

If they have trouble getting to sleep...

Remember it can get worse before it gets better! Be firm and keep going.

if they get up ,say 'It's sleep time' and put them back in bed without chatting or eye contact – respond but don't engage.

You can use a special timer light or clock to tell them it's time to get up.

Sticking to the same bedtime and getting-up time as much as possible, even at weekends, will really help.

Make sure your child is physically tired! children need at least an hour of energetic play or physical activity every day. There is also evidence that roughhousing before the bed time routine can help to release pent up emotions and negative feelings that have been stored throughout the day.



For more information...

Websites & organisations

Bedtime stories www.bedtime.com

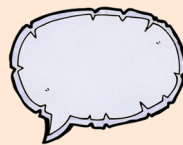
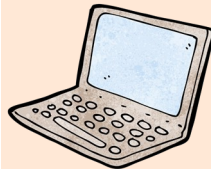
Sesame Street - Elmo Talks About Sleep: Search for 'Sleep' at www.sesamestreet.org/ for lots of video and printable resources.

The Sleep Charity 01302 751416,
www.thechildrenssleepcharity.org.uk

Huffington Post
www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2014/12/08/how-to-get-your-children-to-sleep_n_7319128.html

NHS Live Well
www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Childrenssleep/Pages/childrenssleephome.aspx

BBC
www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/sleep-problems-in-older-children



Tips for parents and carers of 3-11 year olds

Sleep

Sleep is very important: losing as little as 1 hour's sleep a night can affect children's learning.

- Teachers are now seeing more children struggle at school from lack of sleep.
- Different ages need different amounts of sleep
- 3-5yr olds need 11-12 hours of sleep each night - 3 year olds might need a nap too
- 5-11 year olds need 9 1/2 - 11 hours of sleep each night.



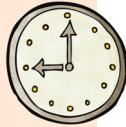
Not enough sleep can affect children's:

- Understanding, concentration and learning
- Ability to manage their feelings
- Behaviour
- Physical health



Things that can affect your child's sleep

- Using phones or screens late at night
- Being out late or eating a late evening meal
- Sugar and caffeine (e.g. from cola drinks)
- Busy parents wanting time with their child later in the evening.



It is important to develop a bedtime routine and stick to it.

- Warn your child when it's nearly bedtime
- Have a quiet time before bed. Finish homework and switch off screens 1 hour before bed
- Colouring or quiet games can help the brain relax.
- Brushing your teeth is a good signal bedtime is coming.
- Reading a bedtime story is a lovely way to end the day.
- A sleep-friendly bedroom is dark, quiet and not too hot or cold.
- Blackout blinds can help with the light.



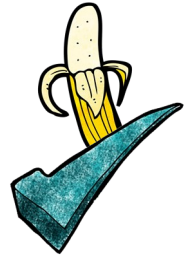
A picture timetable can help the whole family to understand the plan.

Develop a routine for the whole family - bedtime routines are good for grown-ups too!



Things to avoid

- Exercising close to bedtime can actually wake your child up.
- Sugary snacks and sugary caffeinated drinks like coca cola. Try a small snack of banana, porridge, or wholemeal bread instead.
- Try not to let your child fall asleep with the TV or music.. They need to learn to fall asleep by themselves at the start of the night so they know how to get back to sleep if they wake up during the night.



Things to try

A warm milky drink before bed.



A warm bath 30 mins before bed.



Massage can help your child to unwind.

Don't let children drag bedtime out! Have a reassuring bedtime routine and then set a final limit ("This is your last question") – and stick to it!

Calming music can help your child wind down.



Night lights can help children feel safe.

Say goodnight and let your child fall asleep by themselves if possible.

Some smells work directly on the brain to relax the nervous system. Lavender and chamomile baths, aromatherapy oils or teas are good.

If your child is a 'worrier', set time aside earlier in the day to talk about things.



Relaxation techniques can help:

- Encourage your child to concentrate on their **breathing**. Imagine breathing in a beautiful white light and blowing out any worries each time they exhale.
- Relaxation **apps, CDs or videos** can help your child relax. Or you could talk through an imaginary scene such as a trip to the beach, asking them to visualise the scene and feel the warm sun on their face.
- Teach your child to progressively **relax the muscles in their body**. Start by tensing the feet to the count of 5 and then letting them become relaxed. Work up through the calf muscles, thighs and so on until they have relaxed the whole body.