

The Pajama Project

At the start of the program year children were arriving at school tired. Parents shared with staff that they struggled with establishing a consistent bedtime routine, children were not getting a sufficient amount of sleep, and in some cases, children were falling asleep on the sofa in the clothing that they wore throughout the day. It became apparent that some families did not have a bedtime schedule that included the basics, such as tooth brushing, washing up/bathing, or story time. Home-based visitors observed the same needs.

Our program became aware of a national initiative called The Pajama Program and decided that it was the perfect time to apply for their grant. The Pajama Program collaborates with local businesses to provide low income children with a new pair of pajamas and a book. We were excited to be approved for the grant and received 400 pairs of brand new Carter pajamas and 250 hard cover children's books.

Our program knew that parents would benefit from additional resources to develop positive bedtime routines. We collaborated with Fidelis Health and utilized funding from a community partner to purchase bars of soap, washcloths, toothbrushes, toothpaste, and to produce a laminated visual "bedtime routine" schedule. Parent volunteers created bedtime bags for each child which contained the donated items.

Family Advocates and Home-Based Visitors incorporated these items as part of the education offered during their visits. They used information contained in the Partners for a Healthy Baby, Hip on Health, and Parents as Teachers Curriculums to supplement the bedtime bags.

Two months later, parents were presented with a Pajama Program survey. The outcomes were astonishing!

- ❖ 94% of Early Head Start and Head Start families indicated that the Pajama Program helped them to establish or improve bedtime rituals
- ❖ 86% of families felt that the Pajama Program helped to develop positive sleep habits. Of those, 94% were Early Head Start families
- ❖ 74% said the new bedtime routines helped their children to feel more rested. That average includes 91% of Early Head Start families
- ❖ 98% of Early Head Start families said the Pajama Program increased tooth brushing habits! The programs averaged 90% in this area
- ❖ 80% of our families felt that the Pajama Program helped to educate them with new parenting skills, with the majority being Early Head Start families

Parents are singing praises about the Pajama Project...

~I struggled with keeping my daughter in her own bed. Now she stays in her bed more often since we started using the bedtime routine.

~He was excited about the new PJs and brushing his teeth. Now he says, "Let's brush teeth momma." I have to brush mine with him.

~My son now sleeps in his own room and goes to sleep by himself, which I thought would never happen!

~Before the program, my son refused to wear pajamas. Now that we are doing the Pajama Program, he wears them.

~We love the Pajama Program. It is wonderful. It has helped immensely with oral hygiene habits and really helped with bedtime routines. Thanks so much!

~This program really helped to prompt us as a family to improve our tooth brushing habits. Thank you so much!

Success Story

A grandparent is using the Pajama Project to incorporate bedtime routines in her home. The Family Advocate educated the grandparent about the importance of limiting screen time for children. The child is now "screen free" for the two hours prior to bed time. The time on his tablet has been replaced with a new bed-time routine and story time. The positive outcomes are the child is experiencing fewer nightmares, he is more rested, and he is better natured at school due to the increase of quality sleep.