



# LIFE AT HOME

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## BEDTIME



Photo, Leah Hennel, Calgary Herald

# The family slumber party

Are we having fun yet? Not really, say sleepy parents whose beds are crowded with kids, while experts say you need strategies to make the break at bedtime

LISA KADANE  
CALGARY HERALD

For many parents, the only thing worse than hearing their child cry out in the night is listening to the pitter-patter of tiny feet padding down the hall, followed by the sound of their bedroom door opening and Johnny announcing, at 2 a.m.: "Mommy, I can't sleep," or "There's a monster in my room," or "I have to go pee."

After Mommy opens her eyes and realizes she's not dreaming, one of two scenarios usually plays out.

In the first, she escorts a kicking and screaming Johnny back to his room.

In the second, more common scenario, Johnny climbs into bed with his parents and everyone, eventually, goes back to sleep. It's the path of least resistance and the one preferred by today's over-worked, time-strapped parents, many of whom are operating on a sleep deficit. They'd rather call a truce in the form of a family slumber party than turn the bedroom into a battlefield.

A 2004 Sleep in America poll conducted by the National Sleep Foundation found more than one-fourth of toddlers (27 per cent) and pre-schoolers (28 per cent) change their sleep locations midway through the night, many of them waking up between Mom and Dad. As a result, parents of those children lose an average of 35 minutes of sleep per night.

An equivalent survey hasn't been conducted in Canada, but casual conversation among friends with one- to five-year-olds reveals many have experienced the middle-of-the-night migration.

SEE SLUMBER, PAGE G2



Matt Vanderlinde, Calgary Herald

Loic Floc'h-Anderson, 4, often refuses to sleep in his own bed, opting to sleep with his mom Patricia and dad Pierre (not seen). Loic's parents are divided on the issue of whether he should continue to be able to do this.

## Get some sleep

May is Better Sleep month. Here are some tips to help you and your kids get the sleep you need

### How many hours is enough sleep?

- Adults: 7 to 9
- Children aged 5-12: 10 to 11
- Pre-schoolers (3-5 years): 11 to 13
- Toddlers (1-3 years): 12 to 14

—Source: National Sleep Foundation

### Bedroom and bedtime basics

- Shut out the sun: sunlight can wake you up early (or prevent you from falling asleep). Make sure sleeping rooms are dark, especially during Canadian summers.
- Control the temperature: A room heated between 16 C and 18 C is ideal for sleep.
- Reduce noises: If barking dogs, sirens or other loud sounds are a problem, stifle them with a noise machine or wear ear plugs.
- Kill the television: TVs, video games and computers have no place in a child's bedroom, as the temptation can lead to a later bedtime and over-stimulation.
- Mattresses matter: For adults, anyway. Make sure it's comfortable and not past its best-before date (usually after about 10 years of use).
- Revel in routine: Go to bed and get up at the same time every day, even on weekends. It will help your body get into a sleep routine. For kids: put them to bed and get them up at the same time every day.
- Relax before rest: Just as you read or take a bath before bed, get your child into the habit of calming down before lights out, whether through quiet play or a story.

— Tips courtesy Better Sleep Council of Canada and the National Sleep Foundation.

### Strategies to keep your child in bed

- Under the age of three, secure the door to prevent nighttime wandering. "Now that the child is in a toddler bed, we turn the whole room into a crib," says parenting coach Kitty Raymond. She says the safest place for a child is behind a closed door in his own room.
- After age three, parents can set limits through bargaining and guidelines. Some suggestions:
  1. Communicate bedtime expectations, keep them consistent and enforce them — even if it means getting up and physically taking the bed crasher back to his own room.
  2. Install a wireless door chime on your child's door that will ding if it's opened. The bell will remind him of the rule (stay in your own bed) and make him hesitant to break it since it means announcing it to the house. Move a potty chair into the room for those learning nighttime potty skills.
  3. Try using a special "bed-time box" filled with new books, neat toys and a flashlight that the child has access to only at night. This accessible diversion will help him remember the rule and dispel the need to visit Mom and Dad.
  4. Children who profess to be scared of the dark need to have control over their lights. Parents: resist the urge to turn them off before you retire.

