



Sleep Schooling



Contents

- Sleep Deprivation Epidemic Hits British Children – The Facts
- Why Is Sleep Important For Children?
- What The Sleep Experts Say
- Child Sleep Guide
- Why Children Try To Stay Awake
- Zzzz Advice
- Golden Bedtime Rules
- Recommended Sleep Routine
- The Ideal Child's Bedroom
- Feng Shui Your Child's Bedroom
- How To Tell Good Children's Bedtime Stories
- How To Make Bedtime Special
- Children Say The Funniest Things About Sleep



Sleep Deprivation Epidemic Hits British Children

The Facts:

Two thirds of UK children are not getting enough sleep...

62% of children find it difficult to get to sleep at night.

74% of children actually get less sleep than the amount recommended for adults.

Over 80% of children suffer extreme daytime tiredness.

Over a quarter of children admitted to falling asleep in class at least once a week.

67% of children miss out on having a bedtime story.

Nearly a quarter of teachers let children sleep in a corner of their classroom.

As many as 58% of children stay up late playing games consoles and watching TV.

Child sleep problems are widespread, with 77% regularly suffering from disorders such as sleepwalking, nightmares and talking in their sleep.

92% teachers have stated that pupils are so tired they are unable to pay attention in class



Why Is Sleep Important For Children?

Experts suggest that, in order to reach their full potential, children need 10-12 hours of sleep every night. Scientific evidence shows that an adequate night's sleep is vital to a child's development and well being.

A lack of sleep leads to poor academic performance and obesity. In addition the immune system can be affected by lack of sleep, leading to a child becoming ill more frequently. Children who are sleep deprived often suffer from chronic tiredness later in life.

Children who go to bed at the same time every night are said to improve their intelligence. Research says youngsters who have a regular bedtime are better at languages, reading and maths than those who do not. Those who go to bed earlier than most are also more likely to pick things up quicker.

At night, the body produces more of the hormone that stimulates growth. So, sleep is important for your child's development.

Sleep deprivation can impact negatively on mood and behaviour; a tired child is generally not a happy child.

Pre-school children who have less than the recommended 11-12 hours sleep a night run the risk of falling behind, according to research by the SRI International Research Institute in California.



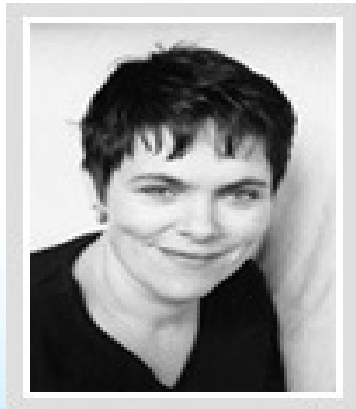
What The Sleep Experts Say...



"Research shows that children who are sleep deprived do less well academically, show more problem behaviour and have lower levels of social skills." **Parenting Expert Dr. Pat Spungin**



"An over-tired child is difficult to handle and will fight sleep, but naps are very important. Lack of sleep produces higher levels of the stress hormone cortisol. Napping will help to reduce cortisol levels and help your child to sleep better at night too. Naps also help children to be more alert and observant during the day." **Mandy Gurney, Millpond Children's Sleep Clinic**



"Most children have periods of not sleeping well, but by getting into healthy bedtime habits, you can keep broken nights to the minimum. Start these when your baby is 4-8 weeks old and you'll avoid common sleep pitfalls, but it's never too late to get into good routines." **Dr. Kate Daymond, Children's Sleep Consultant**

"It seems harmless enough, lying down with your child while he goes to sleep, but it could be that sleeping by himself at night is one of his biggest steps towards independence. An unbroken night's sleep is crucial to your child's development and staying tucked up in bed all night could make a clingy child less dependent in the daytime, too." **Jo Frost, Supernanny**



Child's Sleep Guide



2 years	10.5 to 12.5 hours
3 years	10.5 to 12.5 hours
4 years	10 to 12 hours
5 years	10 to 12 hours
6 years	10 to 11.5 hours
7 years	9.5 to 11.5 hours



Travelodge
Sleep tight

Why Children Try To Stay Awake...

