

## SLEEP

A good night's sleep is vital for your child's emotional and physical wellbeing but settling to sleep can sometimes be difficult for children.

### Tips to help you and your child:

**In the day** and the nearer you get to bedtime avoid giving your child food and drinks that can stimulate such as high sugar or caffeinated food or drinks such as coke or chocolate. Encourage foods such as eggs, turkey and milk. These foods contain tryptophan which can help promote sleep. Bananas are rich in magnesium which relaxes muscles and they also contain serotonin and melatonin, which also encourage sleep.

Give children opportunities to talk about worries and fears which can often get stored until bedtime.

**In the evening** Having a good, peaceful routine helps to promote a good night's sleep and makes bedtime a more enjoyable time. There are a number of things that can help create this.

**Importantly-** Avoid screen time, which stimulates rather than relaxes, in the bedroom. This includes tablets, smartphones and televisions. Stop using screens at least an hour before bedtime helping relaxation ready for sleep.

- A warm bath will help to relax your child ready for bed.
- Keeping the lights dim encourages the body to naturally produce a sleep hormone, melatonin.
- Once your child is in bed, encourage them to sit and read quietly or read a story calmly together.
- Relaxing music being played can also help to create a peaceful environment.
- Keep your child's bedroom at a suitable temperature 18-24c and make the room suitably dark at bedtime.

If your child is not used to this kind of routine it may take a little while to settle into it but be positive, calm and consistent- i.e. do the same each day and make sure other caregivers do the same.

Children will like the positive attention this regular routine gives them.

Even if you don't have time to bath every day do everything else in the routine



## **After lights out:**

Children sometimes get up after you have put them down for the night as they can struggle to separate. It is your job to let them know all is well and you will achieve this best by :

- Calmly putting them back
- Reminding them it is bedtime and they need to sleep
- Staying calm on the outside even if you feel stressed on the inside
- Not going back to meet your child's requests for another drink , story , cuddle etc. because they will then keep asking
- Putting your child back as many times as it takes

If you are trying this plan but need support to do so please contact our team and we will assess your child's sleeping situation and support you with a workable plan going forwards



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