

Encouraging good bedtime habits



A good bedtime routine, can help toddlers and older children to feel secure and relaxed













Develop a short and simple bed time routine, that works for you and your child, and keep to it.

Good sleeping habits can be introduced from 6 months to help babies begin to adapt to differences between day and night. However, it usually takes several months for a child's day-night pattern of wake and sleep to become established.



- Keep regular sleeping hours. Late nights and sleeping in can disrupt the routine for days.
- Avoid stimulating activities in the hour before bedtime.
- A comfort/transitional object, or security blanket at bedtime often helps toddlers and children feel safe and secure when their parent or carer is not present.
- Tell your child how to sleep. For example: lie down, pull the covers up, close your eyes, stay still, goodnight.

Use relaxation techniques to aid sleep and to ensure your child has no worries before they go to sleep. Ideas include a warm bath, warm drink, relaxation exercises, massage or bedtime cuddle, relaxing music, a bedtime story or imagining positive scenes like being on a beach.

Bath-Book-Bed			
1  Last meal	2  Warm bath/shower	3  Night clothes	4  Warm drink (plain milk or water)
5  Brushing teeth	6  Toilet/nappy	7  In bed	8  Relaxation techniques (bedtime story/ lullaby/bedtime chat)
9  Bedtime cuddles	10  Time to sleep	11  Lights out	12  Good night

Keep the bedroom just for sleeping



Create an environment that helps sleep:

- For the first six months of life, babies are safer if they sleep in the presence of a caregiver compared to sleeping in a room on their own.
- The bedroom needs to be dark and quiet. The dark causes us to produce a natural hormone called melatonin, which makes us feel sleepy.
- The bedroom should smell fresh and be kept at a temperature of 21°C or lower.
- Children should be put to bed drowsy, but still awake. Letting your child fall asleep in other places forms habits that may be difficult to break.
- Avoid screens in the bedroom. The light from screens can affect how easily children get to sleep.