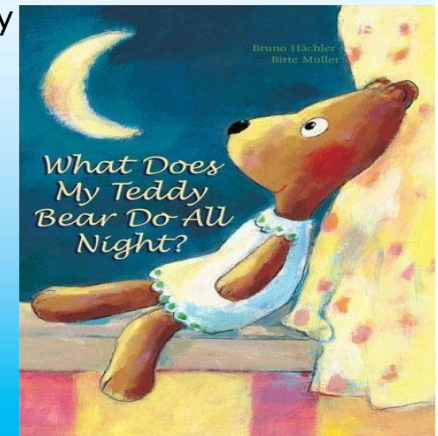
A child may look and act exhausted but may still battle to stay awake. This is because children are fundamentally motivated to explore and ensure they miss nothing.

It's up to you to decide when your children should go to bed and at what time you expect them to settle to sleep. There's some variation in the amount of sleep each person needs, but on average, a five year old needs 11 hours of sleep each night.

To work out when your child should be settling to sleep, take 11 hours off the time they wake each morning. For example, if your child wakes at 7am, sleep time should be 8pm.

Newborn babies sleep up to 16 hours per day. At first, they wake up every two or three hours to feed. From four months old, babies often start to sleep for longer periods of time. From six months old and up to one year, they often sleep five to six hours continuously.

It's important to remember that each child's sleeping pattern is different. If a child is one year old and sleeps 10 hours each day, it's perfectly OK, as long as the child is happy and healthy.



Zzzz Advice...

Establish a regular time for bed each night and do not vary from it.

Create a relaxing bedtime routine, give your child a warm bath/shower.

Make bedtime fun – read a story to your child.

Avoid giving your child large meals close to bedtime.

Make after-dinner playtime a relaxing time as too much activity close to bedtime can keep children awake. Jigsaw puzzles and craft activities are ideal.

Make sure the noise level in the house is low.

Infants and children should be put to bed when they appear tired but still awake rather than falling asleep in parents arms, or in another room.

Tuck your child in with their blanket, teddy bear or some other thing that makes them feel secure.



Golden Bedtime Rules...

Bedtime mantra: As part of your routine, it's a good idea to have a vocal cue to let your child know that it's bedtime. "Time for sleep now", "Goodnight, sleep tight" or some other repetitive saying will tell your child it's time to settle to sleep. Use this mantra instead of begging or pleading with your child, as discussions can engage your child and actually decrease the chance of sleep.

Beds are for sleeping: Put your child to sleep in the place they'll spend the night. This makes a connection for your child between their bed, their bedroom and sleep that will make going to sleep there increasingly likely.

If your child doesn't currently go to sleep in their own bed, this is one area where you may need plenty of patience as they fight against the changes in routine. Stick to your new routine and you'll get results but it may take some time to break current habits. Don't permit your child to fall asleep watching TV or DVDs in bed - if you need to, remove the TV/DVD player from the bedroom.

Once your child's in bed, it's crucial they stay there. Don't give them any excuses to get out of bed unnecessarily. Make sure there's water to drink in the room, and easy access to the toilet if necessary.

Your child may try to get you to engage with them either by calling out to you, continually getting out of bed or deciding they're suddenly 'hungry'. Repeat your bedtime mantra, keep your response to a minimum (don't chat or cajole), put your child back to bed if necessary and then leave the room (making sure they have all they need).





Recommended Sleep Routine ...

A regular bedtime routine, repeated at the same time every night, is essential for creating good sleep habits. The routine should be calm and gentle. A sleep routine might go something like this:

7.30pm Offer your child a warm drink and cuddle time with you or your partner, get them to brush teeth and visit the toilet, snuggle them up in bed with a favourite soft toy and read them one or two short stories - not scary ones! Tell your child it's time for sleep.

8pm Dim the lights and kiss your child goodnight. At this point expect them to stop playing and stay in bed. You could stay in the bedroom or leave, depending upon the habits you've already developed.



The Ideal Child's Bedroom...

- Keep toys out of sight in cupboards or use a sheet to cover them over at night.
- Avoid having televisions and computers in the bedroom. If you do have them in your child's room, do not use them during the last hour before bedtime because they are mentally stimulating.
- Posters on the wall and pictures can frighten a children during the night. If your child wants to keep the posters up try to cover them over at night or position them where they can't be seen from the bed.
- Colours are very important in bedrooms. Pastel and neutral shades are the best for promoting relaxation.
- Blackout blinds are recommended particularly during the summer months when the nights are lighter.
- Create an environment of soft lighting in the child's bedroom using a nightlight or small lamp.
- Adjust the temperature in your child's bedroom and check it using a nursery thermometer. The ideal temperature is round about 18 degrees.
- Play relaxing music during the run up to bedtime.
- Try not to use the bedroom as a place to send your child for a punishment. You want your child to view time in their bedroom as a positive experience not a negative one.



