

# Good sleep habits

**ALL children (and adults!) benefit from good sleep habits, also known as 'sleep hygiene.'**

Make sure you have these good habits in place before making any other changes.

## Good habits for sleep

**1. A calming bedtime routine:** Try to do the same things each night, choosing calm and enjoyable activities to help your child wind down. e.g. dinner, bath, quiet play or read, then into bed.

- Regular sleep and wake times (within 30 minutes)
- Avoid daytime naps (for children 5 and over).

**2. A calm, quiet sleep environment:** Your child's sleep environment should be cool, quiet, and relatively dark. It should be the same at bedtime as it is throughout the night. For example, the same lighting, and no music unless it will play all night.

**3. A media free bedroom:** Avoid watching electronic screens such as computer games, iPad and TV for at least one hour before bed.

**4. Get morning light:** Getting natural light during the morning, by opening the curtains or going outside, helps keep the body clock on the right track.

**5. Avoid caffeine from late afternoon:** Remember, caffeine is in chocolate bars as well as cola, tea and coffee.

**6. Encourage exercise (but not just before bed):** Avoid exciting, high-energy activities, just before bed - such as playing outside or running around.

## TIP: BE CONSISTENT

**Being consistent will increase your chances of success with improving your child's sleep patterns. It is important to stick to good sleep habits, even on weekends and holidays, otherwise your child's sleep patterns can get confused.**