

A PRACTICAL PLACE TO BEGIN

A Gentler Start to Bedtime

One small routine plan to help bedtime feel more familiar and manageable

Bedtime does not have to look perfect to be working.

Every family's evening looks different. You may be creating a bedtime routine for the first time, making an existing routine more predictable, or simply looking for one idea that could make evenings easier.

This short guide helps you choose a few familiar steps, involve your child, and practice the routine without expecting every night to go exactly the same way.

Keep what already works. You do not need to replace the comfortable parts of your family's evening.

Choose one small goal. A short, familiar routine is often easier to practice than a long list of changes.

Stay flexible. Late evenings, illness, travel, and real family life may change the plan—and that is okay.



BEGIN WITH THE ROUTINE YOU ALREADY HAVE

Make a Simple Bedtime Plan

Write or draw four steps your family would like to use tonight. Four is only a starting point—you may use fewer steps or add more later.

STEP 1 	STEP 2
STEP 3 	STEP 4

Ideas you might include			
MOVE	PAJAMAS	BATHROOM	BRUSH TEETH
READ	SONG	DRINK	BED

Invite your child to help choose the order when that works for your family. Some steps—such as a little movement before quieter activities—may make the transition easier.

WORDS TO TRY TONIGHT

Keep the Language Short and Helpful

Short, familiar phrases can help your child understand what is happening without adding a long explanation at the end of a busy day.

To begin	"It's time for our bedtime plan."
To show what comes next	"First pajamas, then book."
To offer a manageable choice	"Blue pajamas or green pajamas?"
When choosing is hard	"You can choose, or I can help choose."
When your child needs help	"I'll help you get started."
When the evening changes	"Tonight our plan is a little different."

Not every moment needs to be a teaching moment.

When everyone is tired or time is short, it is okay to give your child more help. You can practice independence another day when there is less pressure.

Choose One Phrase to Try

Write one short phrase that feels natural for your family. Practice it before bedtime so the words feel familiar when you need them.

Tonight I will try: _____



GIVE THE NEW PLAN TIME TO BECOME FAMILIAR

Practice Without Pressure

Practice earlier. Talk through the bedtime steps during a relaxed part of the day, before anyone is tired.

Set the stage. When bedtime begins, you might turn off the television, lower the lights, and offer quieter choices.

Notice where things get hard. Your child may need more warning, help stopping a favorite activity, time to move, or a more comfortable choice.

Change one thing at a time. Give one small change time to become familiar before adding something new.

The goal is a routine your child understands and that works for your family.

Want More Bedtime Support

The complete Elev8 Family Bedtime Toolkit includes a ready-made bedtime routine story families can use right away, along with a customizable routine story where families can add photographs of their own child and use the words that feel familiar at home. It also includes a family guide, two-inch visual cards, an editable visual schedule, optional star boards, family reward-choice cards, and a short video guide.

Explore family resources at

elev8classroomcoaching.com

This resource offers general educational ideas and does not replace individualized medical, developmental, or therapeutic support.

A SMALL VISUAL SET TO HELP YOU BEGIN

Bedtime Visual Cards

Choose only the cards your family needs. Cut them apart, place them in order, and point to each picture as you move through the routine.



PRINT AT ACTUAL SIZE OR 100%

Do not select Fit to Page, Fit, or Scale to Fit. Each card should print as a two-inch square.