



Sleep School

Information for Parents

www.thechildrenssleepcharity.org.uk

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Reg Charity No: 1150585

Welcome

I would like to welcome you to our Sleep School workshop and the work of The Children's Sleep Charity. We were delighted to receive funding from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation in 2016 to allow us to develop this important piece of work.

Sleep is of vital importance in order for children to meet their full potential and for families to function well. Being a sleep-deprived mum is what led me to set up the charity in 2012 so I really do understand what it's like for families. Prior to working within the charity I spent over 15 years as a teacher and witnessed first hand how sleep issues can impact on young people's learning. I hope that you will find the workshop helpful in supporting your pupils to get a better night's sleep so that they can meet their full potential.

If you would like to make a donation to our charity then we would be most grateful. You can donate online using this link

<https://www.charitycheckout.co.uk/1150585/Donate> or you can send a cheque made payable to The Children's Sleep Charity
St Catherine's House, Woodfield Park, Tickhill Rd, Doncaster DN4 8QP

We need help to spread the word about our work so please like our Facebook page or follow us on Twitter. If you would be willing to share your success story following today's workshop we would love to feature you on our website or press releases, please email me at the charity.

Changing sleep patterns can be difficult for young people. The team at the Children's Sleep Charity are committed to offering support so please don't hesitate to contact us.

Vicki Dawson

CEO and Founder

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Working to ensure that Children get a good night's sleep.....
And so do their parents!

The Importance of Sleep

Sleep is vital to our wellbeing. A sleep deprived young person cannot meet their full potential.

Youngsters who get the right amount of sleep are more likely to:

- Be mentally alert and concentrate
- Have a brain that functions better
- Have sharpened senses
- Be able to learn to their full potential
- Be calmer

Sleep helps youngsters bodies to develop by:

- Supporting the immune system
- Releasing hormones that aid growth
- Helping tissues to repair

Not getting enough sleep can cause numerous issues including:

- Relationship breakdowns: friendships/siblings/parent-child
- A rollercoaster of emotions: Hatred, anger, blame, depression etc.
- Accidents
- Illness – lowers the immune system
- Isolation
- Inability to cope with everyday life
- Inability to think rationally
- Weight issues
- Increased anxiety
- Reduced concentration and impaired cognitive ability



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Melatonin

- Naturally occurring hormone produced by the pineal gland in the brain
- Controlled by circadian clock
- Levels rise at night and fall at dawn
- Administering can produce shifts in circadian rhythms, especially if light absent
- Studies indicating beneficial effect on sleep pattern of children with neurological and/or behavioural disorders; delayed sleep phase, jet lag
- Teenagers release melatonin later in the evening – hence why they fall asleep later

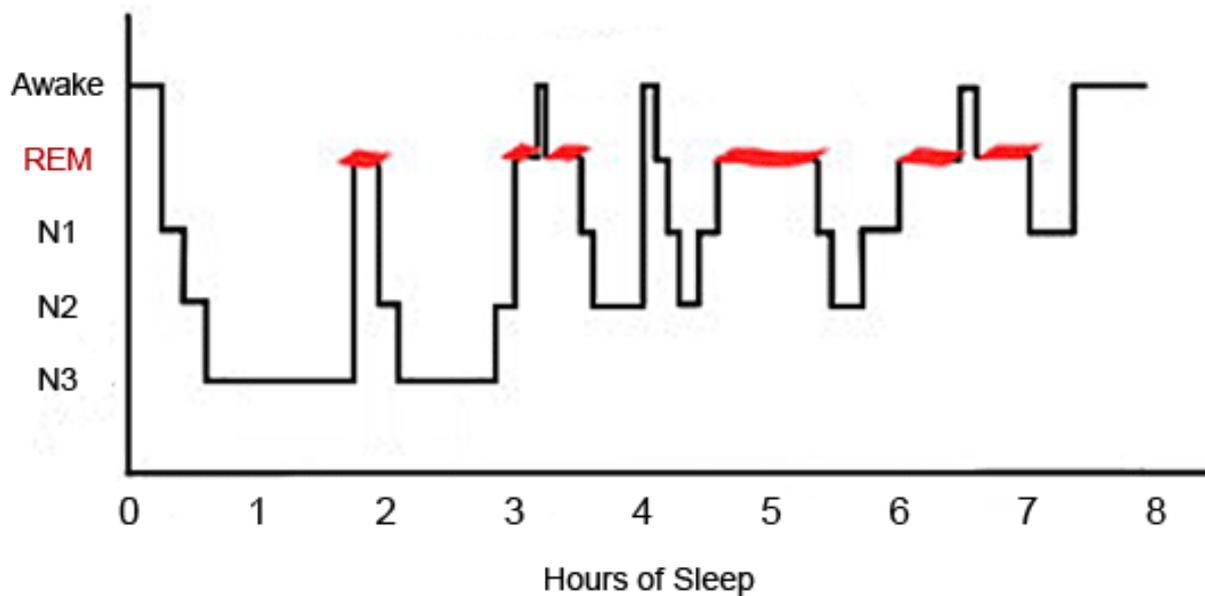
Circadian Rhythm

- Our biological clock that regulates appetite and body temperature
- Genetically programmed so people may have a tendency to be a 'night owl' or a 'lark'
- We rely on environmental cues to keep it on track such as having regular meal times or using an alarm clock to get up at the same time each day.
- The human circadian clock doesn't naturally run on a 24 hour cycle, it runs at around 24 hours 11 minutes.
- Light cues can help to entrain the biological clock.
- Teenagers circadian rhythms change so that they aren't tired until the early hours of the morning and then find it hard to wake up.



