



Developing and maintaining bedtime routines:

A good night's sleep is important for your child's physical and mental wellbeing. They will benefit from a daily 11-12 hours of sleep.

The recommended bedtime for four to five-year olds is between 7pm and 7:30pm. Up to the age of ten to twelve between 8pm and 9pm.

A relaxing bedtime routine is one important way to help your child get a good night's sleep, the routine should last about half an hour including taking a bath.

Encourage your child to stop using screens an hour before bedtime.

Doing the same relaxing things in the same order and at the same time each night helps promote good sleep:

- Remind your child "in five minutes time it's bedtime."*
- A warm bath will help your child relax and get ready for sleep.*
- Use gentle reminders of what's coming next "in two minutes we'll get out of the bath so you can brush your teeth." Try to avoid checking your watch or hurrying things along. Keep your tone calm.*
- Your child's room should ideally be dark, quiet and tidy. It should be well ventilated and kept at a temperature of about 16 to 20C.*
- If your child doesn't like the dark then place a night light in their room, keeping lights dim encourages your child's body to produce the sleep hormone, Melatonin.*
- Do remind your child to use the bathroom one last time before getting into bed. This is especially important for children who still have issues with bedwetting.*
- Once in bed, encourage your child to read quietly or listen to some music, or read a story together.*

- *Avoid tablets, smartphones, TVs and other electronic gadgets in your child's bedroom as these can affect how easily your child will go to sleep.*

The earlier you establish a good bedtime routine with your child the easier it will be as they get older.

If you have tried all the above and your child keeps having problems getting to sleep or sleeping through the night, you may feel you want more support. If so, speak with your GP or health visitor.

