



## Moving From The Crib to Bed

### Here are some strategies for making the transition from crib to bed

- Keep your toddler in a crib until he can get out on his own to reduce nighttime battles. Don't move your child to a bed any sooner than needed for safety! Even though beds make your child seem more grown up, they have disadvantages. It is much harder to keep track of a child who can get out of bed himself. Wait until your child is able to get out of the crib before using a bed. In fact, a firm warning to stay in the crib can even delay the need for a bed longer.
- Make sure the timing is right. Plan the transition during a stress-free time in your toddler's life. Try not to make the switch when there are other changes happening like a new baby, moving, or new childcare. New babies sleep better in a bassinet in your room for the first 4 months.
- Go slow. Prepare your child by talking about the switch before it happens. Talk about getting "too big" for the crib and praise your child for her efforts to be a "big kid." Read books together about making the move to a bed.
- Let your toddler pick out the bed or bedding. Whether it is a new or old bed, let your child claim it by picking out the bed, sheets, pillow, or a blanket.
- Start with the mattress on the floor. Help your child safely get used to sleeping on the new mattress and without the crib rails by putting the mattress on the floor.
- Buy bed rails. If your child needs them, bed rails can keep children from falling out of bed. Blankets on the floor might help too, in case your child takes a tumble.
- If your child protests, let him make the transition more slowly. He may do better at first by sleeping on the bed for naps or cuddling on the bed during playtime.
- Say good-bye to the crib. Make a big deal about saying goodbye to the crib. Have a fun ceremony to welcome the bed.
- Stick to the same bedtime routine. Your child will be comforted by all of the things that do not change for bedtime. Your familiar routine might help your child settle in faster.
- Ask for help. Your doctor is available for more ideas on this change in your family's life.