— Tips courtesy Kitty Raymond

## AROUND THE HOUSE

### Compost crazy

**GARDENING** • Load up on free compost May 7 to 13 at Roll-Land Farms Limited — Essex Kent Mushrooms near Crossfield. The mushroom grower is holding its annual Gardener Appreciation Week and is giving away spent mushroom substrate while supplies last.

This organic compost is the fertile medium used to grow commercial mushrooms. When mixed or tilled with soil, the substrate helps lawns, trees, shrubs and flowers flourish.

Gardeners must load their own vehicles in bulk, or in bags or containers they supply themselves. The exception is May 12 (weather permitting) when there will be three loaders and two bobcats between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. to load trucks up to one ton in size.

Take Hwy. 2 north to the Crossfield/Drumheller exit. Go east .5 km to the service road. Turn right and follow the road back south to the entrance. Look for the sign in the field. For more, call 946-4395.

### Hip to be square faucets

**PRODUCT** • More Canadians are choosing lofts and condos for downtown dwellings, and contemporary design is keeping pace. Delta and Moen faucets have introduced collections with geometric forms to make bold statements.

Delta's Arzo Bath Collection is square but hip, with centre-set and widespread sink faucet options, tub/shower faucets, and a Roman tub faucet with optional hand shower. It's available in a chrome or stainless steel finish. Go to [Deltafaucet.com](http://Deltafaucet.com).

Moen's Level faucet line includes products for the bath and kitchen. Bathroom faucets are available in chrome and brushed nickel finishes; kitchen faucets come in chrome or stainless finishes. For information, call 1-905-829-3400.

— Lisa Kadane, Calgary Herald

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Springbank Hill \$589,000

**218 Springbank Villas**  
Bungalow villa, like a showhome, open plan, vaulted ceilings, granite counters, slate floors, wrought iron spindles, 1470 s.f. + developed bsmt, lofted family room, master bdrm on main + 2nd bdrm/den in bsmt w/ Murphy bed. Backing greenbelt.

Springbank Links \$1,225,000

**455 Rodeo Ridge,**  
Awesome views of river & DT, superb location backing treed ravine & golf course, quarter acre lot, luxurious 2448 s.f. home + dev'd walkout (over 3500'), 4 bdrms/4 baths, extensive use of slate & mahogany hardwood & granite, like new.

Wentworth \$650,000

**88 Wentworth Crescent, SW**  
Wentworth Estates, quiet crescent, west backyard w/ huge deck, walking distance to new Co-op shopping mall, 2145 s.f. 2-storey with hardwood floors, maple kitchen with stainless steel appliances, 3 bdrms, main floor den, bonus room.

North Glenmore \$1,250,000

**5911 – 20th Street, SW**  
Perfect location across from golf course, no traffic, built in 2003 on a 56 ft lot with mature landscaping & dbl garage, 2300+ s.f. + dev'd bsmt, 4 bdrms + huge main floor home office, chef's kitchen, media room, walk to school, playground & pool.

Christie Estates \$825,000

**148 Christie Park View, SW**  
Walkout bungalow, brick front, oversized dbl garage, approx 1700 s.f. + walkout, high vaulted ceilings in living/dining/kitchen, slate & hardwood floors, granite counters, 3 bdrms + den/guest room, wet bar, media room, lovely, quiet location.

Elbow Valley \$1,450,000

**323 Diamond Willow Point**  
Most sought after location, backing onto a natural forested ravine with creek & beautiful views, 2600 s.f. bungalow + dev'd walkout, spectacular vaulted & open plan, views from most rooms, tons of natural light, 5 bdrms + den, pie lot, triple garage.

Patterson \$825,000

**10 Patterson Green, SW**  
Renovated 2400 s.f. home w/ walkout bsmt, views, cul-de-sac, backing a greenbelt, gourmet kitchen w/ 36" Wolf gas range, media room w/ drop down movie screen, 3 bedrooms + den, walkout developed as nanny suite w/ separate entry.

Cranston \$1,495,000

**7 Cranleigh Manor, SE**  
On the ridge, spectacular views over river & golf course, 2084 s.f. bung + dev'd walkout, open plan, energy efficient "Greenbuilt" home, sophisticated elegance w/ European country charm & quality finishing, 3 bdrms + den, media rm, wine cellar.