

CONVERSATION GUIDE

FOR OFFICERS STARTING ON NIGHT SHIFT

HAVE THE CONVERSATION

Start with honesty and openness with both partners and children (at an age-appropriate level) about starting on the night shift, what changes can be expected, your new sleep schedule, and the importance of sleep as a matter of physical health and mental well-being.



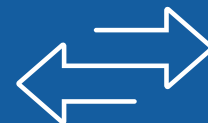
ASK FOR SUPPORT



Emphasizing the importance of maintaining a regular sleep schedule while working on the night shift is a family affair. Let your family know that you are going to need their help, support, and understanding to get the amount of sleep that is necessary for good health and mental well-being.

TWO WAY STREET

Relationships are a two-way street. When you are discussing the importance of maintaining a sleep schedule, ask your partner or spouse how you can take advantage of your new schedule for them to engage in self-care, whether that's getting additional sleep themselves or time for them to participate in activities they enjoy. Find benefits in your new family schedule.



SET EXPECTATIONS



Acknowledge the events that may be impacted by the change in sleep schedule to manage expectations both with partners and children. Ask for their support in maintaining your sleep schedule in your larger community, including events with family and friends—plan for these events with a “family calendar.” Include planning “quality time” as a family unit.

ADDRESS CONCERNS

Allow your loved ones to ask questions or express concerns about your new schedule. If you don't know the answer, tell them you will talk to a Night Shift Thriver at your agency for advice.



EMPHASIZE THE POSITIVE



Sleep is the foundation for physical and mental health. Emphasizing the importance of sleep (for all family members) and setting a good example can lead to a healthy lifestyle and better mental health, which benefit your family in the long run. Remember that it's not just about the amount of time you spend together as a family, but the quality of time that you spend together as a family.