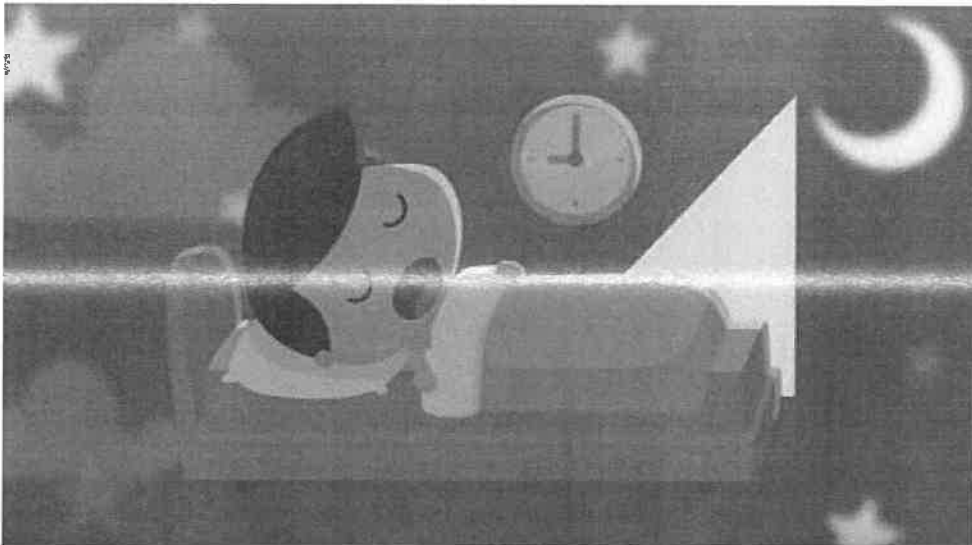


Good Sleep Hygiene— Teaching your child to sleep at night.



How much sleep do we need?

A guide to the amount of sleep your child needs.

Age	Average Number of Hours Sleep Needed	
	Daytime	Night – time
1 Week	8	8 ½
4 Weeks	6 ¾	8 ¾
3 Months	5	10
6 Months	4	10
9 Months	2 ¾	11 ¼
12 Months	2 ½	11 ½
2 Years	1 ¼	11 ¾
3 Years	1	11
4 Years	-	11 ½
5 Years	-	11
6 Years	-	10 ¾
7 Years	-	10 ½
8 Years	-	10 ¼
9 Years	-	10
10 Years	-	9 ¾
11 Years	-	9 ½
12 Years	-	9 ¼
13 Years	-	9 ¼
14 Years	-	9
15 Years	-	8 ¾
16 Years	-	8 ½

Lyn Quine (1997)

When making changes to sleep it is important to remember that sleep is a behaviour.

These behaviours are usually of both the child and the parent. Therefore changes need to be made within the whole family. Being a positive role model for your child will help them to develop a sleep routine. Providing a two week consistent pattern helps sleep routines to imbed.

These changes also mean removing any sleep associations immediately prior to or in bed. These sleep associations can be:

1. Drinks in the bedroom
2. Music playing
3. Toys
4. Lights
5. Persons presence where possible—Unless following graded withdrawal.

The aim is that your child falls asleep by themselves.

Your child's bedroom environment:

Your child's bed should be mainly for sleeping only and playtime should be encouraged outside of the bedroom where possible. This helps children recognise that the bedroom is for sleeping.

The room is to be as dark as possible with blackout blinds ideally. You can purchase suction cup removable black out blinds online.

Should your child need a light, a nightlight at low level (not eye level) can be used. (Please note: light can affect natural melatonin production) .

Ensure their room is not too warm and remove any distractions where possible such as fun and exciting toys / homework. All of these may increase your child's cortisol level.

Behaviour management strategies:

For a child who is demand avoidant, remember to use distraction, humour and visuals as appropriate.

Only placing necessary demands in line with their routine.

Remember how consistency will help your child know what is expected of them and how the routine will be every night.

Remember to always tell your child what you want them to do, not what you don't want them to do, this will help alter behaviour if needed quickly.

Consider phrases used to not provoke any responses from your child as this is likely to increase their cortisol levels.

If your child begins or starts to repeat any behaviours remember that the more consistent you are in your responses the quicker they will understand. Keep all responses calm.

The Routing

Bedtime routine

Start a regular relaxing routine an 1 hour before the bedtime. This is referred to as 'The Golden Hour'. Offer one last snack and drink. Some foods such as banana's, cherries and warm milk encourage sleep. No further drinks or snacks should be offered until the morning. (Please seek advice from your health visitor for infant feeding needs).

This relaxation time, personal care time and then into bed routine should take no more than one hour to complete. The Golden Hour ensures that you are catching the natural Melatonin peak to encourage sleep.

The relaxation part should last for around the first 30 minutes and be calming and non-stimulating e.g. jigsaws, books, or building blocks, cuddles with someone on the sofa etc. No TV, no iPad or mobile phones. Hand eye co-ordination activities are good to encourage relaxation.

Following this step go to the bathroom. If toilet training your child and safe to do so encourage your child to sit on the toilet whilst the bath is being run. Provide a relaxing warm bath which should not be too hot and lasting around 10-15 minutes. **Remember:** the aim of the bath is to encourage relaxation, not playing. Bath time is not to be stimulating. If your child finds bath-time too exciting consider baths in the mornings only.

Your child is encouraged to get dressed in the bathroom or bedroom. Once up-stairs/ in the bathroom your child is not to return downstairs/ to the lounge area.

Then settle your child into bed, one story can be read and then say goodnight. Stories are to be set and no changes to the amount of them read once agreed. After saying goodnight, no interaction with your child, even limit eye contact. Any interaction with them will give them the opportunity to interact with yourself and stay awake longer.

Leave the room, only re-entering if they get out of bed.

Night Time Wakening's:

The key to reducing the night time wakening's is the successful night time routine and teaching your child to settle to sleep.

We all wake up in the night, its learning to go back to sleep when you wake which is key. Successful settling to sleep at bedtime, helps them to re-settle themselves back to sleep when they wake in the night.

If your child wakes during the night return them back to bed just like you did at the beginning.

Remember stay calm and focused.

Minimal interaction.

Sleep is a behaviour so we are supporting your child with this behaviour change. Consistency is **really key** in order for change to take place.

Morning:

Regardless of what time your child settles to sleep they need to be encouraged to wake at the same hour every day. This encourages their circadian rhythm / body clock.

When your child has woken regardless of how the previous night has been this is the time for 'positive parents.'

Be happy and cheerful when they wake so they understand that daytime is the good time for interaction and engagement.

Open your child's curtains every day at the same hour. If needed put the lights on to encourage as much light as possible.

For a child who may find a bath too stimulating, a bath in the morning can help wake them up for the day.

With consistency your child will learn the new bed time sleep routine.

Once you have started this bedtime routine do not be tempted to go back as any change will ultimately make it harder to establish a routine in the long run. There will be an 'extinction burst' where your child may test the routine in place. It is key on these nights that you are more consistent.

Praise your child when they wake in the morning.