Bedtime routines (definition of optimal routines)

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Bedtime routines should be formed around a calm environment and include different activities such as:

- (1) brushing teeth before going to bed for 2 minutes using a fluoridated toothpaste(for children under 7, parents should actively brush children's teeth);
- (2) avoiding snacks and drinks after brushing teeth and generally limiting snacks and drinks the hour before bed (water and unflavoured milk aside);
- (3) reading or sharing a book with children or simply telling a story before bed;
- (4) avoiding stimulating activities and electronic devices such as television, mobile phones, tables and gaming consoles, and
- (5) interacting with the child in calm, relaxing activities such as playing together, cuddling, singing and/or having a bath/shower but not necessarily every night.

All these activities should take place the hour before the child goes to bed and they should be fairly consistent across the week and the weekend. Finally, each night, children should go to bed early enough to allow them to sleep for the recommended, age-appropriate time before they have to get up in the morning.