

Adherence and acceptability of a bedtime routine intervention for toddlers

Author names, institutions

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Introduction:

Implementation of a consistent bedtime routine is associated with improved sleep outcomes and better social-emotional development. The aim of this study was to examine adherence and family acceptability of an individualized bedtime routine recommendation for toddlers introduced at well-child visits.

Methods:

Caregivers of 36 toddlers reported on their child's bedtime routine at 12, 15 and 24-month well-child visits. The intervention, conducted as part of a randomized control trial, consisted of provision of an individualized bedtime routine with an emphasis on bathing, teeth brushing, and bedtime reading. Recommendations were provided at the child's 12-month visit and discussed again at the child's 15-month visit.

Results:

Overall, 50% (n=18) of caregivers reported having a consistent bedtime routine (5+ nights per week) at 12 mos (prior to intervention), which increased to 69% (n=25) at 15 mos and 81% (n=29) at 24 mos. Of the families who started with a routine, 89% (n=16) and 83% (n=15) had a consistent routine at 15 and 24 mos, respectively. Approximately half of families without a consistent routine at baseline engaged in one at 15 mos (50%) and 24 mos (61%), but at a lower rate of adherence, $p < .001$. Of those with a consistent bedtime routine, almost all incorporated the recommended activities, including bathing (97% at 15 mos, 92% at 24 mos) and brushing teeth (86% at 15 mos, 94% at 24 mos), with fewer engaging in bedtime reading over time (86% at 15 mos and 67% at 24 mos). At 15 mos, 98% (n=35) of caregivers reported that they liked having a bedtime routine for their child and 94% (n=34) that the bedtime routine helped their child's sleep. At 24 mos, 100% (n=35) of caregivers reported liking having a bedtime routine for their child and that the bedtime routine helped their child's sleep.

Conclusions:

Overall, families were adherent with the recommendation of a bedtime routine provided at 12 and 15 month well-visits through 24 months of age, with lower adherence for families who started off without a routine. Recommended bedtime routine activities were incorporated by almost all families, including bathing, brushing teeth, and bedtime reading. Caregivers reported that they liked having a bedtime routine for their child and that it improved their child's sleep. Health care providers should consider recommending an individualized bedtime routine at well child visits, as it is acceptable and feasible for families and can benefit children's development and sleep.

Support

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Frequency of routine activities at 15 and 24 months

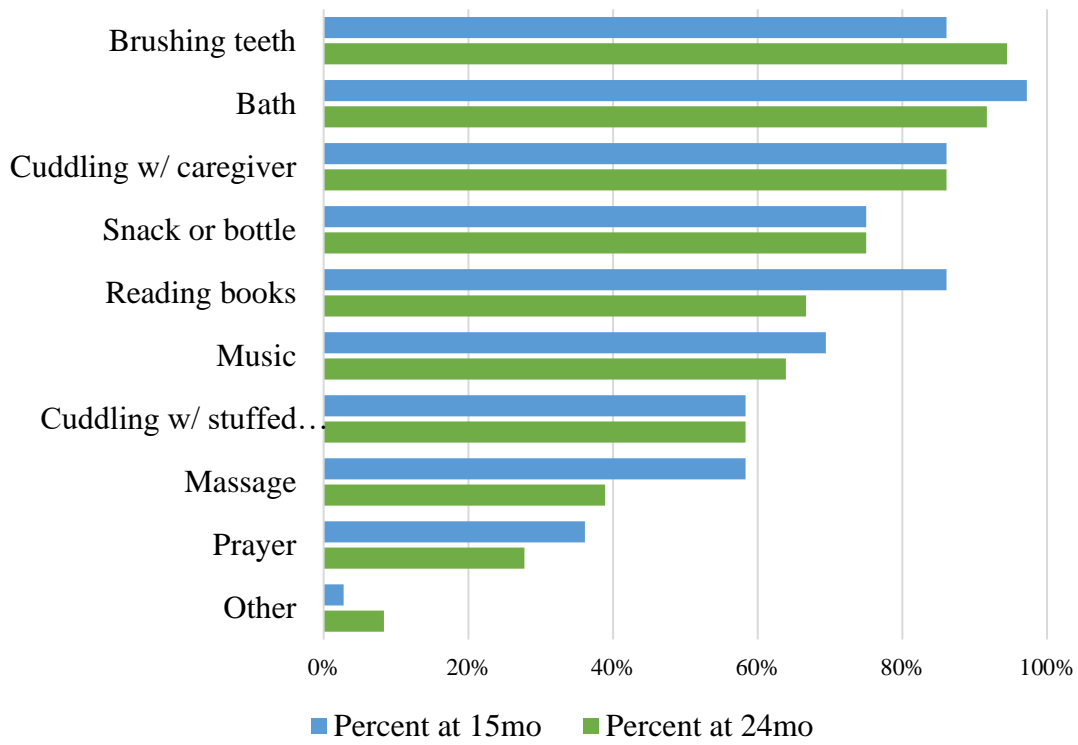


Figure 1. Percentages of activities incorporated by each family into toddler's bedtime routine at 15 and 24 month visits.