

Guide for Grown-Ups

ALL ABOUT SLEEP

What does sleep do?

Sleeping helps with many mind and body functions. When we sleep, our body is able to repair cells from injuries or illness, restore our energy levels and cement any new learning or information in our brain.

Research shows that sleep is directly linked to our mood and how we feel about ourselves. Poor sleep can increase feelings of worry and stress. Whereas getting enough, good quality sleep can boost our mood, making us feel happier and giving us the brain-width to take on our day!

How much sleep?

According to the Sleep Charity UK, children aged 3 to 12 should have around 10-12 hours of sleep each night. Teens need 8-10 hours and adults 7+ hours per night.

Is falling asleep tricky?

1 in 5 people in the UK are not getting enough sleep (Mental Health UK, 2023) with many struggling to get to sleep in the first place.

Here are some tips that may help:

- Work on a bedtime routine: going to bed and wake up at similar times everyday helps to programme our brain and body to encourage better sleep. Your routine should be similar each day to let your body know that it is nearly time to go to sleep.
- Check what you are eating or drinking before bedtime. Caffeinated, fizzy or sugary drinks can help to keep us awake and prevent deep sleep, which is needed to feel refreshed in the mornings.
- Keep a sleep diary to track how many hours you are sleeping and if there is a pattern of behaviour then you can address this by making positive changes.
- If you find yourself worrying or writing to-do lists over and over again in your head before bed, then write down your thoughts. It is important that you do not do this when in bed but prior to getting into bed to help separate your busy and sleepy brain.
- Can't sleep? Get up and do something relaxing until you feel sleepy. Lying down, worrying about not being able to sleep can increase feelings of worry and stress, which are not helpful for sleep.

Swap it & Sleep:

Swap screentime for reading, meditation or mindful breathing.

Swap coffee for herbal tea, a milky drink or water.

Stop using your bed as a desk or home office, separate your working space from your sleeping space.

Breathe in slowly through your nose and count to 4.

Breathe out slowly through your mouth and count to 8.

Hold and count to 7.