

# PDA Bedtime Routine Reset

Simple shifts to reduce resistance and create calmer nights

## ***Why bedtime triggers PDA***

- Fatigue lowers regulation
- Stopping feels like loss of control
- Demand stacking escalates quickly

## ***Parent nervous system first***

- Lower lights, slower voice, fewer words
- Wait to problem-solve until morning
- Stay steady and calm

## ***Reduce demands at night***

- Move hygiene earlier if possible
- Keep bedtime steps minimal
- Drop non-essential expectations

## ***What to say instead***

**Instead of:** "It's time for bed."

**Try:** "Do you want to head up now or in a few minutes?"

**Instead of:** "Turn everything off."

**Try:** "Let's start winding things down."

**Instead of:** "You need to go to sleep."

**Try:** "Let's just get comfortable and rest."

**Instead of:** "Why are you still up?"

**Try:** "Looks like your body isn't ready yet."

## ***Autonomy reduces resistance***

- Offer simple choices (music, lighting, order)
- Keep choices limited
- Allow some control within structure

## ***Regulation supports***

- Snack or water if needed
- Weighted blanket or pressure
- Quiet environment

## ***If it escalates***

- Pause and regulate yourself first
- Lower stimulation
- Stay present without pushing

Bedtime struggles are often about nervous system overload, not defiance. Reduce demand, support regulation, and protect connection. - Tara Triebel