

how to HAVE HAPPIER MORNINGS



Get more sleep. I know, it's obvious advice, but sadly, it's true: the best way to make getting up at 5:30 a.m. better is to go to bed at (gulp) 9:30 p.m. Plus, you're fried. Don't stay up late trying to remember who needs lunch and who hates mayo. Go to bed, and you can get up with enough time to deal with it in the am.

Lighten your afternoon and evening load. Know why you (and your kids) don't want to go to sleep at 9:30 p.m.? Because it's the first time all day you've been free from other people's demands. When your time is less scheduled, you're more able to invest it in sleep.

Make a morning mantra. If getting out of bed is hard no matter how much you slept, be ready. Remind yourself: *Once I'm up, I'll feel great, or It's always easier once my feet are on the floor.*

Don't make their problems your problems. Yes, your kids need to be at school at precisely 7:47 a.m. But unless you have to clock in right after you drop them off, you're good. You can be mellow, pleasant and helpful while they rush—and learn the value of preparation.

Know what you want. Again, you might think you want them to get to school on time. But is that really your main goal? Or is it a yelling-free start to their day (and yours)?

Try a precision-timed playlist. Imagine: at wake-up time, *Walking on Sunshine* blares. On *Top of the World* marks the need to brush teeth and load backpacks, and with the opening bars of *Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go*, people flee the house for the car or bus, and you haven't said a nagging word.

Master the timing. Yes, once you made it to school in 8 minutes. But it usually takes 12—and while your kids could get up and out the door in half an hour, they never do. Plan for the time your morning routine really takes.

Revel in the ordinary. Know when parents and kids spend the most time together over the course of a childhood? Mornings and dinnertimes. Yeah, mornings can suck. But they're also part of your glorious life together, tardy slips and all. You get one a day until they're gone.

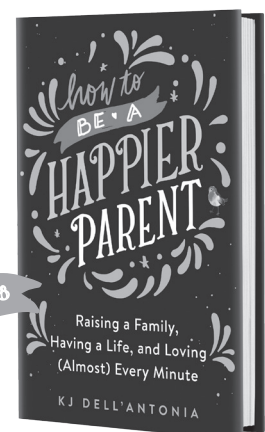
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10 SNUGGLY REASONS TO GET LOTS OF SLEEP

1. SLEEP MAKES EVERYONE HAPPIER (PARENTS TOO).
2. SLEEP IS DREAMY AND SNUGGLY AND COZY AND LOVELY.
3. SLEEPING HELPS YOU DO BETTER AT SCHOOL.
4. WHEN YOU SLEEP MORE, IT'S EASIER TO BE KIND TO OTHERS.
5. OTHERS WILL FIND IT EASIER TO BE KIND TO YOU, TOO.
6. THE MORE SLEEP YOU GET, THE NICER TOMORROW WILL BE.
7. THE CAT PLAYS WITH YOUR LEGO AT NIGHT.
8. AFTER A BIG SLEEP, YOU'LL RUN FASTER, JUMP HIGHER AND HAVE MORE FUN.
9. YOUR TOYS ARE TIRED. THEY NEED SLEEP TOO.
10. RESEARCH SHOWS:
BETTER NIGHTS = BETTER DAYS!

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