

BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR LUTHERAN SCHOOL

PRESENTS:

PEARLS OF LOVE AND LOGIC

Presented by:

Special Thoughts on Raising Kids

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Time for Bed

Sometimes bedtime can be a hassle. We say “Time for bed, Sweetie.” And then what? Our children often have an exciting array of excuses to put us off: “I don’t wanna,” or “Can I have some ice cream first?” or “Read me a story.”

This issue offers two guidelines for handling bedtime with children.

Don’t “oversleep” your children - A friend remembers an early childhood filled with unnecessary naps. He and his brother would rub their eyes until they were red before stumbling out of their bedrooms in the afternoon. They would grope their way into their mom’s room and say, “We just woke up. Can we get up now?” If they had wanted to get up because they weren’t sleepy, it would not have been allowed.

Recent research indicates that bright children, particularly gifted children, may not need as much sleep as others. Too bad. They are bright enough to be more of a problem when they are awake.

Some parents put their youngsters to bed simply to gain some time away from them. That’s sad, because ideally children should be able to be up and unobtrusive at the same time! On the other hand, if adults need privacy in the evening, sending children to their rooms is more reasonable than sending them to bed early.

Understanding the child’s reason for not wanting to go to bed - Sometimes younger children are afraid. Night is associated with scary noises and other strange

things. Monsters are lords of the darkness. Every child knows that a night creature is not your basic friendly puppy. Children have fairly active imaginations. One little eight-year-old girl, after recently being adopted, imagined that her parents only looked like humans. But at night, their skin would peel off and they were really lizards underneath. This sounds like a horror movie, but after all, horror stories touch something present within us all—things more readily accessible to children through their imaginations.

Explore your child’s reasons for not wanting to go to sleep. For youngsters, going to bed is no fun if they know their parents fight as soon as they are out of sight. Fear of the dark, fear of loss, fear of the unknown, and fear of death may all play a role in a child’s bedtime problems.

You can use simple, calm reassurance with the expectation that your child will be able to handle his or her own problems. Unfortunately, instead of providing simple reassurance, an over exploring or overly involved parent may sometimes elevate the ridiculous to the sublime. For example, pleading, “Ricky, you’ll be all right, honey,” makes things worse. And it definitely does not improve the situation when parents look under the bed to prove there are no monsters. Children are likely to be more afraid, thinking, “Wow! Maybe there are monsters or they would never be looking under the bed like that!”

If parents are relaxed and do not make a big issue out of bedtime, most youngsters will naturally go to bed when they get sleepy.

***Explore your child’s reasons for not wanting
to go to sleep***