

Tips for a Regular Sleep Time



The effects of irregular sleep

Irregular sleep patterns affect kids' cognitive abilities (*thinking brain*), appetite (*immune system*) and emotions (*feeling brain*).

A child's body is more prone to getting out of tune when they go to bed at different times. Imagine you're taking a trip to another country, time is different, your body needs to regulate to the new time and your immune system is off, ("*jet lag*") you lose your appetite, you struggle to think clearly and you get upset at the slightest thing!

Kids with irregular bedtimes are much more likely to experience behavioural problems than their friends who have a regular bedtime... And the effects appear to increase throughout childhood.

Example:

Have you ever once had a good nap and all off a sudden you wake up, all confused about what should be happening. You're suppose to be at work or dropping your kids off at school. Then you realise... oh, but its evening, I didn't sleep the whole night!

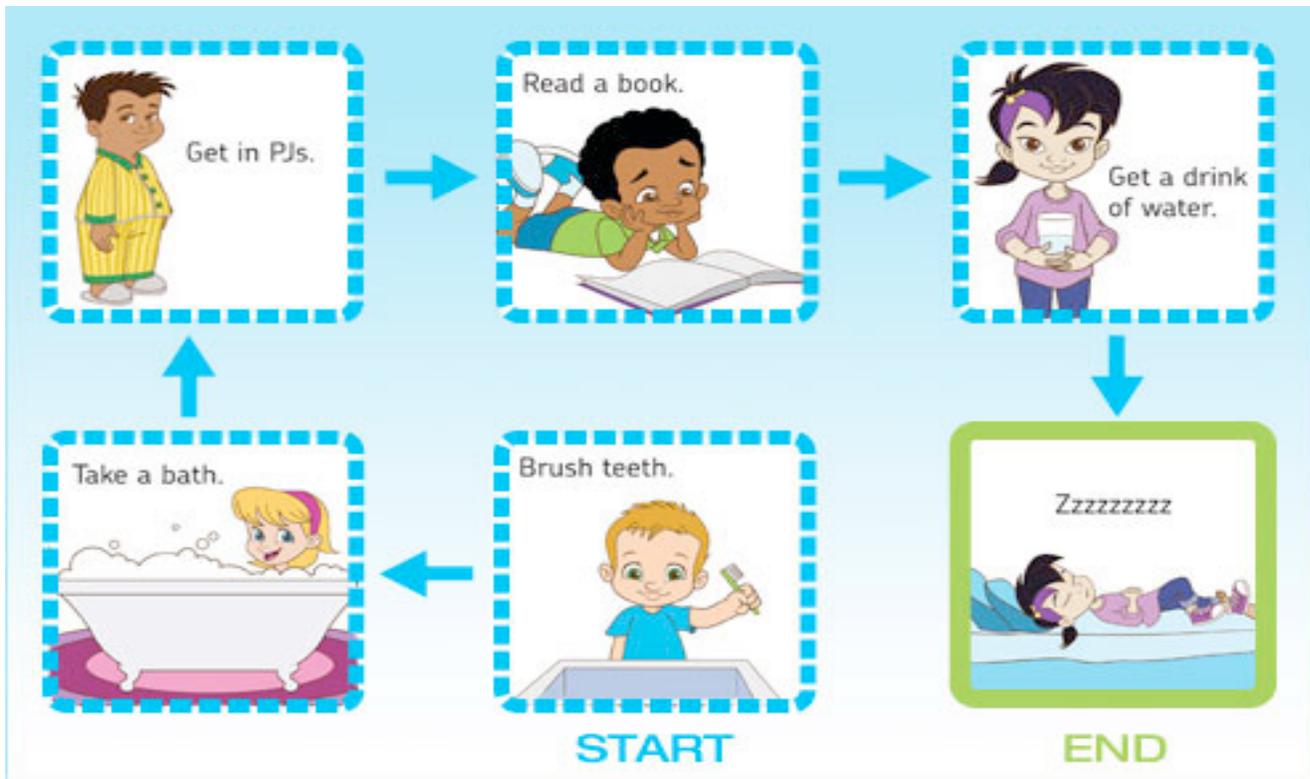
Our bodies have a natural rhythm (internal body clock) which works best when it knows what to expect!

But here's the good news. These negative effects on behaviour are reversable. Kids who switch to a regular bedtime routine show dramatic improvements in their behaviour. It's never too late to help your children get back onto a positive path, and a few small changes could make a huge impact.

The Biggest Challenge for Parents.

To undo what has been done through small change. Its not easy putting children to bed at regular times and it can become an overwhelming process and very tiring. They are full of energy and turn bedtime into a very exhausting process.

But, all hope is not lost, it can become easier over time with hard work and persistence and the joy of the outcome is rewarding for both parents and children.



Guide Lines to stick to a fun and rewarding schedule.

- 1 Have a regular bedtime routine (see picture above), and set bed time at a regular time every evening.
- 2 Read a book to your child while they are settling down, ready for sleep time.
- 3 Use a sleep chart to add a sticker if your child goes to bed on time. *At the end of the week reward your child & yourself – if they have stickers on all the days (stickers are daily rewards).*
- 4 Give constant praise, e.g. *“Excellent try for yesterday”, “lets keep on working and see how tonight goes”.*