

SLEEP TIPS FOR CHILDREN

The following recommendations will help your child get the best sleep possible and make it easier for him or her to fall asleep and stay asleep.

- **Sleep schedule.** Your child's bedtime and wake-up time should be the same time every day.
- **Bedtime routine 2 hours before sleep time.** Your child should have a routine that is the same every night. Make the 2 hours before bedtime a quiet or wind-down time. Relaxing, calm, enjoyable activities, such as reading a book or listening to soothing music, help your body and mind slow down enough to let you sleep. Do not watch TV, use a computer or play video games (these items should be removed from the bedroom). Do not study, exercise, or get involved in "energizing" activities in the 2 hours before bedtime.
- **Bedroom.** Your child's bedroom should be comfortable, quiet, and dark. Your child will sleep better in a room that is cool (less than 75°F). Also, avoid using your child's bedroom for time out or other punishment. You want your child to think of the bedroom as a good place, not a bad one.
- **Snack.** Your child should not go 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.
- **Caffeine.** Your child should avoid caffeine afternoon. Caffeine can be found in many types of soda, coffee, iced tea, chocolate and energy drinks.
- **Naps.** Naps should be geared to your child's age and developmental needs. Long naps or too many naps should be avoided; too much daytime sleep can result in your child sleeping less at night.
- **Exercise.** Your child should spend time outside every day for routine exercise. Avoid strenuous exercise in the 2 hours prior to bedtime.