



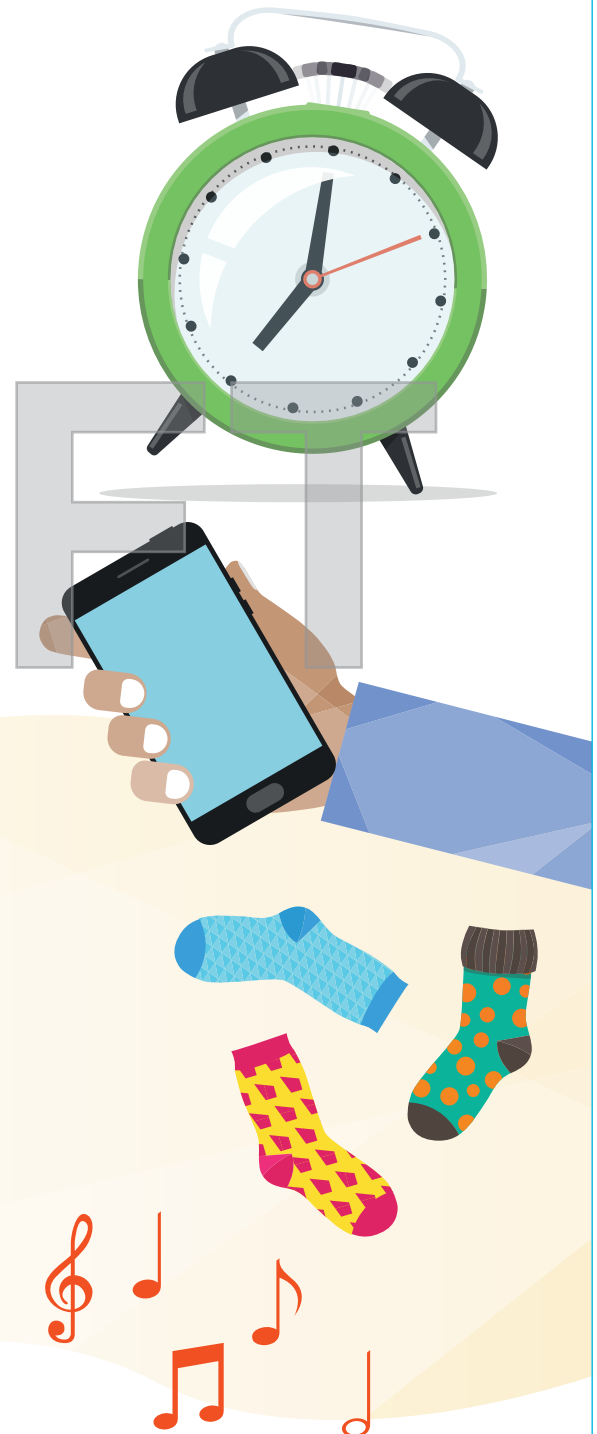
SLEEP HYGIENE AND FURTHER TIPS

Having a routine before bedtime is very important. This is because routines help the brain to release the chemicals which the body needs for sleep.

Medical professionals use the term 'sleep hygiene' to describe the good habits and routines which aid sleep onset for children, teens and adults alike.

These are as follows:

- Have a **fixed bedtime** which stays the same, even during weekends and holidays.
- Have a **fixed waking time** which stays the same, even during weekends and holidays.
- Have the **same (short) calming routine** before every bedtime (such as bath, suitable light snack, milky drink, talk time and story).
- Avoid exercise too close** to bedtime (three hours or less).
- Avoid products with caffeine** in the late afternoon and evening.
- Limit technology exposure** during the day and switch off all forms (including phones and TV) at least an hour before bedtime.
- Avoid having electronic gadgets** including TV in the bedroom.
- Keep **evening lighting low** in household (eg using lamps or dimmer switches).
- Keep the **bedroom as dark as possible** (eg use blackout blinds or thick curtains).
- Make sure the **mattress is comfortable** and the **bedding clean**.
- Keep bedroom at a temperature of **16–20 °C** (60–68 °F).
- Keep feet warm** (wearing loose, cosy socks if tolerated)
- Use **low level relaxing music** or **soothing audio sounds** if the child does not like silence or the household is noisy.





More Tips and Hints

Below are some helpful hints and tips that can be used to help support your child with their sleep hygiene:

- 🚩 Schedule in **nurture time** each day to talk with your child about their worries, fears or anxieties.
- 🚩 **Keep things the same** in all home settings.
- 🚩 Address and seek help for **tensions** between **older siblings** or **adults**.
- 🚩 **List** what needs to be done the next day with your child and write down things to be **grateful** for or any **positive** things that they have done that day.
- 🚩 Aim for a **healthy lifestyle** which includes a balanced diet and daily exercise.
- 🚩 Aim to get as much **natural daylight** as possible, even during the winter.
- 🚩 Monitor and manage content of **screen time**.
- 🚩 Make the bedroom a **sanctuary** and **not overly stimulating**.
- 🚩 Try not to use the bedroom for **time-out**.
- 🚩 If your child has persistent sleep difficulties keep a **diary** for 1-2 weeks to pinpoint problems and identify changes you could make. **Sleep For Kids** has a fun, printable [sleep diary](#) which you may find useful.
- 🚩 Create room **dividers** for siblings who share a bedroom.
- 🚩 Sleep problems are **stressful**. Seek **advice** if you are struggling.
- 🚩 Only consider **medication** when all else has failed.
- 🚩 Continue with **sleep hygiene** even if medication is given.
- 🚩 **Stick to changes** to see rewards.
- 🚩 **Be kind (but firm)** to teens who struggle to get up (it is natural for this age group).
- 🚩 Encourage children or teens to take **ownership** of their sleep habits and understand why it is so important.
- 🚩 Get children to air and **make their own beds** every morning.
- 🚩 Use **positive language** when referring to sleep issues.
- 🚩 Try **walking away** or **deep breathing** if things get tough overnight.
- 🚩 See [Sleep – Resources for Parents/ Caregivers](#) for more help and support or if your child had neurodevelopmental related sleep problems.



To find out other useful advice and information please visit:
providechildrenandfamilyservices.co.uk