



THE CONSCIOUS SLEEP GUIDE ENVIRONMENT CHECK LIST

Creating a sleep-friendly atmosphere in your child's room is crucial for establishing healthy sleep habits. This is significant from as early as 8 weeks of age and remains important throughout their life.

QUICK CHECK LIST

Safety

Prioritizing safety is crucial for children of all age groups. For babies under 1 year, they should be alone in a crib and placed on their back. When children are in a bed, it's important to ensure the entire room is safe.

Dark

The goal is to establish the room with complete darkness, making it challenging to see inside.

Night Light

When the child is old enough for a night light, consider using an amber or red light bulb.

Temperature

The ideal room temperature for promoting deep, healthy sleep is between 65-72 degrees Fahrenheit.

Sound

When using a sound machine, opt for a consistent noise (avoiding waves) and keep it on throughout the entire sleep period.

Consistent

Use the same environment for majority or all of the sleeping sessions.



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Safety

Safety is the most important aspect of a child's sleep, as it helps reduce the likelihood of accidents, unexpected events and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). For a child below the age of one, the safest practice is for them to sleep alone, on their back, and in a crib with no items in the crib. I suggest using a crib for children until they reach the age of 3 or older. It provides the safest sleeping arrangement, fostering a secure and comfortable environment that contributes to better sleep. Once your child has transitioned from a crib to a bed, treat their entire room as a secure sleep environment. Confirm that furniture is firmly anchored to the walls, outlets are covered, blinds and cords are inaccessible, and take any additional measures needed to enhance overall safety in the room. What additional steps can be taken to further enhance safety measures in your home?

Consult the latest guidelines on ensuring your baby sleeps safely by referring to the American Academy of Pediatrics at <https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/safe-sleep/> or the National Institute of Health & US Department of Health and Human Services Safe to Sleep at <https://safetosleep.nichd.nih.gov/>.

Darkness

The second most important aspect of a sleep environment is darkness, a factor that is significant from 8 weeks of age throughout their lifetime. Darkness is essential for sleep as it prompts the release of melatonin, the hormone regulating the sleep-wake cycles. Creating a dark sleep environment helps promote consolidated and restful sleep. Strive to achieve a darkness level similar to darkness in the middle of the night. Your goal is to replicate this darkness level at all moments of the day, regardless of the time of year. This may require using two coverings over your windows.

Night Light

Introduce a night light for your child when they are able to ask for one. Until that point, maintaining complete darkness is optimal for promoting better sleep. When using a night light, amber or red night lights are preferable as they help avoid disrupting the release of melatonin, the sleep-inducing hormone.

Temperature

The ideal room temperature for promoting deep, healthy sleep is between 65-72 degrees Fahrenheit. Lower temperatures help prepare and support the body for sleep through the release of melatonin and reaching deeper stages of sleep. The best method to assess your child's temperature is by feeling the back of their neck. If it feels sweaty or cold, it's important to make adjustments to the room temperature or clothing choices. Keep in mind that cool or cold fingers or toes may not accurately reflect body temperature, therefore, focusing on their neck is a better indicator.

Noise

The use of noise or a sound machine provides several benefits for sleep. These include creating a stable background noise and masking disruptive noises such as house noises, traffic or other environmental disturbances. Additionally, for infants under the six months old, a sound machine helps replicate the comforting noise reminiscent of the womb.

If you choose to use a sound machine, there are three factors to consider:

- Constant noise - You want to avoid a sound that has waves or peaks.
- Sound level - A favorable sound level is in the range of 50-60 decibels, considered low to medium-low.
- Consistency - You want to keep the sound on during the entire sleeping period.

Consistency

Maintain a consistent sleep environment for all periods of sleep at home, including naps, bedtime, and night awakenings. Avoiding changes in the sleep setting during these periods helps prevent confusion and contributes to better overall sleep quality.