

Early Risers Checklist

Review their bedtime

If your child is falling asleep too early it might be unrealistic to expect them to sleep 11-12 hours overnight. Sometimes an earlier bedtime will help but children can only sleep a certain amount of hours in 24hrs.

Nap timings

Nap timings. Naps should ideally happen in the middle of your child's awake period. Napping too late in the day can affect their tiredness at bedtime and napping too early in the day can mean they will be overtired.

Keep them in the dark.

If your child is waking very early, do not immediately turn the light on. Try sitting or laying with them in the dark for 20-30 minutes, then turn on the lights and tell them its morning. This helps them to understand that when the light comes on it is morning. Over time you can make the lights go on later and later.

Stir your child

Stir your child. Try 'stirring' your child about 15 minutes before they normally wake up to see if you can restart the sleep cycle and delay wake up time.

Breakfast time

Breakfast time. Maintain a consistent breakfast time and remember that a sense of order is important for the child under three.

Natural light.

Make sure your child is exposed to as much natural light during the day.

Floor bed / Low Bed.

Floor bed / Low Bed. If your child uses a floor bed encourage them to play quietly in their room until you come to greet them in the morning or invite them to come into your room for some early morning cuddles.

Gro-clocks / Digital clocks

Gro-clocks. While gro-clocks may work for some children, it can be over complicated for some children and overstimulating for others. As well, the blue light that it uses inhibits melatonin. All night lights should emit a red light which will not affect their melatonin levels. Digital clocks. A normal digital clock can work for some children. Introduce them to the number they need to look for and post that number next to the clock. For example, '6'. When the clock shows '6' it means it is morning and they can get up.

Tag team with your partner.

Tag team with your partner. Maybe one of you is also an owl. Agree to do the night wakings if they do the morning shift. Or take turns so that you are both able to get a sleep in every now and again.