Feng Shui Your Child's Bedroom...

Decorate using soft, light colours, such as yellows, light greens and blues, purples and pinks. Rooms that are painted dark colours can be depressing and create too much oppressive energy.

When arranging your child's furniture, do not place the bed under a window, skylight, beams or shelves full of books or games.

Things that are good to have in your child's bedroom include: a hanging crystal in the window; a good quality, wooden bed; stars and planets stuck on the ceiling to create a night sky; and a family photo near their bed to remind them of the loving family they have.

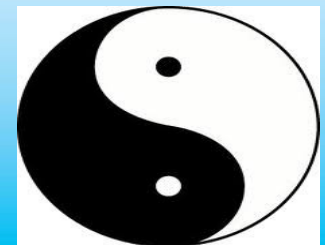
Avoid bunk beds and, if possible, try to have a separate bedroom for each child. If this isn't possible, there are lots of decorative ways to create division and privacy within a room.

Always avoid high energy producing items such as computers, televisions, and other electronics in your child's bedroom.

Select posters and pictures of images which make your child feel secure rather than aggressive images such as battle scenes, swords, guns, wrestling paraphernalia, wild animals, or violent video game posters. These can cause nightmares and increase aggressive behaviour in your child.

The space under your child's bed should always be kept clear. There should be no mirror or other reflective object facing their bed as these can cause nightmares.

Make sure your child can see the door from his or her bed easily, but is not in direct line of the door. Your child should not share a wall with a toilet or see a toilet or bathroom from the bed.



How To Tell Good Children's Bedtime Stories...

Telling a good story at bedtime has many benefits. It entertains and relaxes your child, it helps to build his or her imagination, it makes bedtime something to look forward to, it builds a lifelong enjoyment of reading and it's an opportunity for quiet time with your child.

What makes a good bedtime story? Whether you're reading from a book or making it up as you go along, it should have these common elements:

Familiarity:

Even if you are weaving a tale about dragons and magical places, a child likes to have hints of familiar things. Maybe the dragon has an annoying little brother or the kingdom has a grocery store just like the one your child has been to. Being able to relate to one or two aspects of the story or setting helps your child build stronger, richer images in his or her mind.

Length:

Since one of the goals of a bedtime story is to help your child sleep, you don't want the story to be too long. Kids like to see results, so falling asleep before the end of a story can frustrate them. If you're involved in a series of tales or a longer book with chapters, keep the segments short. If you can't get to the end of a chapter, try to leave the story at a point where something has happened to give your child a sense of some kind of completion. The amount of time you spend reading at bedtime will vary but a good rule of thumb is twenty minutes.



How To Make Bedtime Special...



Variety:

Every child has a favorite book or story and asks for it to be read or told time and again. No matter how bored you are with the story, your child needs this reassurance and repetition to help him or her learn. However, you can slowly put new stories into the repertoire by compromising. Tell your child that you'll read their favorite every night except on Sunday and Wednesday (for example) when you'll read something else. Most children will agree to this because they still get their beloved story most of the time and they know when to expect something new. Eventually, they will begin requesting new stories every night until they find a new favorite.

Plot:

Many children like scary stories, but bedtime isn't when they should be told. Helping your child get to sleep is the primary goal and scaring them isn't going to help. There can be scary or dangerous elements to the plot but don't end on a frightening note. Keep in mind how active a child's imagination is and how imaginary things can be very real to them. A mixture of happy, sad, safe, dangerous, serious and funny events or characters make the best bedtime stories.

Participation:

As children grow older, they will participate more in the storytelling. Before they know how to read, give them plenty of pictures or use gestures and faces to illustrate your tale. Once they start learning to read use your finger to show what you're reading and solicit their help from time to time. At all times, don't dismiss their feedback. Younger children will ask questions and older kids will make comments or wonder about things in the story. Their interaction is just as important as the story itself, so don't give them the impression that they are doing something wrong by interrupting breaking the flow.



Bedtime reading is an important event in a child's day. Make the most of it.

Children say the funniest Things about sleep...

A boy, aged 5, was in his bedroom looking worried when his Mum asked what was troubling him, he replied, **"I don't know what'll happen with this bed when I get married. How will my wife fit in it?"**



"When it gets dark it's because God turned out the lights so he could sleep." 6 year old girl.

After digging my son's glasses out of the toilet I asked him how they got there and he told me **"its a long story and its past my bedtime..."**

"Tell me when you're asleep, ok?"
7 year old son, overheard talking to his 5 year old brother.

