

Sleep Information for Parents and Carers

How much sleep?

Sleep is very important to a child's wellbeing. A lack of sleep can cause a child to become hyperactive and disagreeable, and have extremes in behaviour. Parents are sometimes unsure of how much sleep their child should be having. Here are some approximate numbers based on age, as recommended by the Millpond Children's Sleep Clinic:

Age	Daytime	Night time
4 weeks	6.75 hours	8.75 hours
3 months	5 hours	10 hours
6 months	4 hours	10 hours
9 months	2.75 hours	11.25 hours
12 months	2.5 hours	11.5 hours
2 years	1.25 hours	11.75 hours
3 years	1 hour	11 hours
4 years		11.5 hours
5 years		11 hours

Sleeping at Nursery

Your child may find sleeping at nursery more difficult than sleeping at home. We will try to follow parent's wishes with regards to sleep patterns as much as we can but we cannot/will not attempt to force a child to have a sleep against their will or alternatively we will not force a child to stay awake if they are falling asleep. Children are welcome to have a nap at nursery at any age, please discuss this with your child's key person.

Nightmares

Nightmares are quite common. They often begin between the ages of 18 months and three years. Nightmares aren't usually a sign of emotional disturbance. They may happen if your child is anxious about something or has been frightened by a TV programme or story. After a nightmare, your child will need comfort and reassurance. If your child has a lot of nightmares and you don't know why, talk to your GP, Health Visitor or local Children's Centre.

If your child won't go to bed

- Decide what time you want your child to go to bed.
- Close to the time that your child normally falls asleep, start a 20-minute "winding down" bedtime routine. Bring this forward by 5 to 10 minutes a week until you get to the bedtime you want.
- Set a limit on how much time you spend with your child when you put them to bed. For example, read only one story, then tuck your child in and say goodnight.
- Give your child their favourite toy, dummy or comforter before settling into bed.
- If your child cries, leave them for 5 to 10 minutes before going **back** in and settling them down again. Don't pick them up or take them downstairs. If your child gets up, put them back to bed again.
- You might have to repeat this routine for several nights.
- If you try this, you will need to be firm and not give up.

Setting up a bedtime routine

Getting your child into a simple, soothing bedtime routine can be helpful to encourage longer periods of sleep. It's also great one-to-one with your baby. Suggestions would include:

- having a bath · changing into night clothes and a fresh nappy
- brushing their teeth · putting to bed
- reading a bedtime story · dimming the lights in the room to create a calm atmosphere · giving a goodnight kiss and cuddle
- singing a lullaby or having a wind-up musical mobile that you can turn on when you've put your baby to bed

Sleep safe (Babies)

- Suitable room temperature, between 16-20 degrees.
- Feet at the foot of the cot lying on their backs covered over to their shoulders. Nothing should cover the child face.
- Pillows should be avoided to avoid suffocation.
- Making sure there are no teddies, toys or other items in the cot with the child.
- No dummy chains or other stings in or nearby the cot.
- Children should only sleep in their cot/ Moses basket, not in a car seat, bouncer, sofa or bean bag.

<http://www.millpondsleepclinic.com/>

<http://www.nhs.uk/LiveWell/Childrenssleep/Pages/childrenssleephome.aspx>