

My child just will not sleep, help!!!!



# Sleep in the earliest years



- Does your child have a comfortable mattress? Make sure you try their mattress to make sure it is comfortable
- Is your child's bedroom a calm environment? Rooms with vibrant colours/ busy décor can stimulate a child.
- Does your child prefer a dark/light environment while sleeping? Have you tried a night light or black out blinds
- Offer a warm milk / diary product prior to your child's bedtime book.
- Avoid screen time for at least one hour prior to bed.
- Avoid physical exercise before bed.
- Use a calming cd to aid the drifting off to sleep process
- Have you tried pre bed mediation? Here are a few useful links  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNk7N6Awm\\_g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNk7N6Awm_g)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4T77IFYsqHs>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rUQOG5MAEfM>
- Does your child need comfort throughout the night? Have you tried a weighted blanket.

- Useful websites:
- <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/healthy-sleep-tips-for-children/>
  - <https://www.thechildrenssleepcharity.org.uk/>
  - <https://millpondsleepclinic.com/>

- Recommended sleep books for parents:
- The calm and happy toddler, by Cr Rebecca Chicot
  - The baby sleep solution by Lucy Wolfe
  - Solve your child's sleep problem by Richard Ferber

'Always kiss your children goodnight, even if they're already asleep'  
(H. Jackson Brown, Jr. 2012 [online])

Did you know sleep is good for you and your child's wellbeing?  
Lack of sleep can lead to irritability and anxiety

Did you know sleep can boost you and your child's immunity?  
Lack of sleep can effect you immune system – This may result in more illnesses

Did you know the twitching your child's eye makes while they sleep is called Rapid Eye Movement (REM)?  
This happens when your child is in an active sleep phase – processing the things they have learned

Did you know that naps are necessary?  
Children under 2 will require a nap during the day. If naps do not happen for these children it may impact on their night time sleep pattern.



Did you know warm milk can help you sleep?  
Dairy product contain an amino acid called Tryptophan. This is believed to aid sleep.



Having a bedtime routine helps a child and infant to understand that it is approaching a time to settle and sleep.



Here are three simple steps for a good bedtime routine.

**Step One**  
Bath time is the perfect start to a bed time routine. A warm bath can be soothing for a small child and aid them in calming . It's the perfect time to connect with your child through speech - talk about your day



**Step Two**  
Bedtime is an ideal time to share a book. It's a special time of day and a chance for some one-to-one time with your child. When you feel it is a good time, before bed, snuggle up with your child and read them a book. This is a special time of day to cherish your little person. Reading to a child can enhance their development in many areas



Keep to your bed time routine daily

**Step Three**  
One last trip to the toilet or change of nappy (if needed). Now make a calming environment with the room darkened. This will let your child know it is time for sleep. Explain in a comforting manner that 'its time for sleep'. Give them a good night cuddle and kiss and let them know you will see them in the morning – 'when the sun comes up again'.



Sleep patterns for children change depending on their age. The table below is a guide towards the average hours of sleep needed for a child throughout their earliest years. (NHS, 2017 [online])

Age of child	Day time sleep (per day)	Night time sleep (per night)
1 week	8 hours	8 hours 30 minutes
4 weeks	6-7 hours	8-9 hours
3 months	4-5 hours	10-11 hours
6 months	3 hours	11 hours
9 months to 2 years	2 hours 30 minutes	11 hours
2 years	1 hour 30 minutes	11 hours 30 minutes
3 years	Up to 45 minutes	11-12 hours
4 years		11 hours 30 minutes
5 years		11 hours



Did you know melatonin helps us to feel sleepy? It's a natural hormone that we produce when it get dark. The children's sleep charity (2020 [online]) says that you can also find melatonin in bananas and cherry juice.