



# PROMOTING HEALTHY SLEEP



**Healthy Body. Healthy Mind. Healthy Planet.**

# WHY?

**Quality sleep is essential for children's growth and development.**

**A good night's sleep will:**

- help them to do better at school**
- allow them to react more quickly to situations**
- have a more developed memory**
- learn more effectively and solve problems**

# WHY?

**It will make them less susceptible to colds and other minor ailments, less irritable and better behaved!**

**Sleep deprivation causes increased hyperactivity and other behavioural problems, as well as damaging physical and mental development.**

**Poor sleep habits from an early age can lead to long term sleep and mental health problems.**



# WHAT'S CAUSING IT?

There are many different factors which can affect children's sleep.

Think about the bedroom environment?

- Is there too much light?
- Are the noise levels too loud?
- Is the temperature too hot or cold?
- Are they exposed to blue light at bedtime? Blue light is emitted from screens, tv's, computers, tablets, games console and mobile phones. This blue light messes with your body's ability to prepare for sleep because it blocks a hormone called melatonin that makes you sleepy.

# WHAT'S CAUSING IT?

If a child isn't getting enough sleep, then the parents probably aren't either - causing increasing stresses among the whole family.

Children don't always know when they are tired and therefore become easily overtired and demonstrate this by becoming fractious, tearful, and bad tempered.



# **SLEEP & THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

**Children need routine in all aspects of their life and the current worldwide |Covid-19 pandemic has interrupted that routine.**

**Social distancing, school closures, quarantines, and working-from-home all bring profound changes to normal routines for people of all ages and walks of life.**

**It can be difficult to adjust to a new daily schedule or lack of a schedule, but it is important now more than ever.**



# **SLEEP & THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

**Keeping track of the time, and even the day, can be hard without typical time “anchors” like going to school and/or attending after school and sports clubs.**

**Being stuck at home, especially if there are low levels of natural light, may reduce light-based cues for wakefulness and sleep, known as zeitgebers, which are crucial to our circadian rhythm.**



# HOW TO HELP

Children respond well to routine, so establishing and sticking to a regular bedtime routine is essential to promote good quality sleep in children.

Check that the temperature and light levels are suitable in the room.

Make sure your child feels safe in the room they are sleeping in, if they are scared or worried about something this will inhibit their sleep.



# HOW TO HELP

Remove and store away blue light devices.

Read a bed time story.

Do it together - there's no better way to encourage and teach your child.

Reassure your child.

# DO'S & DON'TS

1. Do make sure you get fresh air and exercise each day.
2. Do go to bed at the same time each day. Make this the same on the weekends as well as school nights.
3. Do get up at the same time each morning - ensuring you have 8-9 hours sleep.
4. Do go to the toilet before bedtime.
5. Do have a warm bath or drink about an hour before.

1. Don't eat the hour before bedtime.
2. Don't eat sugary food and drinks during the late afternoon and evening.
3. Don't watch the TV, play on your games console, tablet or phone at least one hour before bedtime.

# USEFUL LINKS

[SLEEP COUNCIL - SLEEP ADVICE FOR CHILDREN](#)

[GOSH - SLEEP HYGIENE](#)

[NHS - HEALTHY SLEEP TIPS FOR CHILDREN](#)

[THE CHILDREN'S SLEEP CHARITY](#)