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[healthy children : Powered by pediatricians. Trusted by parents.](http://www.healthychildren.org/English/)

**The Four B’s of Bedtime**

Bedtime success for babies & older children

We understand that it can be difficult for your toddler to learn to self-soothe and fall asleep independently without the help of a pacifier, bottle, or breast.

Here is the recipe for a tried-and-true bedtime routine to establish lifelong healthy habits…

**Bath**

* Soothing
* Hygienic
* Decisive way of separating the evening’s eating activities from sleeping
* Your child will learn that eating is not a cue to go to sleep

**Brush**

* Brush your child’s teeth right after the last feeding or right before bedtime itself
* A toothbrush (or washcloth for gums) should be the last thing in your child’s mouth at night after one year of age
* Before age one, your infant may use clean pacifier during the first year of life (helps prevent against sudden infant death syndrome)
* Do not let your child fall asleep with a bottle or sippy cup!

**Books**

* Books can serve as the perfect cue that it’s time to cuddle up and go to sleep!
* Often, when a child is tired and tries to read (or is read to) they fall asleep
* Choose the same number of books to read each night (whether it’s one or five)

**Bedtime**

* Follow a firm routine
* Once bathing, brushing and book-reading are complete you should let your child fall asleep independently
* Sometimes, this is often easier said than done – stick with it!