



# Is it important to put your baby or child to bed at the same time?

Popular science communication: Evelyne Touchette, PhD

Date : 12 May 2022



Photo by [Alexander Schimneck](#) on [Unsplash](#)

---

Always, no. Exactly to the second either. **As often as possible, yes.**

As for taking the train, it is a question of being at the station on time, that is to say **a little before the exact time**, so as not to miss the first [train of sleep](#) (see [Signs of lack of sleep](#)).

**But why going to sleep at the same time?**

- Regular waking-up and bedtimes are **reassuring** for children and help them to **avoid getting into a sleep debt**.
- In addition, even if toddlers are not aware of the time, they learn to **make associations through repetition** in their daily lives. The [routine](#) thus serves as a metronome and helps the child to first learn the rhythm of day and night. Thanks to their [internal clock](#), which develops during the first year of life, their body learns to secrete sleep hormones, which will allow them to string together [sleep trains](#) and **have a consolidated sleep at night (with fewer and fewer awakenings)**.
- Science shows that the older the child gets, the easier it becomes to put him to bed at the same time, thanks to the development of his brain and his [sleep clock](#) and to the fact that he knows the difference between day and night. The regularity of the schedules

also facilitates falling asleep.

## Inspiration and scientific sources:

- Pennestri MH, Burdayron R, Kenny S, Béliveau MJ, Dubois-Comtois K. (2020) **Sleeping through the night or through the nights?** Sleep Med. 76:98-103.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sleep.2020.10.005>.
  - *Popular science communication:*<https://www.ciusssnordmtl.ca/nouvelles-et-evenements/article/faire-une-nuit-ou-faire-ses-nuits/>
- Touchette E, Mongrain V, Petit D, Tremblay RE, Montplaisir JY. (2008) **Development of sleep-wake schedules during childhood and relationship with sleep duration.** Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med.162(4):343-9.  
<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/379301>