

ISSUE NO.01 - HEALTHY HABITS

GLORIFIED BABYSITTERS

Journal

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Naptime Tips

Napping is an essential part of a toddler's routine. Read our expert tips and tricks to simplify naptime.

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The Benefits of Gardening for Kids

Gardening has countless benefits – these range from physical flexibility to mental well-being. We discuss why getting your kids involved in the garden is amazing for your kids and you!



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NAPTIME TIPS

ENRICA SAROTTO

8

THE BENEFITS OF GARDENING
FOR KIDS

KATHRYN TOMASETTI

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NAPTIME TIPS BY ENRICA SAROTTO

Napping is an essential part of a toddler's routine, and well... We all know what can happen when a child lacks the quantity of sleep that they need, don't we? They can become grumpy, stressed, and irritable, and their environment (home, childcare) can suffer the consequences.

Of course, juggling and syncing everyone's sleep routine can be hard, with different family members being on different schedules. But it is important to keep in mind that toddlers and kids need more time to recharge and rest, as they are living a phase of significant changes and fast growth.

Read on to discover why naps are important for our little ones, plus all our tips on how to integrate them easily into your daily routine.

Studies (1) show that

preschoolers who nap often develop a higher level of attention than those who are not napping. Attention supports memory and self-regulation, so napping becomes even more critical as it can influence the cognitive development of our kids.

Of course, every child is a little different, but they usually need more time asleep than an adult.

HOW MANY HOURS SHOULD THEY SLEEP?

- Between 3 and 5 years old, kids need a good 11-13 hours of sleep;
- Between 7-10 years old, they generally need 10-12 hours.

HOW MANY NAPS?

- Around the time a toddler is 15 to 18 months old, they will begin to drop

their morning nap.

- As they get older (at around age 5), the afternoon nap might disappear, but not necessarily.

HOW LONG SHOULD THESE NAPS BE?

Assuming they are getting a substantial amount of sleep at night, naps should add up to a total of 2-2.5h when the toddler is 12 months old, 1.5-2h at 18 months, and about 1h to 75min when the child reaches two years old. (Unfortunately, that's precisely the time the "terrible twos," kick in so don't expect them to be consistently happy about napping...

HOW CAN YOU HELP THEM TO FALL ASLEEP?

Sometimes kids will refuse to take their nap even if they are tired - usually they are playing and simply don't

want to stop. There are so many more "interesting" things to do instead of sleeping!

Here are some tips to help transition from active time into rest time that will signal to a child's brain subconsciously (and consciously!) that it's time to lay down for a doze.

TIPS.

- Usually, a pre-sleep routine can help a lot. Try 15-20 minutes (timed!) of storytime or reading.
- Create a quiet and preferably dark environment, with little stimulation and the correct temperature. (Pediatric Judith Owens recommends a temperature between 65° to 70°F (18° to 22° C), making sure that your toddler is wearing a single layer of long pants and long sleeves (2).)
- Avoid electronic devices.

NAPTIME TIPS

The screens' blue light is known to affect sleep (of adults and kids alike).

The National Sleep Foundation (3) reminds us that light from fluorescent bulbs and LED lights can produce the same effect on the circadian rhythm, so be aware of the type of light sources that are in the bedroom.

- Sometimes children can't sleep because they are too tired. Overtiredness can cause the body to experience a surge in adrenalin, which in turn keeps a child awake. It's important to have a good grasp of a child's individual sleep needs. Then we won't end up

waiting too long once we notice the typical signs they are ready to take a nap (even if it's slightly out of schedule!)

- Eating a proper meal before going to sleep is preferable, too, because a kid with an empty stomach will probably not sleep. However, (as always!) it's a fine balance, as a heavy meal will be difficult to digest.

Last, but not least, the adult's mood can affect the child in his or her transition to sleep. It's important to be relaxed and to transition ourselves into a quiet time first. Less stress and anxiety equal better sleep (for kids as well as for adults).

