



# **Frequently Asked Questions – Toddlers**



## **When and how do I get rid of the pacifier?**

Cut down the use of pacifiers around the age of 1.5 to 2. It is easiest to completely get rid of a pacifier around the age of 3. If they are not using it constantly, just at bedtime and naps, then pediatric dentists agree with this age as well. By three years old they are old enough to fully understand not needing it anymore because they are a big kid. I recommend picking a special day (perhaps their 3rd birthday) and discussing with them how on this day you will be getting rid of their pacifiers because they are so big and don't need it anymore. Make it an exciting conversation and you could even talk about how you will "gift them" to a baby you know. Have them wrap them up and hand off to you so you can "pass them along". Praise them for being such a great friend/helper to the babies. If they ask about them remind them, they are a big kid and don't need it anymore. Go on to explain all the fun things big kids get to do that babies don't do; we want them excited about being a big kid! Perhaps point out that an older sibling, cousin, or friend they admire doesn't use a pacifier. Stay strong. If you give in and allow them to have a pacifier, even just once, it will make things so much more difficult in the end. You may have a few nights of resistance or needing to talk them through it, but it shouldn't take long before they don't even remember needing or wanting one!

## **How do I handle sleep when traveling?**

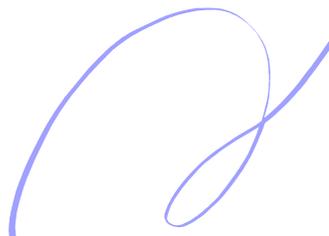
First of all, be easy on yourself, try your best to stick to their regular schedule but be flexible. Bring along as many items as you can to make bedtime/naptime like what they are used to at home (noise machine, pacifier, special lovey, monitor, etc.) Know that some naps may happen on the go: in the stroller or in the car and that's ok. Plan ahead. If they miss a nap, try your best to bump up bedtime to make up for that. In a hotel it may be advantageous for everyone to book a suite or connected hotel rooms so that your child can have a separate sleeping space. If this is not plausible just know you may need to "go to bed" around the same time your child does, and once asleep you can likely move around quietly or watch a movie.

## **When should we move out of the crib and into a bed?**

DO NOT RUSH THIS. If your child is happily sleeping in a crib, there is no need to change that. If he or she is trying to climb out of their crib, then it likely is time to transition to a bed for their safety.

## **How do I transition my child from crib to bed?**

If your child is ready for a bed (see question above) be sure to set, clear rules and expectations. Talk with your child about the fact that you are trusting them to be safe and listen as big kids do. Explain they do not need to get out of their bed but rather to call for mom or dad if they need anything. Use an "ok to wake" clock to help them understand when it is time to sleep and when it is okay for them to call for mom and dad to get them when awake. Treat their room as their crib, be sure cords are out of reach, outlets are covered, furniture is bolted to the walls, and it is safe for them to roam in their room. Using a gate at the bedroom door is a good option until you can trust they will stay in their room. Communication is key!





## When should my child drop their nap?

This is another situation of wait it out as long as you can. If your child will nap and it is not putting bedtime too far off, then allow for nap. If nap seems to be making bedtime harder, then shorten nap before eliminating it. Refer to my "sleep chart" to be sure your child is still getting the correct amount of daily sleep. Overtiredness can show up in so many ugly ways and we don't want that! Sometimes shortening nap and coupling it with a quiet time can be helpful. Once nap is eliminated, I recommend still implementing a quiet time which can be your child playing with puzzles, books, iPad, watching a movie, playing with toys quietly in their room, etc.

## How should I adjust our sleep during daylight savings?

Stick to your normal schedule! If your child normally wakes at 7am then wake them at 7am, if they wake earlier than that then allow them to rest in their bed until 7am or when you get up. For the remainder of the day stick to regular clock times. If they nap at noon, then their nap will be at noon today, no change. It may take a week or two for their bodies to adjust but they will!

## My child is sick and/or teething, what should I do?

It's okay to put your child to sleep as normal even if they are sick or teething. It is good for them to learn to soothe themselves despite feeling different. But do what you feel you need to in order to help them along in the soothing process. If your sleep routines get off track then just hop back on track as soon as you can.

## We have a special occasion coming up that will interfere with bedtime, what should we do?

- Do what you are most comfortable with, here are some options: Push bedtime back one night, get back on track the next
- Leave early in order to do normal bedtime routine at home
- Hire a babysitter
- Don't attend, it's an option J

## My child has special needs, can I still sleep train?

Absolutely!! Many of the same tools you use during the day you can use at night/bedtime. Routine is key for children with special needs and sometimes adding in items such as essential oils, routine boards, visual outlines, and a bedtime book can all be beneficial. Utilizing their senses as part of bedtime cues can be helpful as well: putting the lights low in the evening, turning the volume on the tv low, using hushed voices, drawing the blinds, and diffusing lavender oil. If after a few weeks our sleep training methods don't work then we would recommend you ask your pediatrician for a referral for a sleep specialist.