



“Sleepless in Suburbia” or “The Battle of the Bed”

Does this sound like your household?

Do you feel like a “Zombie Warrior” or the “Night of the Living Dead”?

Then these guidelines will help so everyone can get the rest they need!

Your child needs lots of sleep every day.

The amount of sleep your child needs (total = naps and night time):

0-3 months old	16-17 hours
3-6 months old	14-15 hours
6-12 months old	12-14 hours
12-24 months old	13 hours
2-4 years old	11-12 hours

Newborns sleep a large part of the day, but because they need to eat every few hours, they wake up frequently. While this can be hard on the parents, waking up frequently is necessary for the baby. During your baby's first few weeks of life, don't expect to develop a schedule, just go with the flow. Remember that newborns have needs that should be met promptly. Babies cannot be spoiled by having their needs met. This is the time that they learn that they are loved and that their parents can be counted on. So don't worry about 'spoiling' your baby. Hold them, cuddle, rock and snuggle.

As your child gets older you may find it easier to develop a schedule. As you begin to get more of a routine established make sure your child is getting enough sleep. Avoid letting your child get overtired. It then makes it that much harder to get him to sleep.

Once your child is slightly older, and a bedtime has been established, create a routine for your child. Follow this routine every night. Children do better when they have a set routine. It helps them to feel secure and in control. Generally children who have a bedtime routine will sleep better. Make sure the last hour before bed is a quiet time by keeping activities calm and relaxing. When your child is wound up or excited it will be harder for him to get to sleep.

Bedtime Routines

Here are some things that could be included in a bedtime routine:

- A bedtime phrase, for example “ Now it's sleep time”
- A special song
- A good cuddle
- Reading a story

- Bathing
- Brushing teeth
- A snack
- A prayer
- Listening to a song

Sample Routines

Baby

"Let's get ready for sleep time."

Bath

Feeding

Lullaby as they are rocked

"Now it's time to sleep."

Toddler

"As soon as this program is over you need to get ready for bed."

Bath

Brush teeth

Cuddle and tell a story

Sing a song

"Now it's sleep time."

*An established bedtime routine makes it easier for others to put your child to sleep.

It's okay to ask for help!

Parenting is one of the hardest, and also the most important job that you will ever have. If you have questions, concerns or just need someone to talk to, then call and ask to speak to the Public Health Nurse.

Chouteau County Health Department

406-622-3771

Our hours are Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

