

Tackling Sleep/ Bedtime Routine Difficulties



Why is my child struggling to sleep?

- Too much screen time during the day
- Sensory Seeking
- Sensory sensitives
- Limited outside play
- Limited sunshine
- Sensory threshold is not being met
- Sensory system is overstimulated
- Dehydrated or over-hydrated
- Nutritional deficiencies
- Food dyes / other nutritional components
- Too much sugar
- Emotional needs not being met
- Challenges with transitions
- Too much daytime sleep (naps)
- Retained primitive reflexes
- System in fight, flight or freeze response
- Biological needs are not met
- Separation anxiety
- Sibling awake (spending time with you)

Pre- Bedtime Activities & tools to try:

- Go for a walk
- Ride bikes or scooters
- Play in the sand
- Swing or climb at the playground
- Bubble mountain/blowing activities
- Let them play in a sensory bin
- Wrestle/rough & tumble
- Roll Yoga ball on back
- Jump on the trampoline (see handouts of trampoline programmes too)
- Crash on sofa / bed / bean bag
- Finger paint
- Do an obstacle course
- Push a heavy laundry basket across the room
- Chewing gum (if safe)
- Massage with a vibration gadget
- 'Heavy work'- proprioceptive activities
- Vibration toothbrush
- Vibration Hairbrush
- Dry body brushing
- Slow blanket swinging
- Crawl slowly with something like a pillow or weighted blanket on their back
- Crawling through a lycra tight tunnel
- Use a visual schuedele
- Textured blankets i.e. fluffy, weighted
- Slow snow angels



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Tip for the bedroom

- Black out curtains/blinds
- Red light light
- Declutter bedroom
- White noise
- Sleep spray on pillow
- Teddy (weighted)
- Sleep mask

Snacks to try before bed

- Bananas
- Crunchy foods
- Smoothies with straws
- Chewing gum (if safe)
- Sour candy spray (Zed candy)

Tips for Bathtime before bed

- Soft music
- Low lights/dimmed lights
- Straw in the bath for blowing
- Essential oils diffused
- Hot towel to dry them
- Wrap/Swaddle them in towel

Experiment with different amounts of sensory input/activities during the bedtime routine to find the just-right amount. Remember- no two days are the same, the child may need more important on some days.

Co-Regulation is extremely important when soothing a child that is struggling to sleep. Calming them through your calm body and mind is vital.

NOT INTENDED AS MEDICAL ADVICE



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