

School Nurse Top Tip



SLEEP NEEDS

School-Age Children and Preteens

School-age children need 10 to 12 hours of sleep a night. Bedtime difficulties can arise at this age for a variety of reasons. Homework, sports and after-school activities, TVs, computers, and video games, as well as hectic family schedules might contribute to children not getting enough sleep.

Lack of sleep can cause irritable or hyper types of behaviour and may make it difficult for children to pay attention in school. It is important to have a consistent bedtime, especially on school nights. Be sure to leave enough time before bed to allow your child to unwind before lights out

3-6 years old: 10-12 hours per day

Children at this age typically go to bed between 7pm and 9pm and wake up around 6am or 8am, just as they did when they were younger. At three, most children are still napping; at five, most are not. Naps gradually become shorter as well.

7-12 years old: 9.5-10.5 hours per day

At this age, with social, school and family activities, bedtimes gradually become later and later, with most 12-year-olds going to bed at about 9pm. Most children in this age group do not get enough sleep and have a wide range of bedtimes, from 7:30pm to 10pm, as well as total sleep times, from nine to 12 hours.

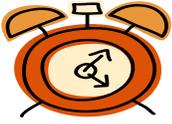
If you have any concerns regarding your Childs Sleep Problems

Please contact 01933 414934

Many thanks from your Children and Young People's Nursing Team

'Working together, with you, to keep your child healthy'

Tips for good sleep habits



Do establish a bedtime routine, this will regulate your child's body clock and ensure healthy sleep/wake patterns.



Do avoid stimulating activities in the hour before bedtime. You can start building a brief routine into your child's pre-bedtime period from an early age, but always keep it low key and relaxing. Perhaps have a special bedtime toy/book box that the child picks from, this could include things like colouring, drawing, story books, beading, etc.

Put away, or cover, stimulating toys, try not to have televisions in their bedroom; if there is a television in their room don't leave it on standby.



Do stick to a bedtime routine. A bedtime routine might include; quiet play; a bath; a story: then lights out. Make it low key and relaxing. It should about 1 hour, try to encourage your child to stay upstairs after their bath.



Try and be consistent around boundaries for bedtime routines. This applies to you as well as your child! If you say you'll bring a cup of milk don't be talked into fetching a second. Once boundaries are stretched most children will push them even more. Most calls for a drink, another kiss, a trip to the toilet are an excuse to string out bedtime and should be resisted, so they don't become a habit.



Do leave your child awake when you say goodnight. This will encourage him/her to learn to get to sleep by themselves



Don't give your child any stimulating food or drink in the evening. This includes drinks such as tea, coffee and cola as well as sweet foods. Both caffeine and sugar are stimulating. But don't put your child to bed hungry. Most children will sleep better if they have eaten well during the day. Sleepy foods like a banana, honey on toast, warm milk etc work well, try and give them an hour before bedtime.



Don't send your child to their bedroom as a punishment. They need to feel the bedroom is place of peace and harmony.



Don't discuss any difficulties relating to today or tomorrow. This may unearth difficulties or anxieties from your child's day which can interfere with sleep and are best discussed in the daytime. Try and get it out the way at tea time

