



# NOISE AND SLEEP

Whether your children wake up to every bump in the night, or sleep like a rock; sound can affect their sleep and impact their overall health.

## Noises that can Affect Sleep

1. Home appliances
2. TVs, radios, electronics
3. Pets
4. Other people in the home
5. Rain storms or wind storms
6. Traffic
7. Urban city noise
8. Trains, planes, or boats
9. Toilet flushing



## The Facts

- When your children are asleep, their brains can hear and wake up to even the quietest of noises.
- Even if your children do not fully wake up, if their brains wake up because of noises throughout the night, their sleep cycles can be affected.
- Noises, even at low-volumes can cause sleep problems in children.
- Noises are measured by “decibel levels.”
- Excessive noise can cause poor sleep, which can lead to long-term health problems, such as heart disease.

## What Kind of Noise is Safe?

Decibel (db) Level	Sounds Like	Affect on Sleep
Under 30 db	Normal breathing A watch ticking Leaves blowing Soft white noise	Little to no affect on sleep; <b><u>Safe</u></b>
30-to-40 db	Whispers Bird calls A quiet library	Causes awakenings; <b><u>May cause sleep problems</u></b>
40-to-55 db	Rainstorm or windstorm Traffic noise A refrigerator running	Affects most people. Causes awakenings; <b><u>Can cause sleep problems</u></b>
Over 55 db	Normal talking Radio, TVs Washing machine Toilet flushing	Lots of exposure is linked to heart disease; <b><u>Known to impact health; Will likely cause sleep problems</u></b>



# What You Can Do

One of the **best things** you can do to make your children's sleep space better is to **limit distracting noises throughout the night that may wake them up.**

## 1. Children Sleep Better with Music?

That's okay! We want your children to have the best sleep possible! Try choosing music that is slow and quiet, that does not change in volume or rhythm. Music without words is best. Keep this part of your bedtime routine relaxing instead of exciting. White noise machines can also be helpful.

## 2. Turning Off Music Once they are Asleep.

If your children use music to go to sleep at night, be sure to turn off the music once they fall asleep. You can also teach them how to turn the music back on if they wake up and need it to fall back asleep. Some music players have a timer you can set, which can be helpful for busy, sleepy parents.

## 3. Keeping the Windows Closed.

Outside noises are not something we can control. But keeping the windows closed at night can help drown out the sounds that may wake your children at night. You can also try moving their beds away from the windows in their bedroom.

## 4. Sharing a Room with a Snoring Sibling?

Most importantly, have the snoring child evaluated by your PCP. Otherwise, to make this work for young children, have the beds as far apart as possible. A room divider or the use of a "sleeping fan" or "white noise machine" between the beds may also help drown out unwanted noise.

## 5. The Safe Way to Use White Noise Machines

Never put the machine right next to the bed or the crib, keep it on a dresser across the room. Keep the volume low, but so the sound can still be heard. It should sound like if you were standing outside of a bathroom door when someone is taking a shower.



## PARENT RESOURCES

- [Nationalsleepfoundation.org](http://nationalsleepfoundation.org)
- [Sleepforkids.org](http://Sleepforkids.org)
- [HealthyChildren.org](http://HealthyChildren.org)
- AAP Program: "Brush, Book, Bed" is available at: <http://bit.ly/bedroutine>
- <http://www.seattlechildrens.org/clinics-programs/sleep-disorders/resources/>