



PROMOTING SLEEP IN CHILDREN

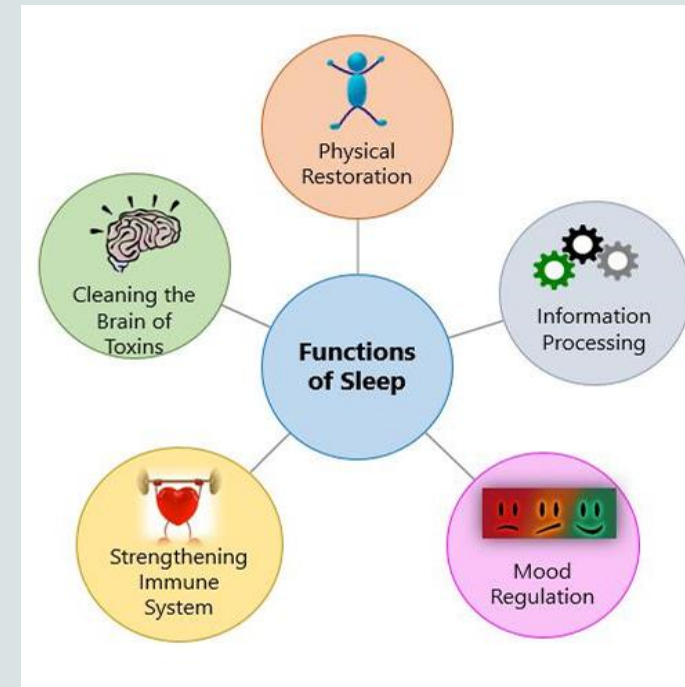
ENCOURAGING HEALTHY BEDTIME
HABITS FOR YOUNG MINDS



WHY SLEEP MATTERS

Sleep is an important part of every child's daily routine as it helps them to recover from mental and physical exertion. Sleep is just as important as drinking, eating and breathing. Without good quality sleep, children may have difficulty creating new memories, concentrating, and responding to situations quickly.

- Cognitive and Emotional Benefits
 - Sleep supports memory consolidation, learning, and emotional regulation essential for school-aged children's development.
- Behavioural and Attention Challenges
 - Lack of sleep can cause irritability, hyperactivity, and difficulty managing emotions and attention.
- Physical Restoration
 - Deep sleep enables body repair, muscle growth, and immune strengthening, crucial for overall child health and wellbeing.
- Importance of Routine
 - Consistent, calming bedtime routines reduce anxiety and help children transition smoothly to sleep, fostering long-term healthy habits.



BEDTIME ROUTINES

Melatonin is a naturally occurring hormone which is released during the evening in preparation to help us fall asleep. Implementing a bedtime routine can help with the release of melatonin if the body associates the routine with sleep.

How to Naturally Increase Melatonin?



