## **FACT SHEET:**

Category: Life After ABI **Parenting** 

Audience: Person with an ABI

For more information contact the Acquired Brain **Injury Outreach Service** (ABIOS)

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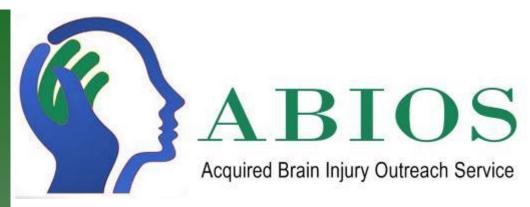
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# **Bedtime Routine**

#### Introduction

Getting the children to bed on time can be a problem. It can cause a lot of stress and frustration for parents. For children it can lead to chronic over-tiredness. This can affect their schooling, friendships, behaviour and their mood. Developing a routine increases the chance of your children going to bed on time.



## How do I know that the bedtime routine is a problem?

- The children are late to bed most nights
- Often there is fighting and arguing when the children are told it is bedtime
- The child will not go to sleep in their own room (e.g. they go to sleep on the couch, or floor in the lounge room)
- The child will not "get ready" for bed (e.g. clean their teeth, change into their pyjamas, go to the toilet)

### **Prevention Strategies:**

- Establish a realistic routine. List what each family member is to do at the required time.
- Think about a guiet activity at the start or the middle of the bedtime routine for 10 to 15 minutes. For example, reading a book together.
- Have dinner at the appropriate time to fit into your routine. You may need to plan
  - meals in advance or prepare some of the meal during the day. For example, peel potatoes and place in water at lunch time
- Start each morning at the same time. Make it early enough to prepare for the days activities.
- Make the bedtime age-appropriate. If you are unsure ask other parents of children of similar age.



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- Complete all jobs and activities before the bedtime routine is to start.
  For example, make sure the homework is done before dinner.
- Make sure the television and any other distractions are turned off before the bedtime routine starts.
- Bedtime can vary when the children are on school holidays or at weekends. However, these exceptions to the rule should be rare otherwise every night becomes an opportunity for the child to negotiate

Time	Activity
7.00pm	Children clean teeth and go to the toilet
7.15pm	Parent reads story to children
7.30pm	Children can read in their own beds
8.00pm	Lights out

#### **Management Strategies:**

- Have a family meeting about the new routine before you start. Make the list of tasks very clear.
- Keep to the routine. You can use a kitchen timer to keep the child and yourself on track.
- Review the routine if the times don't work.
- Use 1-2-3 time-out if there is disobedience.

#### **Key Steps:**

- Establish a realistic routine
- Include some quiet time into the routine
- Make sure the children wake up at the same time each morning
- Have dinner at an appropriate time.
- Turn off all disruptions at the start of the bedtime routine
- Use 1-2-3 time-out for any problem behaviours

#### **Acknowledgement:**

We acknowledge that in the development of the ABIOS Parenting fact sheets we have incorporated ideas from the 1-2-3 Magic Program and The Triple P program.

#### Resources

See other Acquired Brain Injury Outreach Service (ABIOS) Information sheets at http://www.health.gld.gov.au/abios/



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