

# 10 Top Tips for tackling sleep issues in children



1. Ideally the temperature in the bedroom should be between **16-18 degrees** celsius.
2. Keep the room **dark** to block out external light.
3. **Dim the lights** in the hour before bedtime, **close the curtains** and **turn off all screens** to help create a relaxing environment to promote the production of melatonin (a natural occurring sleep-promoting hormone).
4. Offer **quiet activities** that are motivating to your child. They may like puzzles or prefer art and craft but try to tailor the choice to their age. You may like to use a “Bedtime Box” that only comes out during the bedtime routine which you can fill with colouring sheets, threading or even a game that can be played more than once like dominoes or cards.
5. Offer a **“sleepy food”** supper snack and drink. Download our sleepy foods leaflet and recipe ideas for more information.
6. A **warm bath** may be helpful around 30 minutes before bedtime as this aids relaxation by first increasing the body temperature then dropping it. Once in bed, as temperature starts to decrease, this can help your child feel more relaxed and help them drop off to sleep more easily. However, if bathtime is stressful for your child, move this to earlier in the evening and consider putting a warm hot water bottle into their bed at the beginning of the routine and remove it once they get into bed.
7. Once your child is in bed, you should be a **“night time parent”** meaning that fun interaction is saved for the daytime and at night you will be responsive and reassuring but firm.
8. Keep a **sleep diary** so you can be sure of what time your child is regularly falling asleep. Consider putting them to bed later if they are taking over an hour to fall asleep.
9. If your child needs certain conditions in place to help them fall asleep, ensure they remain the same throughout the night to **avoid the risk of night wakings**.
10. **Wake your child at the same time every day** and open the curtains and blinds as soon after waking as possible. This helps to strengthen the natural rhythm of their body clock.

