



Tips for Families
☎ 877-SC-YAPPY (877-729-2779)

Tips to help kids maintain a consistent sleep/wake cycle during the holidays

- **Stick to a Schedule** - Encourage your child to go to bed and wake up at the same times every day, even on weekends and during school breaks. Consistency is key in regulating their internal body clock.
- **Gradual Adjustments** - If your child's schedule needs to change during the holidays (e.g., due to family events or vacations), try to make adjustments gradually. Shift bedtime and wake-up time by 15-30 minutes each day until you reach the desired schedule.
- **Limit Screen Time** - Avoid screens (phones, tablets, computers, and TVs) at least an hour before bedtime. The blue light emitted from screens can interfere with the production of melatonin, a hormone that regulates sleep.
- **Create a Relaxing Bedtime Routine** - Establish a calming bedtime routine to signal to your child's body that it's time to wind down. This could include reading a book, taking a warm bath, or practicing relaxation techniques like deep breathing.
- **Control the Sleep Environment** - Make sure the bedroom is conducive to sleep. Ensure the room is dark, quiet, and at a comfortable temperature. Consider using blackout curtains if necessary.
- **Healthy Diet** - Encourage a balanced diet and avoid heavy meals close to bedtime. Caffeine and sugary snacks should be limited, especially in the hours leading up to sleep.
- **Regular Physical Activity** - Promote regular exercise during the day, as it can help improve sleep quality. However, avoid vigorous exercise close to bedtime, as it can be stimulating.
- **Limit Naps** - While napping can be beneficial, excessive, or late-day naps can disrupt nighttime sleep. If your child needs a nap, keep it short (20-30 minutes) and earlier in the day.
- **Manage Stress** - Teach your child stress-reduction techniques, such as mindfulness or progressive muscle relaxation, to help them manage any anxiety or worries that might affect their sleep.
- **Lead by Example** - Show your child the importance of a consistent sleep schedule by following one yourself. Parents who prioritize their own sleep can set a positive example.
- **Communicate** - Talk to your child about the importance of sleep and how it affects their mood, energy levels, and overall well-being. Help them understand why it's essential to maintain a regular sleep/wake cycle.
- **Be Patient** - It may take some time for your child to adjust to a new sleep schedule or get back on track after a holiday break. Be patient and persistent in enforcing the routine.

Remember that good sleep habits are essential for physical and mental health, so it's worth the effort to help your child establish and maintain a consistent sleep/wake cycle, even during holidays and breaks from school.