



REST AND RELAXATION

<http://www.cccf-fcsge.ca/english/resources/onethreehealth.htm>

Periods of rest and relaxation help children grow, stay healthy and participate fully in their busy days.

- Children need their sleep. Infants will usually require a sleep in the morning and afternoon, while toddlers and preschoolers usually nap in the afternoon. Even older preschoolers and kindergarten children need to have a quiet time after lunch, looking at a book or hugging a special doll or teddy bear.
- Children of all ages need a good night's sleep. Remind parents that children have a busy day care day and a tired and cranky child can't enjoy his or her play. A good night's sleep also lessens a child's susceptibility to illness.
- Sometimes parents will resist the idea of their child napping during the day because they're afraid that it will interfere with bedtime. Reinforcing the importance of a midday rest for their child and putting the children down soon after lunch for an early and shortened nap may help. If the children are having a busy day that includes physical activities, especially outdoor exercises, then there shouldn't be any problem at night.
- Establish routines around nap time. After lunch, everyone uses the toilet, washes their hands, brushes their teeth and gets ready for nap. It's important that children know that they will have a nap or quiet period at the same time every day. Talk positively about sleep time; about how nice and relaxing it will be having a rest; and about something you plan to do after nap time, such as reading a story or making a picture.
- Welcome comforting objects such as blankets or a favourite stuffed toy from home can help children feel secure and ready to sleep. Provide a basket of cuddly toys so that the children can choose one to sleep with.
- Children should have their own sleeping place and use bedding that is not shared with the other children.