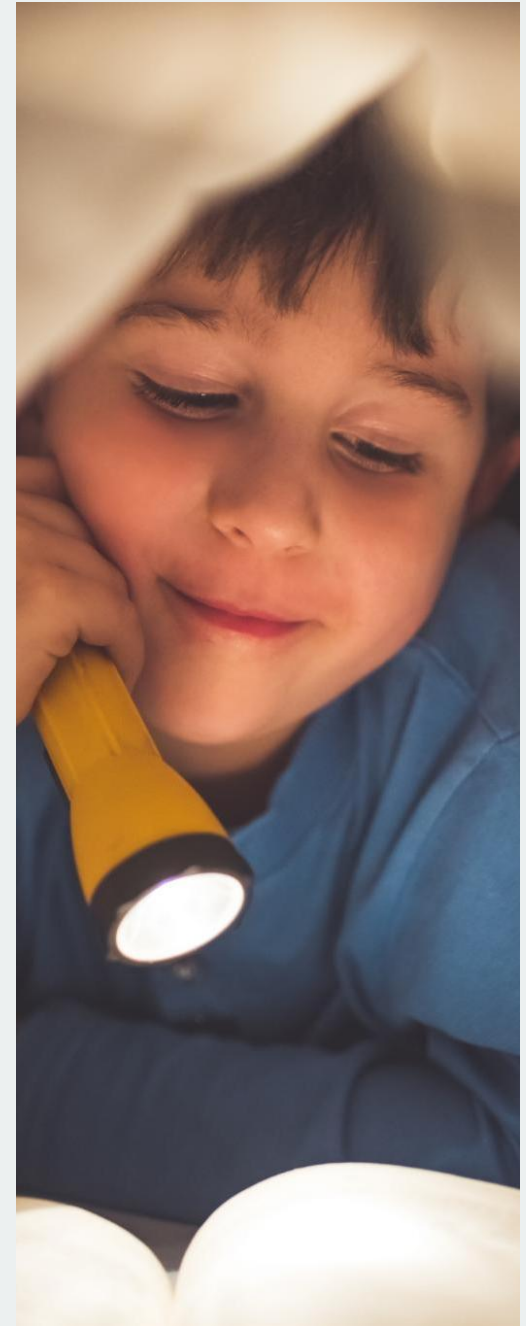
Implement a bedtime routine



Keep meal times consistent



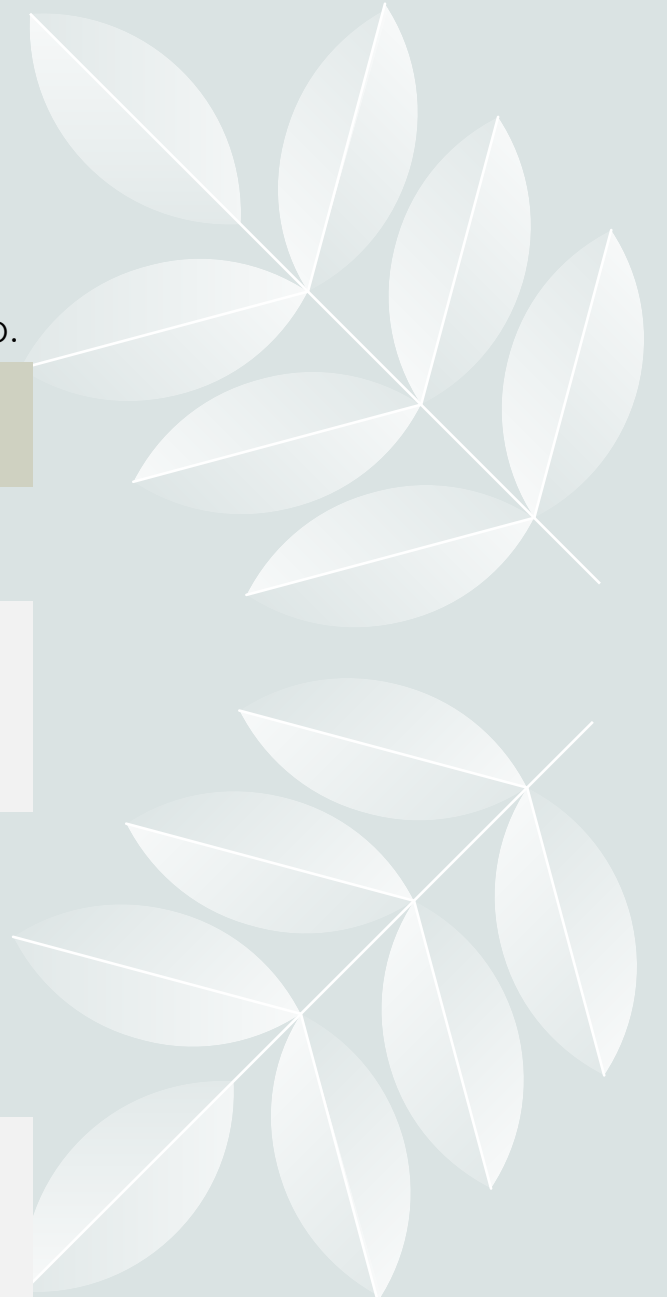
Ensure the bedroom is dark by using black-out curtains or blinds



CREATING HEALTHY SLEEP HABITS

Creating good, predictable bedtime habits is helpful for a child to get a restful nights sleep.

HABIT	BENEFIT
Consistent bed/wake times	Regulates internal body clock
Screen-free golden hour	Reduces stimulation and cortisol, the hour before bedtime should consist of relaxing, calming activities.
Clear bedtime limits	Lots of children tend to push boundaries at bedtime, asking to stay up longer, an extra bedtime story a drink. Try and set bedtime limits and stick to your limits this can reduce anxiety and bedtime resistance.
Calm bedroom environment	Prevents overtiredness Supports smooth settling



WAYS TO SUPPORT SLEEP

Keeping a sleep diary can be useful for many reasons. They show your child's sleep pattern, they also show a visual representation of your child's sleep which can help if you feel changes need to be made.

Listening to relaxing music. Doing stressful/exciting tasks earlier.

Avoid sweet treats too close to bedtime, but adding in a small evening snack of certain foods can really help aid sleep.

Exercise in the day time. Getting daily daylight exposure or being in a well-lit environment as soon as your child wakes up helps their sleep/wake clock recognise day from night. It also helps your child to burn off all excess energy and release happy hormones.



USEFUL RESOURCES

Self-help Apps

Self-help apps can be a useful and viable way of support. The NHS have published apps on their digital library, some focussed on helping you relax include:



Calm Chill Panda Headspace Mindfulness Woebot Clear Fear

<https://insighttimer.com>

www.thesleepcharity.org.uk

Staffordshire Children's Hospital Royal Stoke Paediatric
Sleep Service: [www.uhnm.nhs.uk/our-services/sleep-
service/](http://www.uhnm.nhs.uk/our-services/sleep-service/)

www.sleepcouncil.org.uk

