time instead of more stimulation.

According to the National Sleep Foundation 3-6 year olds need between 11 and 13 hours of sleep each night, this includes the nap time. This may sound like a lot, but they are very busy growing physically and intellectually all day long, and if they are going to school and not napping, they are burning energy constantly. Preschoolers need the security that a structured bedtime routine provides and if the routine is followed consistently, bedtime will become nearly effortless and a time when you can enjoy a sweet and peaceful connection with your child.

A typical bedtime for preschoolers is between 7-9 pm with a wake up time of between 6-8 am. Obviously, you will need to consider your family’s schedule when determining your child’s bedtime, but try to choose a time that you can stick to give or take a few minutes each night.

3-6 year olds are naturally charming and have a way of talking us out of our intended routines, but they truly thrive on structure and will quickly begin to enjoy your bedtime rituals. If you develop a routine and stick with it for at least 7 to 10 days, you’ll notice that your child begins to look forward to this time with you and that struggles for “one more story” or “just one sip of water” will lessen naturally.

A bedtime routine need not take more than 30 minutes and your child can complete some of the tasks independently.

### **A suggested routine:**

7:00 pm Pajamas, Bathroom, Brush Teeth

7:15 pm Quiet time; stories or books (establish the number of stories or books that you’ll read at bedtime and stick with that number)

7:30 pm Tuck in, Kiss Goodnight, Lights Out

The best way to assure that your child gets a good night sleep is to do yourselves the favor of developing a structured bedtime routine and sticking with it no matter what!