



Dear Early Childhood families,

Welcome to fall!! Our occupational therapists will be sending home monthly tips to help support you and your child in the areas of play, fine motor skills, self-care skills, and sensory processing. This month our topic will be SLEEP!

Sleep is an essential part of our day! Optimal sleep helps to ensure that children are able to play and ready to participate in daily activities at school or at home. It is biologically restorative state of consciousness which replenishes the body on all levels; cellular, immune, metabolic, physical and emotional. Children who don't sleep well are often cranky and irritable. Some have difficulty falling asleep, others staying asleep. Both can contribute to poor self-regulatory abilities.

- Establish a specific bedtime and bedtime routine. Select a bedtime that is appropriate for your child and be consistent, even on weekends and vacations.
- Establish a predictable, regular sequence of events to prepare for sleep and relaxation. Begin this bedtime routine about a half hour before.
- Avoid exercise or TV immediately before bedtime because this can be alerting.
- As part of your bedtime routine have your child pick up and put away toys. Reducing clutter can help the child focus on bedtime.
- Play soothing music during the bedtime routine to help the child calm down and signal bedtime is coming.
- Include bath time in your bedtime routine. Warm water is calming. Try using a soothing lavender scent which can help your child unwind further.
- Place a fan in the room, white noise, or calm music.
- Cover your child with a heavy or weighted blanket.
- Get plenty of exercise and fresh air in the afternoon!! Not just to tire them out but to change brain chemistry. Heavy work increases the production of serotonin.

Sweet dreams!

The early childhood occupational therapists

