

Signs my Child needs better quality sleep:

- Falling asleep during or shortly after school needing to nap.
- Yawning.
- Irritable.
- Low concentration levels.
- Increased emotional sensitivity, e.g. more likely to erupt or explode.
- Reluctance to get out of bed in the mornings.
- Changes to appetite.
- Feels sick.
- Frequently complains of headaches.
- Feeling a sense of dizziness.
- Hyperactive behaviours.
- Increased levels of worry, sadness or anger.



For more information about sleep problems in Children, head over to the G.O.S.H NHS website:

<https://www.gosh.nhs.uk/conditions-and-treatments/procedures-and-treatments/sleep-hygiene-children/>

Seeking Support

If you are concerned about your child and their Mental Health then seek professional support from your GP or talk to School who can refer into the MHST, if appropriate.

Other services who can help that we recommend are:

NHS 111, free 24/7
Mental and Physical
Health Support



YOUNGMINDS
fighting for young people's mental health
YoungMinds Parent Helpline

ChildLine

0800 1111



Workshop provided by
Mental Health Support
Team (MHST) in Schools,
a free NHS service.

Parent Workshop: Sleep

Information Leaflet
for Parents and Carers

Practical strategies for helping
your child with their sleep!



Sleep Swaps

Sleep swaps can help to promote more successful bedtimes:



Worry Time

Do you have a child who often worries before bedtime, on the walk to school, distracts them in school or is finding worry is taking up large parts of their day?

Worry Time is a tool use to keep worries boundaried.

Specific, consistent time each day, in a neutral place, e.g. after school at 4pm each day. Important: Worry Time should not be scheduled before bedtime.

Worry Time should last 10-15 minutes and end with a grounding technique, such as a deep breath or 5-4-3-2-1.

Children learn to bring their worries to 'Worry Time' and after giving themselves time to worry then they can let the worry go.

Top Tips

1. Be realistic about bedtimes, if your child isn't going to sleep until 11pm then do not start the routine at 6pm!
2. Create a calm, cool and relaxing environment for your child to sleep in with dim light.
3. Offer quiet and calm activities before bed, such as fine-motor skills activities like puzzles, building or colouring-in.
4. Get ready for bed in the same order - for example, healthy snack and drink, bath-time 30 minutes before, pyjamas on, tooth brushing, toilet, into bed, storytime, sleep, etc.
5. Wake them up at the same time each morning to help to strengthen their body clock. Consistency is key!

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) is a relaxation exercise that helps us calm our bodies and minds by slowly and progressively tensing and relaxing our muscles, one group at a time.

How to practise PMR:

- Sit or lie down in a comfortable, relaxed position.
- Take 3 deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth.
- Begin tightening and releasing one muscle group at a time: inhale as you tighten. Hold for 5 seconds. Exhale as you relax.
- Face (scrunch up your nose and mouth).
- Shoulders (lift your shoulders up as if you're trying to touch your ears).
- Arms.
- Fists (like squeezing an orange).
- Stomach (pull your belly button towards your back).
- Legs and thighs.
- Feet and toes (imagine that your feet are in sand or mud).
- Now, take 3 more deep breaths and notice how loose and relaxed your body has become. If there is any remaining tension in your body, tense and relax those muscles, while breathing.

You should be tensing your muscles, but not to the point of straining them. If you are uncomfortable or feel any pain, stop. Remember to go slowly and take deep breaths in and out throughout the exercise.

