

## Sleep – Getting Back Into Routine

**Before your children go back to school prepare them and yourselves for the change in routine and to re-adjust family sleep patterns.**

### **Why is sleep so important?**

Sleep is a basic need, such as hunger or thirst, and your body needs it to function normally. It is one of our most important physiological needs. We still don't fully understand why we need to sleep, but what we do know is that sleep plays a crucial part in:

- 'filing away' memories in your brain
- improving your ability to learn
- regulating metabolism (the way your body breaks down food into energy)
- reducing mental fatigue (symptoms include an inability to concentrate, poor short-term memory and your body feeling exhausted)

### **Good sleep is important for your child's, as well as yours physical and mental wellbeing.**

A relaxing bedtime routine is one important way to help your child get a good night's sleep.

### **How much sleep your child need?**

The amount of sleep your child needs changes as they get older. A 3-5 year old 10-13 hours a night. A 6-12 year-old needs about 9-12 hours a night, for example, while a 9-year-old needs roughly 10 hours. Reducing by 15 minutes per year until a teenager!

### **Relaxation tips to help sleep**

Doing the same relaxing things in the same order and at the same time each night helps promote good sleep:

- A warm (not hot) bath will help your child relax and get ready for sleep.
- Keeping lights dim encourages your child's body to produce the sleep hormone, melatonin. Your child's bedroom should ideally be dark, quiet, and tidy. It should be well ventilated and kept at a temperature of about 16 to 20C.
- Once they are in bed, encourage your child to read quietly or listen to some relaxing music, or read a story together – screens should be avoided. Remember you are a role model.
- You could also suggest your child tries this [relaxing breathing exercise](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/ways-relieve-stress/) before bed.  
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### **Top Tips -**

1. Involve your child in getting their clothes ready and packing their school bag the evening before school.
2. Teach them to recognise the time **they** go to bed.
3. **Talk**/explain about why sleep is important.
4. Physical activity/exercise during the day will help wear them out.

Let us know how it goes – *Family Learning Team*