



Expert Tips for the Time Change Transition

By *Gina Roberts-Grey* in: [Featured Article](#) | [Growth and Development](#) | [Health and Safety](#)

For little ones, gaining or losing an hour of sleep because of the daylight savings time change can throw the whole family's schedule off. Here's how to make it a seamless transition for all.



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Many parents bemoan the time change in both the fall and spring, claiming the switch throws Baby's—and parent's—schedule off. But these time-tested tips can take the dread out of daylight savings time and make it easier for everyone to sail through a smooth transition when it's time to lose that one hour of sleep.

Alanna McGinn, a certified sleep consultant and founder of [Good Night Sleep Site](#), says “springing forward” can often be trickier to deal with than “falling back.” “It's tough to abruptly lose an hour of sleep.

To combat the sudden change, McGinn suggests slowly altering your child's sleep schedule beginning seven to 10 days before the time change kicks in.

“You should slowly introduce your baby to the new time by putting him to bed a little earlier than usual,” she says. “Then wake him the same amount of time earlier the following morning.”

Beginning on March 1, move bedtime up 15 minutes and hold that new bedtime for two nights. For instance, if your child's current bedtime is 7 p.m. and he normally wakes at 6 a.m., put him down at 6:45 p.m. and wake him at 5:45 a.m. Two nights later, bump bedtime up to 6:30 p.m. and wake time up to 5:30 a.m. On day five, put him down at 6:15 p.m. and wake at 5:15 a.m. and so on.

When the clocks change on March 9, your child will be used to going to bed at what's now 7 p.m. and will wake refreshed at the “new” 6 a.m.

Revamp Their Entire Schedule

Many parents will only change their baby's sleep times, but that's a huge mistake, says Tamiko Kelly, a certified maternity and child sleep consultant. To accommodate the time change, she urges you shift as

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"Push meals ahead 15 minutes and begin pre-bedtime routines like baths and story time 15 minutes earlier, too. And don't forget your child will need breakfast earlier in the morning, too."

And be patient. Kelly says with any kind of sleep transition, your child can begin to give you battles at bedtime and experience earlier wakings in the morning.

Here are some additional tips to encourage morning sleep-ins and relaxed bedtimes.

Black out the light. McGinn says many kids are sensitive to changes in light and may have trouble falling asleep because of the added amount of daylight at bedtime. She recommends installing shades that block out light to help keep kids on their bedtime schedule and increase chances of them getting a full night's sleep.

Try a toddler alarm clock. It stays blue when it's time for sleep and then turns yellow in the morning when it's time for your tyke to get out of bed. "You can set it to your desired bedtimes and wake times, making it easier for him to understand and follow the schedule," says McGinn.

Create a quiet time box. While your child is adjusting to the effect the time change has on bedtime, McGinn suggests using a quiet time box to keep kids in bed and avoid them slipping out after being tucked in at night. "Let your child choose one puzzle or book from the box that he can relax with in bed until he falls asleep."

What tips can you share to help ease the time change transition? Share them in the comments.



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