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Sleep Cycles



There are 2 types of sleep, REM and Non-REM sleep. There are 3 stages to Non-REM sleep. The red parts on the hypnogram are REM sleep.

NREM Stage 1

Breathing slows down, you go into a light sleep, Takes 10 to 15 minutes to pass through this stage.

NREM Stage 2

Stage 2 is the next stage of sleep you're in a deeper sleep than in stage 1. You can still be woken up easily at this stage.

Here your body functions slow down even more. Your brainwaves become longer and slower as your body prepares for the next stage of sleep.

NREM Stage 3

Brain waves slow down, breathing slows down, muscles relax and children will be still. Hormones are released for growth and development and blood is released to the muscles, tissue repairs.



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REM Sleep

REM sleep is the second type of sleep where most dreaming occurs with brain activity much higher than NREM. However, while your brain is active, only your eyes and breathing muscles can move – for most people!

There are 2 types of sleep REM and non REM sleep

- REM sleep is when we dream. Toddlers and babies spend a lot of time in REM sleep. The body switches off and the brain receives extra blood and processes the day's events.
- Non-REM sleep develops when a baby is around 4 months old. It is the time when sleep becomes restful and muscles relax. The body is repaired by Non-REM sleep.

Average Sleep Needs

Age	Average Number of Hours Needed	
	Daytime	Night-time
12 years	-	9 ½
13 years	-	9 ¼
14 years	-	9
15 years	-	8 ¾
16 years	-	8 ½

Taken from Lyn Quine "Solving Children's Sleep Problems".



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Restful Environment

A restful bedroom should be:

- The correct temperature around 16-20 degrees
- Dark, to encourage the production of melatonin. Black out blinds and curtains can help to keep the light out during summer months.
- Decorated in restful colours e.g. pale greens, creams etc
- Quiet. If outside noise is a problem you can use white noise.
- Free of distractions
- Comfortable.
- A tech free zone
- Avoid revising in bed

Developing A Good Routine

- Plan a 'golden hour' before bed to help to promote sleep
- Bath time should be carried out 30 minutes before you want your child to sleep. The decrease in body temperature following a bath helps them to fall asleep
- Relaxing activities include hand eye coordination activities such as jigsaws, crafts and colouring in. Young people may enjoy playing an instrument or reading a book.
- No screen activities should be used in the hour before bedtime.
- Avoid heavy meals and exercise 3 hours before bed.
- A pre-bedtime snack rich in tryptophan and including a complex carbohydrate can aid sleep such as peanut butter on granary bread.



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Diet and Sleep

What we eat during the day impacts on sleep during the night. Avoid sugary snacks and anything containing caffeine.

Below is a list of foods that may aid sleep:

Almonds contain magnesium which promote both sleep and muscle relaxation. They also help to keep blood sugar levels stable overnight.

Bananas are an excellent source of magnesium and potassium. They also contain tryptophan an amino acid that helps us to sleep but don't forget fruit contains sugar too. Blend one banana with one cup of milk or soya milk to make an ideal bedtime drink.

Dairy, yogurt, milk and cheese contain tryptophan helping us to nod off more easily. Calcium is effective in stress reduction and it's not true . . cheese doesn't give you nightmares!

Oatmeal makes an excellent supper time choice, it's cheap and easy to prepare and has sleep inducing qualities. It's rich in calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, silicon and potassium, all of which help to promote better sleep. You could even add some banana on top.

Cherries particularly tart cherries have been found to naturally boost melatonin production. Drinking a glass of cherry juice (available at most natural foods stores) has been proven to aid sleep. Alternatively try a serving of fresh, frozen or dried cherries before bedtime.

Cereal not only is it a healthy snack (make sure you top it with milk to give your body the protein it needs), but it may also help your child to sleep. Complex carbohydrate-rich foods increase the availability of tryptophan in the bloodstream. Avoid sugar-coated cereals though, these will give your child a sugar rush and could wake them up!



Encouraging Relaxation

Promoting relaxation can help to aid sleep. Here are some ideas to try:

- Mindfulness - Notice your feet on the floor, your body on the chair, your breathing. Notice 5 things you can hear, see, feel right now!
- Defusion – challenge negative thoughts. “I’ll never get to sleep”, how true is that thought really?
- Introduce the idea that negative thoughts around sleep are like junk mail coming into your inbox. You can’t stop them but you don’t have to read them all or act on them.
- Relaxation CDs may help.
- Breathing exercises
- Create a calm area that they can go to
- Hand eye co-ordination activities can aid relaxation
- Body scanning to check for tension

Notes:

If you have any questions about today please contact us at info@thechildrensleepcharity.org.uk or Tel 01302 751416

Only practitioners who have been trained by The Children’s Sleep Charity are permitted to deliver this workshop.

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