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A soft, watercolor-style illustration of a woman with long brown hair and a floral headband, holding the hand of a young child with short brown hair. The woman is wearing a pink top and blue pants, and she is carrying a basket filled with various vegetables like carrots and tomatoes. The child is wearing a white shirt with brown polka dots and blue pants. The background is light and airy, with some green leaves and a small bee flying around. The text is overlaid on this illustration.

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THE BENEFITS OF GARDENING FOR KIDS

BY KATHRYN TOMASETTI

Gardening has countless benefits — these range from physical flexibility to mental well-being. In fact, it's so healthy for kids - and in so many different ways! - that it's well worth considering whether your children's daycare offers them the opportunity to garden, either indoors or outdoors.

Whether there's access to a sprawling yard with space for a vegetable patch, or simply a sunny windowsill lined with herb-filled pots, giving your children the chance to grow their own plants will have positive effects for everyone.

PHYSICAL BENEFITS: STRETCHING YOUR MUSCLES...

Gardening helps you get - and stay! - active (1), no matter what your age or ability. Whether it's trimming overgrown plants,

picking fresh peas, or watering thirsty seedlings, tending a garden helps us to exercise our whole bodies (bending and reaching, lifting and digging), as well as improve balance and coordination. For kids, gardening activities, such as carefully opening seed bags or pruning stray branches, help to develop fine motor skills (2).

...AND STRENGTHENING YOUR ORGANS

It's scientifically proven that gardening can improve the health of your heart (3). This helps reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes (4), as well as lowering the risk of type 2 diabetes and colon cancer.

CULTIVATING SENSORY DEVELOPMENT

For children in particular,

caring for plants and observing their growth engages all their senses, which is the most effective and interactive (5) way for little ones to take in information. Kids see the brightly colored sunflowers, ants and ladybugs. They smell (6) scented sweet peas and listen to flapping butterflies. And they can taste and feel (7) the textures of ripe produce, like cherry tomatoes and home-made basil pesto.

Exposure to this sensory development fuels an early passion for the natural world around kids. It can also be a first encounter with science, math and environmental awareness - via growing, counting and nurturing nature - as well as the cycle of life. And every day in the garden is a lesson in cultivating patience. We all can't wait for that first crop of strawberries to become ripe enough for picking!

GARDENING FOR LIFE

Gardening provides a unique opportunity for teamwork and strengthening bonds with your loved ones (8), whether family or caregivers. You can assign different jobs to different people, trusting children to care for their own plants or a certain section of the vegetable patch. Work together to grow your own mint, basil, and aloe vera plants from cuttings. You are creating unique memories, while at the same time, demonstrating healthy activity (9) and how to take long-term responsibility for your own health. If you're gardening as part of a wider community, the fun is doubled.

PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS

Finally, and equally importantly, gardening has been proven a

powerful antidote for adults and children who experience depression (10). You are effectively reducing day to day anxiety by nurturing another living thing (11).

GARDEN-FRESH TREATS FOR THE TABLE: HARVESTING IN SEASON

Gardening can help the whole family to understand the seasonality of food. When are certain types of fruits and vegetables, from kiwis to cucumbers, ready to harvest? Is it natural for us to eat cherries in December? Or grapes in April?

WHERE DOES OUR FOOD COME FROM?

Watching your garden grow can also stimulate conversations about where our food comes from before it arrives in the store. Not to mention the modes of transport (a pickup from a local farm? an airplane from Chile?) that are used to get it there.

CHOOSING NEW FLAVORS FROM THE GARDEN

Taking an active role in growing your own fresh produce has also been proven to help picky eaters (12) try new foods. The same idea holds true for all the family (13). Is there anything tastier than cooking meals with the fruits, vegetables and herbs that you've grown yourself? From carrots to scallions, there are plenty of types of produce that are easy (14) for even first-time gardeners to grow themselves, whether in containers or outdoors.

THE MOST DELICIOUS OF LESSONS

And once you've harvested your bounty? Then it's time for your family to savor the fruits of your labor! We're thinking apples simmered with cinnamon, fresh spinach wilted in butter, and heirloom tomatoes drizzled in basil-infused olive oil...
Buon appetito!

THE BENEFITS OF GARDENING FOR KIDS

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