

# Primary School Sleep Workshop



Are you OK  
Kingston?



Are you OK  
Richmond?

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# Plan for the session

1. Questionnaire
2. True or False
3. Why sleep is important & how much sleep children need
4. Strategies for supporting good sleep
5. Feedback questionnaire
6. Questions?

Please keep  
yourself on  
mute

Please ask any  
questions in the  
chat as we go

Slides will be  
shared after  
the session

# Questionnaire

Please answer the questions that you'll find on the Poll.

When you answer the poll, please make sure to click on 'vote' so your vote comes through.

## Activities



### Breakout rooms

Split into smaller group discussions



### Polls

Quickly get opinions from the audience



### Q&A

Give everyone an easy way to ask questions



### Recording

Record meetings for on-demand viewing



### Whiteboarding

Collaboratively brainstorm and sketch ideas



What are you hoping to learn today?







Some people dream in black and white

TRUE

12% of the population dream in black and  
white



Falling asleep should take 30 minutes

FALSE

It should take you around 10-15 minutes



On average, humans dream for 4 hours a night

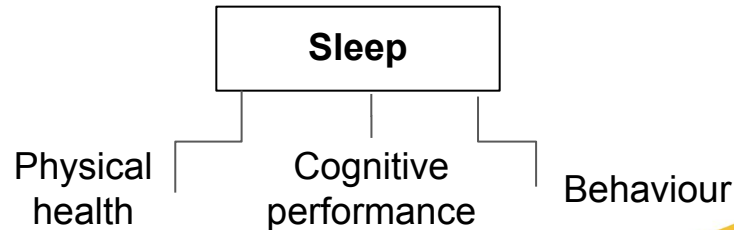
FALSE

This is false. On average, humans spend 2h per night dreaming.



# Introduction- Why is sleep so important?

- Our body needs it- to process, restore and strengthen.
- To consolidate memories
- To restore and rejuvenate, to grow muscle, repair tissue, and synthesize hormones.
- Reduces your chance of developing chronic diseases
- Makes you more alert, focused and able to learn
- Reduces the risks of suffering with poor mental health



# The Circadian rhythm

The Circadian rhythm is our internal biological clock. It is in charge of the sleep-wake cycle. These cycles are roughly 24h long, and can be affected by environmental cues, such as light and temperature about the actual time of day, but they continue even in the absence of cues.

The circadian rhythm directs how awake or sleepy you feel throughout the day by influencing the release and production of the sleep hormone → melatonin.

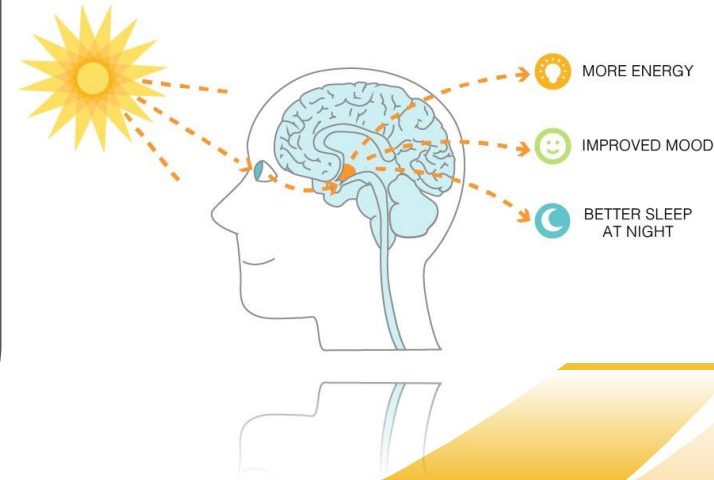


We fall asleep due to high levels of melatonin - we feel sleepy.

First few hours post waking → no melatonin → we feel awake

# How is the Circadian Rhythm affected

- Your circadian rhythm is affected by exposure to sunlight. Direct exposure to sunlight is important for the brain as it helps with production of melatonin.
- Please be safe whilst doing this and don't look directly into the sun. Take care of your eyes! All you need is to be outside.
- Being exposed to direct sunlight can have an impact on our energy levels, our mood and our sleep quality.



