

## Bedtime Routine

You may not have a routine at all, or maybe you have a bed time battle with children who don't want to go to bed or continually come downstairs after being put into bed. There are several things you can try to establish a bedtime routine:

- Set a **'time for bed'** that is reasonable, this could be earlier during the week and maybe half an hour later at the weekend as a special treat.
- Having a **routine** and getting children into bed without fuss will benefit you as much as your child. You will get more 'me' time.
- Bed time shouldn't come as a surprise, give your child an **early warning** so that they can finish what they are doing.
- Some children may need to use up energy before bed, so running about or rough and tumble are ok, but **winding down** and having some quiet time at least half an hour before bed is a good idea.
- A warm bath and maybe a drink (but not caffeinated/fizzy drinks) can help, and having a **routine** of getting washed and changed helps your child to feel secure as s/he knows what to expect.
- Using nightlights or leaving the bedroom door ajar to let in some light can also be reassuring. It's also important to ensure that your child is **comfortable** and the room isn't too hot/cold.

### Activity ideas:

1. Share a book with your child as a way to introduce the topic of bedtime. Use the book to talk with your child about your own household bedtime and routine.

2. Think about what you would like to happen at your child's bedtime. What time would you like your child to be asleep by? When might you therefore give them an early warning? What time should they start winding down? When might they start the routine of their last drink and/or a bath and get changed?

Try writing down your plan. It might take a while for the plan to work, but being clear about what you are aiming for should help.

### Book suggestions:

Peace at Last – Jill Murphy

I am not sleepy and I will not go to bed  
- Lauren Child

Say goodnight to the sleepy animals -  
Ian Whybrow

Bedtime – Elizabeth Verdick

Kiss Goodnight - Amy Hest

The boy who hated toothbrushes -  
Zehra Hicks

Goodnight Moon – Margaret Wise

My Body: Why do I sleep? –  
Angela Royston