

## Further support or information

If you are having trouble with your child's sleep routines and would like any further support then please ask and we can put you in touch with our Family Support Advisor.

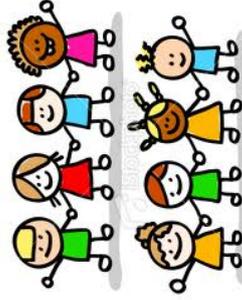
Useful Websites include:

[www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org)

[www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents)

[www.sleepforkids.org](http://www.sleepforkids.org)

[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)



This leaflet has been put together by the White Horse Federation's Family Support Team.

We can provide support and assistance with a number of issues including:

- \* Support with your child's behaviour
- \* Links to other professionals who may be able to support your family
- \* Links between home and school
- \* A listening ear and support at the times when family life gets tough
- \* Support with financial or housing issues

If you would like to arrange to meet with a Family Support Advisor, please ask your school for more details.

# Information about sleep in the Primary School years.



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SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES**

# Sleep Matters!

Experts agree that sleep is vital for brain development; while children are sleeping their brains are sorting and organising everything that they have learnt that day!

Sleep is also very important for day to day brain functions like concentration, motivation, memory and co-ordination.

Many parents will also notice that sleep plays a big part in their children's mood and can have a huge impact on their behavior.



We also need sleep to grow, heal and repair.

Research has indicated that children who get enough sleep.....

- \* Do better at school
- \* Have a better immune system
- \* Have more regulated moods and therefore better relationships
- \* Have more energy and can do more exercise to keep fit and healthy

## How much sleep does my child need?

The amount does vary for individuals and will decrease slightly as your child gets older, but in general children of primary age need between **10-12 hours** sleep a night.

You may feel that your child doesn't need much sleep and doesn't seem tired, but remember that hyper-activity is actually a symptom of not getting enough sleep! Young children also often get over-tired and this makes it harder for them to sleep.



Many parents wait until their child falls asleep while playing or watching TV but children don't usually drop off like this when they are tired—they drop off like this when they are shattered, therefore they are probably not getting enough sleep this way.

## Bedtime routines

A good bedtime routine is a vital part of getting enough sleep, children need to wind down from their busy day and be ready to sleep when they go to bed.

This should ideally stay consistent every night but especially during the week. If you want them to stay up at the weekend it is best not to allow them to stay up any more than an hour later.

## A good bedtime routine will probably take about 30-40 minutes and might include:

- \* Bath time.
- \* Stories— read independently or with you.
- \* A quiet cuddle and a chat about their day.
- \* Brushing teeth.
- \* Getting night wear on.
- \* Going to the toilet.
- \* Getting into bed and settling down with a favourite teddy or toy
- \* Making their bedroom dark (e.g. turning off nightlights, closing blackout blinds or curtains)

Things to avoid at bedtime are:

- \* Caffeine
- \* Sugary food or drinks
- \* TV or video games (especially in bedrooms)
- \* Over excitement (e.g. jumping on their beds while they get ready)
- \* Light— our brains are wired to respond to the dark and we get a far better quality of sleep. The hormones released in our brains when we sleep in the dark also help regulate mood.