<https://www.huffpost.com/entry/parents-bedtime-routines-tips_l_5e174781c5b600960c619e69>

These ideas may or may not work for you, but it is often helpful to hear from other parents struggling with the same issues! Happy Reading! Ms. Hooper

# **14 Parents Share the Bedtime Routines That Keep Them Sane**

# *A list of great ideas for any stage, from newborn to school-age.*

# **By Kate Auletta**

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Every parent knows the bedtime struggle is *real*.

If you’re dealing with meltdowns, constant delaying or seemingly endless book reading, you’re not alone. But there are parents who have figured out how to survive the witching hour(s), and HuffPost Parents wanted to know their secrets.

We sought out some wisdom from the parents in our [Facebook community](https://www.facebook.com/217254191630265/posts/2740601209295538) who have bedtime down to a science. Here are some of their prized tips.

“Consistent routine from when they are itty bitty!!! Same time to bed every night, same routine (whatever you decide stick with it) and **be wise about what you decide because you’re gonna be singing that song for a long time!** Pick one you can live with!” ― Becky Maguire

We aren’t super strict about the exact time, but weeknights it’s pretty easy. Brush teeth, pick a book ― usually mama reads, but sometimes school-age child reads. Kisses, lights out. Our middle is our night owl and early bird, so sometimes [she] will procrastinate, but for the most part they follow our rule: **you don’t have to go to sleep, but you have to stay in bed.**” ― Lesley Carrigan

“I have two kids ages 9 and 5. When my oldest was about 6 **I would have her go to bed listening to audiobooks because she didn’t want to be alone in the dark** but somehow it made it better with an audiobook on to fall asleep to. This let me lie down with my youngest (after reading him his 2 books... he never lets me forget that) and then I sneak away once he is asleep. Total bonus from audiobooks it really boosted her audible memory and she is reading 4 grade levels ahead now!” ― Jill Hutchinson Hollis

“**Start when they’re young**, and stick to bedtime! It means you say ‘no’ to a lot of things, but it helps!” ― Julie Guggenheim Berry

“Consistency is key! We use sleep cues like music and white noise. I also **use a picture chart so that the kids feel like they have some control over the routine** as well. Everyone knows what’s coming next and there are no surprises. Bedtimes are early. Hubs and I rotate who does who (we have three kids) so that they each get our attention on different nights and we don’t get burned out trying to do all three by ourselves in one night. Remember, sleep begets sleep. The earlier to bed, the longer they’ll sleep and the sleep will be real sleep (which is what they’ll need to convert new information from the school day into permanent memories!)” ― Megan Gardea

“**It is possible as long as you make a bedtime routine consistent** from a young age. We do baths, books, teeth, bed, lights out, door closed (with night light) and because that had always been the rules/expectation we don’t have to fight them to stay in bed. Is every night perfect? Not at all... but overall things are smooth sailing.” ― Melanie Bennett

“Routine. We do bath every other night. That starts at 6:30. Then by 7 every night they are in pajamas. Milk and three stories (no more no less) then brush teeth and lights out. **We have bedtime questions that help them settle down and get the talkies out.** They are the same five questions every night: ‘what was your favorite thing about today?’ ‘was there anything you didn’t like?’ ‘how were you kind today?’ ‘what do you think we will do tomorrow?’ and ‘how much do I love you?’ Both kids (6 and 3) are usually passed out after ten minutes.” ― Elizabeth Alton

“**What really worked for us was not making them go to bed at the same time.** Staggering quiet one on one time with one parent just cuddling, reading, or quietly chatting. I cannot tell you how many times I fell asleep in one of my kid’s beds. Or how often they fell asleep in mine. They are now 10, near 12, and 14, and go to bed on their own, but I still get bed time conversation, hugs, and kisses from all three.” ― Nicole Ann Montgomery

“Timers! **Timers have been a game changer**. My son doesn’t ‘transition’ from one activity to another well without advance notice. We set a timer on our Echo Dot. ‘Okay, in 5 mins when the timer goes off, we’re gonna go do \_\_\_\_ and then cuddle and then read books and then bed!’ Also keeping the routine the EXACT same (down to saying the exact same thing ever night: ‘sweet dreams I love you I’ll see you in the morning when you wake up’) helps a ton.” ― Noelle Foster

“**Those night time apps are the best thing ever**! My daughter gets to scroll through and pick what story or lullaby she wants (giving her a sense of control and engagement) but five minutes into a story and she is sound asleep and snoring.” ― Corey Doncaster

“The best thing we ever did with our three kids is to stagger their bedtimes. Half hour in between and there is no more fighting for the bathroom! Also, **separate tubes of toothpaste avoids extra arguments**.” ― Jessica Ueberfluss

“**Start 20 minutes earlier than you think you need to**!” ― Stella Tinnirello Hart

“**We do a ‘last call’ for snacks/drinks 30 mins before bedtime**. It has eliminated the ‘I’m hungry’ and ‘I’m thirsty’ calls from our daughter’s bedroom after we leave the room!” ― Amanda Sapian

“**Let them be in control as much as possible**: ‘Do you want to brush your teeth first, or get in Pjs first?’ ‘Would you like these Pjs, or these Pjs?’ ‘Would you like water first, or a story first?’” ― Lauren Mead

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