

Resetting Sleep and Daily Routines Before School Starts

Summer schedules often move later. A sudden return to an early school morning can leave children tired and make the whole family feel rushed. Begin the reset a week or two before school when possible. The goal is steady progress, not a perfect night.

Start with the school-day wake-up time. Move bedtime and wake time earlier in small steps until they are close to the school schedule. Keep the wake-up time fairly steady each day. A regular schedule helps the body know when to feel awake and when to prepare for sleep.

Build one short evening routine that can be repeated. Finish homework, pack the backpack, choose clothes, wash up, read, and turn out the lights in the same general order. Prepare lunches, forms, and school materials before the final quiet part of the evening.

Lower the amount of light and activity before bed. Turn off electronic devices at least 30 minutes before bedtime and keep them out of the bedroom when possible. Dim lights, reduce noise, and save exciting games or difficult conversations for another time.

Use age-based sleep ranges as a guide. Children ages 6 to 12 generally need 9 to 12 hours of sleep each day. Teens ages 13 to 17 generally need 8 to 10 hours. Children differ, so also notice whether your child wakes rested and can stay alert during the day.

Protect the adult routine too. Share evening jobs, make fewer decisions in the morning, and avoid leaving all school preparation until late at night. Talk with your child's healthcare professional when sleep problems happen regularly, your child snores often, or your child stays tired even after enough time in bed.

Did You Know?

- ✓ The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends moving children toward earlier bedtimes a week or two before school and using a consistent bedtime routine.¹
- ✓ The CDC lists 9 to 12 hours of daily sleep for children ages 6 to 12 and 8 to 10 hours for teens ages 13 to 17.²
- ✓ The CDC recommends regular bedtime and wake times, and both the CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics advise reducing evening device use and keeping devices out of sleeping spaces.^{3,4}

Research Sources

1. American Academy of Pediatrics. ["Back-to-School Tips for Families."](#) HealthyChildren.org. Updated August 5, 2024.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. ["About Sleep."](#) May 15, 2024.
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. ["Sleep and Health."](#) July 2, 2024.
4. American Academy of Pediatrics. ["Sleep and Health: Why Rest Matters for Your Child—and Your Whole Family."](#) HealthyChildren.org. Updated March 27, 2026.

Seven-Day Sleep and Routine Reset Tracker

Use this tracker during the week before school. Record what happened, notice patterns, and make one small adjustment at a time. The goal is a workable family routine, not perfection.

Child's name: _____	Week begins: _____
School-day wake time: _____	Target bedtime range: _____
1. Plan the Reset Current bedtime: _____ Current wake time: _____ Screen-off time: _____ Evening preparation jobs: _____	
2. Days 1–2 Day 1 — Bed: _____ Wake: _____ Screens off: _____ Clothes/backpack ready: Y / N Morning readiness (1–5): _____ Day 2 — Bed: _____ Wake: _____ Screens off: _____ Clothes/backpack ready: Y / N Morning readiness (1–5): _____	
3. Days 3–4 Day 3 — Bed: _____ Wake: _____ Screens off: _____ Clothes/backpack ready: Y / N Morning readiness (1–5): _____ Day 4 — Bed: _____ Wake: _____ Screens off: _____ Clothes/backpack ready: Y / N Morning readiness (1–5): _____ Pattern or note: _____	
4. Days 5–6	

Day 5 — Bed: _____ Wake: _____ Screens off: _____ Clothes/backpack ready: Y / N Morning readiness (1–5): _____

Day 6 — Bed: _____ Wake: _____ Screens off: _____ Clothes/backpack ready: Y / N Morning readiness (1–5): _____

5. Day 7 and Next Step

Day 7 — Bed: _____ Wake: _____ Screens off: _____ Clothes/backpack ready: Y / N Morning readiness (1–5): _____

What helped most? _____ One adjustment for school week:

Healthcare follow-up, if needed: regular trouble falling asleep, frequent waking or snoring, or ongoing daytime tiredness.