

FAQs

► How does technology affect your sleep?

Research shows that the blue light emitted by screens on mobile phones, computers, tablets and televisions reduces the production of melatonin, the hormone that controls your sleep/wake cycle. Low levels of melatonin make it harder to fall asleep and stay asleep.

► How do I settle my child in the cot or bed?

When it is time to leave your child's bedroom give them a kiss and say good night so they know this is the last contact and the expectation is that they will go to sleep. If they remain unsettled, leave them for a short time before going in to see that they are okay. Repeat the 'good night' phrase again. Gradually extend the length of time before you re-enter the room. You may have to repeat this process several times.

► My child wakes in the night... what do I do?

Some children wake up in the night. When they get up, return them to their own bed after you've made sure they do not need the toilet/a nappy change. Keep conversation to a minimum. You may have to repeat this process several times.



Remember...

Sleeping patterns like any other behaviour can be changed but this requires time, a consistent approach, patience and praise for all improvements along the way, however small!

For more tips and ideas, visit:
www.booktrust.org.uk/bathbookbed



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A Parent and Carer's Guide to

Top tips for sleeping

**Leicestershire
SEND**



A good night's sleep is important for children and their carers. Sleepless nights or disturbed nights over a prolonged period can be difficult to manage. Children vary in the amount of sleep they need but a good night's sleep is essential for general wellbeing. Children with specific conditions may need more or less sleep than is typical. Some children with additional needs may need a little extra help and support to establish a good night time routine.

This leaflet gives parents and carers useful advice and strategies to try. If improvements do not occur then parents and/or carers should contact their Public Health Nurse or Community Paediatrician for further help and advice. Keeping a sleep diary is a useful way to see sleeping patterns over time and this record can form the basis of discussions with health professionals

Top tips

1. Having a consistent bedtime routine every night helps signal to children that it's time to wind down and relax.
2. Ensure the routine is calm and gentle. Half an hour before bedtime do quiet activities together, turn the television and/or technology off, have a warm bath, a cuddle and read a story.
3. For some children a picture strip showing what happens at bedtime may help them to get used to the routines. Pictures can be removed as stages are completed.
4. Avoid fizzy, sugary or caffeine drinks such as cola drinks and large amounts of food before bedtime.
5. Try to make sure your child has had some physical activity or time outdoors (where possible) during the daytime.



6. Sharing a story with your child is one of the most important activities you can do with them. Choose books that your child enjoys and share special time looking at the pictures and talking about the story.
7. Ensure your child's bedroom is welcoming and comfortable and somewhere your child is happy to go. Try to create a calm environment.
8. Dim or turn lights off so that your child knows it is time to go to sleep. Blackout curtains can be used to ensure a darkened room. Some children find a special night light reassuring. When it is time to leave, give them a kiss and say good night.
9. Avoid letting children fall asleep downstairs or in your bed. It is important to get children used to falling asleep in their own beds in order that both your child and you can get a good night's rest.