



***SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S  
SLEEP ROUTINE***



# ***HOW MUCH SLEEP?***

**1 to 12 months old**

**14-15 hours  
per day**

**1 to 3 years old**

**12-14 hours  
per day**

**3 to 6 years old**

**10-12 hours  
per day**

**7 to 12 years old**

**10-11 hours  
per day**

**12 to 18 years old**

**8-9 hours  
per day**

**18 to 65 years old**

**7-9 hours  
per day**



# ***BEDTIME ROUTINES***

- A good routine is important to help children develop better sleep habits.
- Things may get worse before they get better as children may try to resist changes.
- New changes may take at least 2 weeks before you start to see results.
- Do the same thing at the same time each day (including weekends until the change is settled) this will strengthen your child's body clock.
- Switch off screens 1 hour before bed, these can hinder the production of the sleep hormone melatonin and interfere with sleep quality.

# STEP BY STEP

## At the same time every night...

### 1 hour before bed

- Switch off all screens
- Give your child a light snack containing the listed sleep foods
- Switch to calming activities that involve hand-eye co-ordination
- Dim the lights if possible

### 30 minutes before bed

- Give your child a warm bath
- clean teeth
- change into pyjamas

### Bedtime

- Put your child in their bed while they are awake
- Share a bedtime story
- Say goodnight, turn off the lights or dim them fully
- Leave the room



# ***FOODS THAT HELP SLEEP***

## What your child eats can impact their sleep

A light snack in the hour before bed can help some children sleep. Avoid heavy meals close to bedtime as this can make sleep difficult.

The body uses tryptophan to help make the sleep hormone melatonin  
Foods that contain tryptophan are:

- Milk and Milk products - Traditional milk products (warm), yoghurt and soya milk
- Eggs
- Meat - Chicken and turkey
- Fish - Cod, tuna. Mackerel and salmon
- Cheese - Cheddar processed cheese, cottage cheese.
- Fruits - Apples, bananas, blueberries, strawberries, avocados, pineapple, peaches and cherries
- Vegetables - Spinach, asparagus, green peas, broccoli, tomatoes, cabbage, cauliflower, mushrooms, cucumber and potatoes
- Nuts - Walnuts, peanuts, cashews, pistachios, chestnuts, almonds
- Seeds - Ground flax, sesame, pumpkin, sunflower
- Beans - Soy beans, kidney and chick peas
- Grains - Wheat, brown rice, barley, corn, oats (porridge)
- Bread - Whole wheat bread



# ***CALMING ACTIVITES***





# ***BEDTIME ROUTINE***

***TRY TO KEEP TO THE SAME ROUTINE AND BEDTIME EVERY NIGHT***

## ***NO SCREENS***

TV'S, TABLETS AND SMARTPHONES CAN AFFECT HOW EASILY CHILDREN GET TO SLEEP

## ***WARM BATH (NOT HOT)***

A WARM BATH 30 MINUTES BEFORE BED WILL HELP YOUR CHILD TO RELAX AND GET READY FOR SLEEP

## ***DIM THE LIGHTS***

KEEPING THE LIGHTS DIM OR OFF HELPS YOUR CHILD TO PRODUCE THE SLEEP HORMONE MELATONIN

## ***RELAX***

ONCE THEY'RE IN BED ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO READ QUIETLY, LISTEN TO CALMING MUSIC OR READ A STORY TOGETHER

## ***CALMING BREATHS***

IF YOUR CHILD STRUGGLES TO GET TO SLEEP TEACH THEM THE CALMING BREATH EXERCISES

## ***CALM BEDROOM***

A DARK, QUIET, TIDY BEDROOM AT A TEMPERATURE BETWEEN 16 & 20 DEGREES WILL AID SLEEP



# **BREATHING EXERCISES**

## **LAY DOWN**

PLACE ARMS A  
LITTLE BIT AWAY  
FROM YOUR SIDES,  
PALMS UP.  
HAVE LEGS STRAIGHT  
OR BENT WITH FEET  
FLAT ON THE  
MATTRESS

## **FLOW**

LET YOUR BREATH  
FLOW AS DEEP DOWN  
IN YOUR TUMMY AS IS  
COMFORTABLE  
WITHOUT FORCING IT

## **IN AND OUT**

BREATHE IN  
THROUGH THE NOSE  
AND OUT THROUGH  
THE MOUTH

## **BREATHE IN**

BREATHE IN GENTLY  
AND REGULARLY.  
COUNT STEADILY FROM  
1 TO 5 IF IT HELPS

## **BREATHE OUT**

BREATHE OUT GENTLY,  
COUNTING FROM 1 TO  
5 IF IT HELPS









# ***TOP TIPS***

- Plan your routine, work out what time it will start (an hour before bed) and finish. Write it down and show your child.
- Do the same thing at the same time every day, bedtime should be a predictable series of events. This may feel difficult at the weekend but it is important for your child's body clock.
- Your child should only use their bed for sleeping, lying on a bed and doing activities such as watching tv or using a screen makes it hard for their brain to associate their bed with sleep.
- A comfy, cozy, tidy room will help your child to switch off.
- Turn off all screens 1 hour before bed as they may suppress the body's production of melatonin.
- Give your child a light snack one hour before bed.
- Dim the lights in the hour before bed to help your child start to produce melatonin.
- Give your child activities in the hour before bed that require hand eye co-ordination or listen to calming music.
- A bath 30 minutes before bed can help promote sleep.
- Put children to bed drowsy but awake, this allows them to associate their bed with sleep rather than other places.
- Once in bed a great way to end the day is to share a story.
- Bedtime check ups should be short and sweet. The main purpose is for you to let them know you are there and that they are alright. The briefer and less stimulating the better.
- Make sure that your child is getting enough exercise earlier in the day, this will help them to sleep later.