



How to Ditch The Afternoon Nap Without Losing Your Sanity

by Arielle - Resident Sleep Expert on January 29, 2018 in Mom, Sleep



As a pediatric sleep consultant, I speak to parents whose lives are being turned upside down by their toddlers' nap schedules. As a parent, I know that for those of us who are caring for these tiny dictators, afternoon nap time can be our saving grace. But what happens when an afternoon nap is no longer appropriate? How do we go about dropping the nap without losing our sanity? And how can you know that your child is actually ready to stop napping?

I have a Facebook group for clients with whom I've worked. It's an added bonus of support that comes along with each of my packages so that families don't feel isolated after our work is complete. Many of my original clients are hitting the dreaded age... dun dun dun... and dropping their afternoon nap.

Signs it's time the nap has got to go:

1. Your child is between ages 3 and 5.
2. You spend hours trying to get your child to fall asleep for her nap. When she finally falls asleep, it's 3 or 4 p.m. (which you know will lead to bedtime struggles!).
3. Bedtime starts to creep later and later, or your child cannot fall asleep until well beyond 8 p.m. Or, bedtime becomes a fight!

4. Your child starts waking throughout the night and/or begins to wake up much earlier than normal. (And you need all the coffee.)

Okay, so I've determined that it's time to drop the nap. But HOW???

1. Expect an icky phase. Know that all nap transitions are just that – transitions – and they can take some time. Sometimes, it can take up to a month to get into a good groove. That's okay and normal (so try not to get frustrated!).
2. Set a significantly earlier bedtime throughout that icky transition phase. By doing this you prevent your child from becoming overtired. Your child will likely be quite tired by late afternoon. Whatever you do, don't let her fall asleep! Instead, help him get to bed super early (sometimes even as early as 6 p.m.) to make up for the lost daytime sleep.
3. Implement quiet time. Just because your child is giving up her nap doesn't mean she no longer needs some downtime. Set aside a minimum of one hour each day for your child to take a time out from her busy little life (and yours!).
4. Be patient. Remember, this is a developmental stage for your child. She's growing up. Be patient as she works through this stage. And remember: coffee and wine make a day go right!

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About Arielle - Resident Sleep Expert

Hello, I'm Arielle! I am the Founder and Certified Pediatric Sleep Consultant at Expect to Sleep Again Sleep Consulting, LLC. After having grown up in the Granite State, I earned my Bachelor of Science in Journalism from Boston University and settled in MA. I became a self-proclaimed "sleep geek" after the birth of my daughter, and have since made it my mission to help families get the rest they need in order to enjoy a happier, healthier life. I offer a variety of services including

sleep-specific Facebook troubleshooting groups, in-person workshops, and individualized sleep consultations. I live with my three-year-old daughter and two longhaired dachshunds in Bolton, MA.

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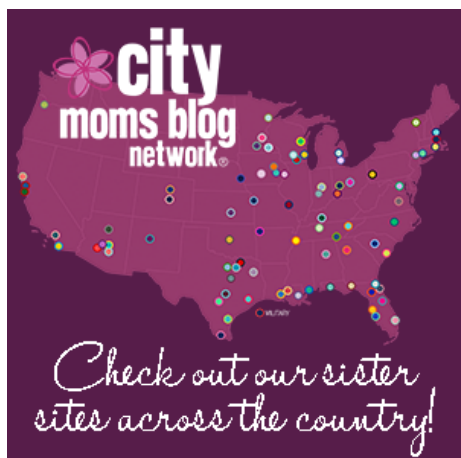
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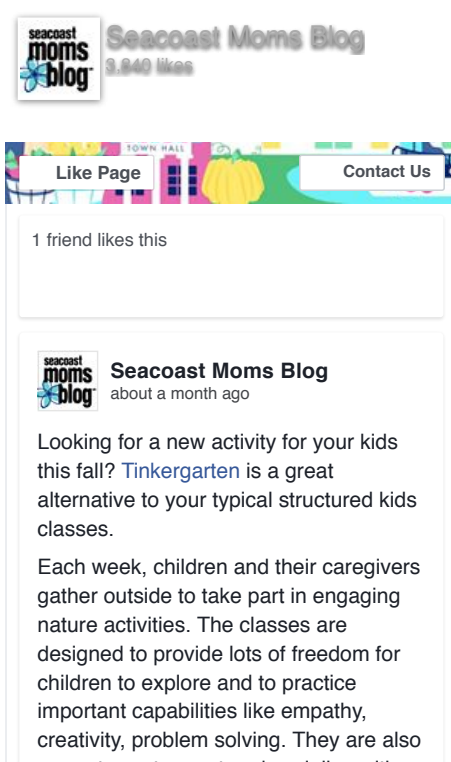


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