

# Bedtime Checklist

By Laura Cooper Peterson

- Bedtime
  - Make a bedtime plan that maps out exactly what will happen each evening
  - Including the order of events and, for your reference, start and finish times.
  - Share the plan with your family (don't forget dad), verbally and through pictures, if necessary.
  - Make a "sleep manners" chart to lay out the rules and reward good sleep behavior.
  - Remove anxiety by having your child play in her room often.
  - Help your child wind down by turning off the electronics and hour prior to bedtime
  - And avoiding caffeine in the evening (and consider hidden sources like chocolate milk or soda).
  - Set the scene with soft lighting and reduced noise.
  - Read or talk quietly with your child to ease her into the sleepy zone
  - Give her guaranteed one-on-one time with you.
  - Avoid "bad thoughts" by getting your child talking and thinking about happy memories or non-scary subjects that interest her.
  - Be consistent 7 days a week, with times, the order of events and in your response to problems.
  - Comfort your child if he's scared, but stay within your rules.
  - If she leaves the room after bedtime, quietly lead her back to bed with minimal interaction (rinse and repeat).