

At Bedtime

Connect: Bedtime is time to wind down. Creating a schedule that your child comes to expect makes the transition from an active day to a quiet time easier.

Many parents create “a special time” to be together at bedtime. Sometimes they read or tell stories. Other times, they let the child select what she or he wants to do.

Watch and listen: What helps your child get ready for bed in the most peaceful way, and what stirs up your child? Emphasize the calming activities and turn them into family traditions.

Extend:

For your baby

- Create a consistent bedtime schedule that your child can count on.
- Think of bedtime as a quiet time to be together rather than a scary time of separation. Your attitude will help build a more positive attitude in your child.

For your toddler

- Create traditions: First we take a bath and brush our teeth, then we read a story, put on the nightlight, give a kiss and go to sleep. With practice, a consistent schedule will help children learn to go to sleep by themselves.

For your preschooler

- Your preschooler can take a more active role in planning bedtime traditions and use special time for listening to stories, making up stories about his or her stuffed animals, or for talking about the day.

Anytime:

- Be curious about your own learning and about how your child learns. Parents and caregivers who are truly engaged and excited about learning are more likely to have children who do the same.
- Have fun! Children and adults learn best when they are connected to others, when they're learning about something they want or need to know, and when they're having fun. So don't make learning in everyday moments a chore, or something to strike off of your to-do list to give your child the best early start. Instead, make it something that you enjoy. The gift of joy in lifelong learning is a very important gift you can give your children.

These tips were developed for Born Learning by [Mind in the Making](#), a project of the Families and Work Institute and New Screen Concepts.