



# SLEEP: RELAXATION AND VISUALISATION EXERCISES

PAGE 1 [OF 3]

Everyone needs to sleep, but sometimes what is natural does not happen easily. It can be very frustrating to have a child with problems in this area, especially if you long to drift off peacefully yourself but they stop you from doing so.

Going to bed in a calm frame of mind is important for all the family, and if, despite all your efforts, the child's brain still seems busy, then relaxation and visualisation techniques may help them to slow down and welcome rest.



## Enchanted forest

After a calming routine, tuck the child into bed in a darkened bedroom and encourage them to close their eyes.

Get them to take some slow, deep breaths (see [Belly Breathing](#))

Ask them to imagine they are walking along a path in an enchanted forest. The trees are moving in a gentle breeze and the birds are singing high above. Underfoot the grass is soft and springy and everything is very peaceful. The forest is dark in a gentle way and the air they are breathing is cool. Before too long, the path ends and opens onto a mossy spot where the tiny shadows dance and a clear stream flows over smooth rocks and pebbles. Beside the stream is a sheltered place which looks safe and perfect for sleeping on. Feeling drowsy they imagine lying down, listening to the sound of running water and feeling the heat of the sun-warmed ground wrap around them like the softest blanket. Soon they imagine drifting off into perfect sleep and not waking up until the next morning when they feel bright and no longer tired.



## Busy Bees

After a calming routine tuck the child into bed in a darkened bedroom and encourage them to close their eyes.

Get them to take some slow, deep breaths (see [Belly Breathing](#))

Ask them to imagine that the thoughts inside their head are like lots of bumble bees. The bumble bees are busy, flying around in all directions and going to lots of different places. The child becomes like a bumble bee, first rising up and then flying in the air. Then, after a while, they see a green meadow below which is full of colourful wild flowers. They choose a flower to land on. The other bumble bees land on their own flowers and stop buzzing as they collect pollen. Everything becomes quiet and still. The pollen in the flower is sweet and makes all the bumble bees feel heavy and sleepy so they stop moving and rest for a while, drifting off into a perfect sleep. The perfect sleep lasts until morning, when they all wake up to taste the morning dew, each one flying away on its own with a special place to go and a special job to do.





## Starry Skies

After a calming routine, tuck the child into bed in a darkened bedroom and encourage them to close their eyes.

Get them to take some slow, deep breaths (see [Belly Breathing](#)).

Ask them to imagine that they are drifting upwards towards a beautiful night sky. There are no clouds and the moon is round and full. Very quickly they are among the stars. The child is holding a white pen with silver ink which glows in the dark. They start writing on the sky about all the good and bad parts of the day just gone. When they write about something bad those words tumble out of the sky like falling stars and disappear forever. The words about good things stay and soon turn into new stars which twinkle in a friendly way and shine brightly. When there are no more words to write, the child has to imagine gently floating back into bed and looking up at the starry universe. The stars made of good thoughts are still there and look down to keep your child safe, happy and contented while they sleep.

**NOTE:** Not every child will be able to do guided imagery, or will enjoy these exercises. Only do what feels right for the child.



To find out other useful advice and information please visit:  
[providechildrenandfamilyservices.co.uk](http://providechildrenandfamilyservices.co.uk)