

Tips On Helping Children Sleep

(NAPSA)—Clinical psychologist Dr. Michael Breus, one of the nation's top sleep experts, has some advice to offer parents. Known as “The Sleep Doctor,” he’s a widely recognized leader in this ever-evolving field and perhaps best known for his appearances on Dr. Oz, CNN, Oprah, “The View” and “The Doctors.”

Dr. Breus notes that “peaceful sleep is essential for everyone; it refreshes energy and enhances creativity and productivity in our daily lives.” According to the National Sleep Foundation, daily sleep needs range from 12 to 14 hours for 1- to 3-year-olds; 11 to 13 hours for ages 3 to 5; and about 10 to 11 hours for 5- to 12-year-old children.

Using characters from Disney's newly released animated classic *Sleeping Beauty Diamond Edition* on Blu-ray to illustrate, Dr. Breus offers six important steps. “By following these tips,” he says, “I’m certain families will have better luck with their kids’ bedtime routines and ultimately get a better night’s rest themselves.”

1. Be consistent. Going to bed and waking up at the same time (even on weekends) will help your children keep Maleficent’s evil henchmen out of their dreams.

2. Use Flora’s gift of beauty. Help your children finish up whatever they’re doing, clean up their toys and make the room neat, comfortable and ready for sleep.

3. Use Fauna’s gift of song. While everyone’s getting ready for bed, sing a few favorite soothing songs while they bathe, brush their teeth and put on pajamas.

4. Use Merryweather’s gift of true love’s kiss. Dim the lights, turn on a night-light and read a book. If kids still have trouble quieting their busy brains, try the



“relaxation game.” And then give your little ones that loving kiss good night.

5. Embrace Maleficent’s color of darkness. The color black is best for sleep, though most children like a little light at night. Keep in mind that some night-lights (LEDs, for example) contain “blue light” and that can actually keep a child awake by preventing the brain’s production of melatonin, which starts the engine for sleep. So make sure your child’s night-light is one that filters out blue light.

6. Follow Sleeping Beauty’s name, Aurora. She is so named because she fills people’s lives with sunshine. When children wake up in the morning, stop by a sun-filled window or take them outside for 15 minutes of brightness. Sun exposure helps reset their internal biological clocks each morning. Parents can also leave the window shades open so the child can wake with the morning light.

Dr. Breus notes, “For tips two through four, I recommend ‘The

Power Down Half-Hour Technique,’ which I created for children, with 10 minutes spent on each of the activities mentioned. The consistent routine helps calm them down and unconsciously signals the brain to get ready for sleep. Roughhousing and other similar ‘fun games’ often initiated by parents who haven’t seen their children all day usually result in poor sleep.”

Finally, here are three rules for napping for infants and toddlers:

1. Set a specific nap time, or make it three to four hours after they last woke up.

2. Have a consistent pre-nap routine (it will not be as long as the pre-bedtime routine).

3. Let children soothe themselves to sleep, even when napping.

For more sleeping tips and information from Dr. Breus, visit www.TheSleepDoctor.com.

For more information about the *Sleeping Beauty Diamond Edition* from Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment, visit www.movies.disney.com/sleeping-beauty.

