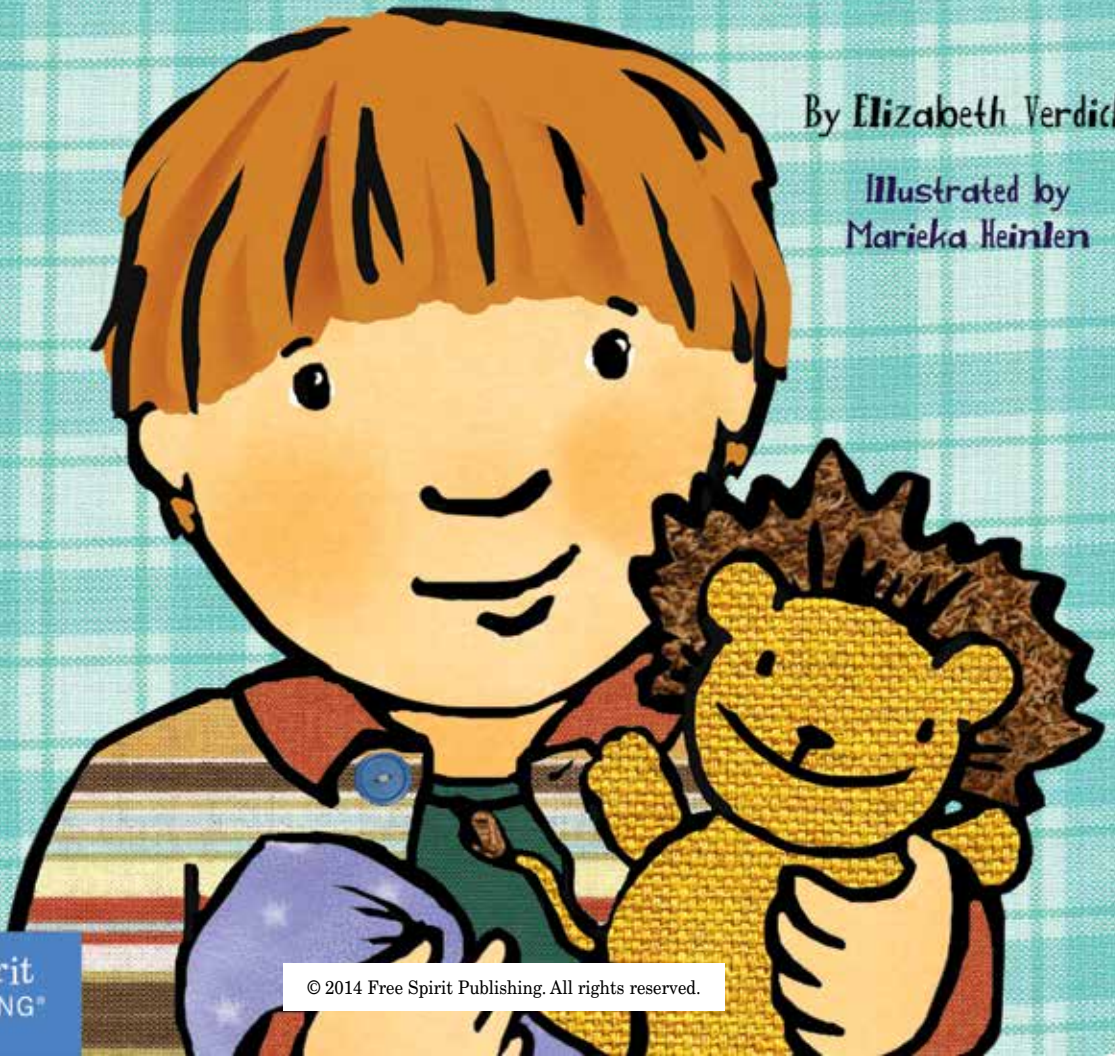


Naptime

By Elizabeth Verdick

Illustrated by
Marieka Heinlen



It's naptime . . .

No, **playtime.**





Naptime.
Do you remember
why we rest?

Yes!

Naptime Tips for Parents & Caregivers

Naps are a much-needed break in the day that help your toddler learn how to settle down and self-soothe—important milestones for emotional growth. Rest is restorative for you, too. A naptime routine lets you get a few things done or have a little time to yourself each day. Want a happier napper? Try the following tips.

- **Read up on sleep guidelines.** A child who is only a year old generally needs two one-hour naps a day. By eighteen months, toddlers are ready for one daily nap lasting one to two hours. (Young children also need approximately ten to twelve hours of sleep each night.) Of course, your child's needs may differ from these guidelines. What are signs that your child *isn't* well rested? Increased crankiness, irritability, and frustration. If you have concerns, talk to your pediatrician.
- **Create a schedule.** If your child isn't already on a schedule, start one now. Stick to a set bedtime, and wake your child at the same time each morning. This helps ensure that your child will be ready for a nap or rest period around the same time each day.
- **Set the mood.** Help your child wind down before naptime. Offer a soothing snack like milk and crackers (avoid sugar). Settle down into some quiet activities. Retreat to your child's room, where you may wish to lower the shades and dim the lights. Play soft music or sing a lullaby; read books with gentle words and pictures.
- **Have a familiar naptime place.** Children benefit from having a predictable place to sleep, whether a crib, a toddler bed, or a cot at the childcare center. Provide familiar comfort objects such as a blanket or favorite stuffed toy.

● **Prepare for resistance.** Toddlers love to play and explore, and many of them have a hard time stopping to take a rest. If your child can't sleep, a rest in bed will still provide uninterrupted quiet time alone. If naps are a daily problem, try to determine the cause. Is your child waking too late in the morning? Too wound up to sleep properly? Your healthcare provider can be a good resource for you.

● **Use this book.** Read it at naptime to help your child grow calmer and feel more in the mood for rest. Repeat words from the book to cue your child when needed: "Quiet as a whisper, shhhh, calm as a purring cat . . ." or "Naps are just a little break. See you when you wake."



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