



# Naptimes

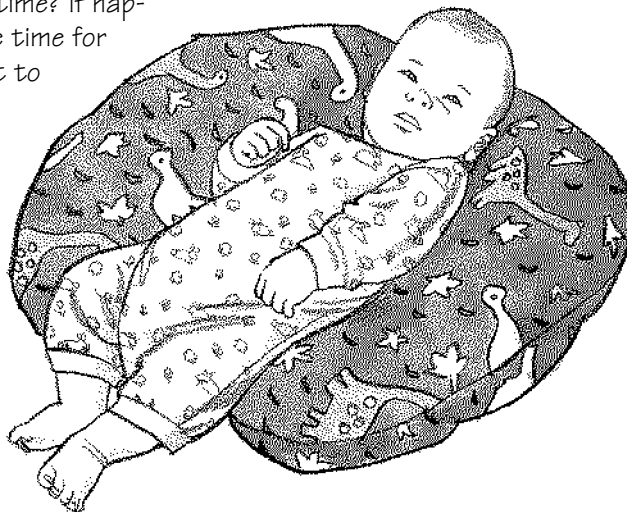
"I think naptime is very important for all young children. They need naps and I need the break during the day. There is no question if a child needs a nap in my child care home. They all do!"

— Sonya, child care provider

"I hated taking naps when I was a child. It's very hard for me to make children take naps, especially when they get older. I know that babies and toddlers need naps and I make sure they get them. As children get older, I try to let them have quiet times as they need them."

— Tasha, child care provider

Do you have problems getting children settled for naptime? If naptime seems more like time for battle, you may want to think about how you handle this time of the day.



Change a  
playroom into a  
resting room

## ALL CHILDREN NEED QUIET TIMES

Children of all ages need both active and quiet times every day. For infants and toddlers, quiet times are naptimes when they need extra sleep. As children grow older, they may not need to sleep during the day. Quiet activities, like reading books, working on puzzles, stringing large beads, drawing, or playing board games gives them a time for rest.

## GETTING READY FOR NAPTIME

When it's close to naptime, slow down the action. Choose quiet activities, such as reading books or singing quiet songs, to help calm the children before they lay down. If you do these quiet activities every day, the children will soon understand this is the time to settle down.

Change the focus from a playroom into a resting room. A room with lots of great toys setting out keeps children interested in playing. If possible, have the children rest in a different room or turn the playroom into a resting room.

- Put the toys away. You may even want to hang a shower curtain or sheet to cover shelves of toys.
- Turn down the lights.
- You may want to play soft, quiet music to keep the mood calm.
- Help children loosen any tight clothing and take off their shoes.
- Some children will enjoy having their backs rubbed to help them relax.

**Have quiet activities ready for children who don't need to sleep**

- Some children need a special blanket or stuffed animal from home to help them sleep.
- Some children need to be in a place where they can't see other children. Use pillows or furniture to help block their view.

Different children relax in different ways. Some children will lie quietly and fall asleep; others will move around and talk to themselves before they can get to sleep. Think of setting a comfortable, relaxed mood to help them rest in any way they can.

**"I CAN'T SLEEP!"**

As children grow older, they may not need to take an afternoon nap. This doesn't mean they can go, go, go all day. These children still need a quiet resting time. They just don't need to go to sleep.

Be ready with quiet activities. Non-sleepers may want to look at books, work on puzzles, draw with crayons and paper, play quiet board games, use lacing boards, etc. These quiet activities are also good for children who take short naps. As children get awake, move them away from the sleeping children to work on a quiet activity.

**MORE NAPTIME TIPS**

- Talk with parents every morning. Ask if their child slept well, had a later bedtime, or a rough morning. You may need to make naptime earlier in the day for a child who didn't sleep well the night before.
- Make sure children get plenty of fresh air and exercise during the morning. Active playing makes children tired by the afternoon. They will be ready for sleeping.
- Don't wait until children are overtired to get them ready for naps. When children are overtired, they often have trouble falling asleep.

**All children need quiet times every day**



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