# How much should our children sleep? A guidance

**Newborns (0-3 months):** 14-17 hours each day

**Infants (4-11 months):** 12-15 hours

**Toddlers (1-2 years):** 11-14 hours

**Preschoolers (3-5):** 10-13 hours

**School age children (6-13):** 9-11 hours

NHS

**Teenagers (14-17):** 8-10 hours

**Younger adults (18-25):** 7-9 hours

**Adults (26-64):** 7-9 hours

**Older adults (65+):** 7-8 hours

# How to encourage good sleep?



There are a range of factors that can influence and support good sleep:

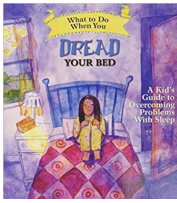
- Resetting the circadian rhythm.
- The bedtime routine
- The bedroom environment
- Wider sleep hygiene strategies
- Specific strategies
  - Relaxation / breathing techniques
  - Worry time

## Resetting the Circadian Rhythm

Resetting your circadian rhythm can be helpful towards regaining a good sleeping routine. To do this:

- Spend time outside at the beginning of their day.
- Spend time outside at the end of their day.
- Consistent waking and sleep times - including the weekends.
- It can take a few days to be reset - consider this for the start of the school year after summer.

# Bedtime Routine



## SHIFT

Goal is to slow down & quiet the mind & body.  
Activities serve to cue the brain & body that bedtime is coming.



Process:

Start by shutting down devices & dimming lights, about 30 minutes (or more) before bedtime.

Have a consistent, calm activity 10-15 minutes before getting into bed. Try: Stretching/yoga, laying out clothes for the next day, cuddling pets, or light conversation (avoid heavy subjects).

End with child getting into bed.

## SNUG

Goal is to create a feeling of safety & coziness with an intentional, calm activity in bed with child (or child alone if they prefer).



Process:

Give about 15 minutes for this time.

Try a self-soothing activity like a breathing practice or meditation.

Reading, calm songs, journaling, or drawing are other great activities... just no screens!

Try to have the same activity for two activities for several weeks to promote conditioning.

## SNOOZE

Goal is to tell the brain it's time to sleep, initiated by the predictable & calm activities & affirmed by this closing ritual/practice.



Process:

Child finds comfy position in bed.

Turn on white noise, music, or aromatherapy if that is something your child enjoys and assists their sleep.

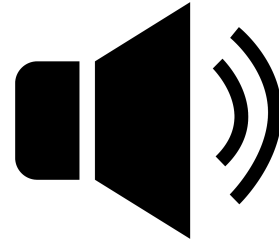
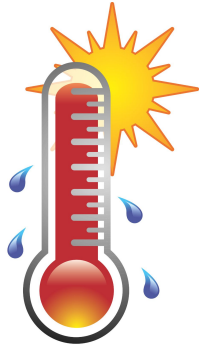
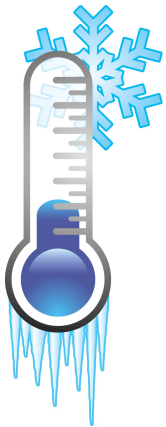
Turn lights out.

Say a goodnight phrase and/or a gentle, "I love you" as you leave the room.

Dawn Heubner

# Bedroom Environment

What helps your child?





## Bedroom Environment - guidelines

- Dark environment → blackout blinds can help in summer to avoid early waking.
  - Some children prefer a little light in the room at night - try using a soft glowing night light that can be safely left on all night
  - Try to keep light conditions consistent where possible - avoid products that turn off in the night and be mindful of hallway/landing lights
- Around 18 degrees is ideal
- Screen free zone - TVs, gaming devices, tablets and phones
- White noise may be useful for masking out background noise
- Try putting away toys at nighttime so they don't provide a distraction
- Comfort is important, we all have different needs when it comes to what we prefer and what suits our bodies - mattress, pillows, textures.
- Avoid using the bedroom or early bedtimes as a sanction - sleep should be promoted positively.


# Sleep hygiene

Sleep hygiene encompasses a set of behavioral and environmental recommendations that aim to improve sleep.

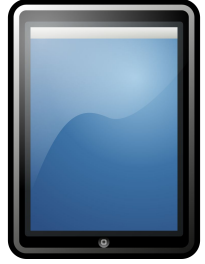
## Bedroom environment and activities

- Avoid spending lots of non-sleep time in bed.
- Physical activity during the day, not before bed.
- Fall asleep in bed instead of other places in the house.
- Security objects, e.g., blanket, doll, toy.
- Brief and boring 'check-in'.
- A light snack can be helpful.
- Sleep diary.

# Try a Sleep Diary

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning 							
I went to bed at:							
I woke up at:							
I slept for..... hours							
I woke up ____ times 							
Evening 							
I had ____ caffeinated drinks after midday.							
What did you do 1 hour before bed?							

## Screen time



Devices with screens emit a particular kind of blue light that stimulates the brain, and therefore prevents sleepiness.

They also tend to produce changing and stimulating images which engage attention and keep the brain active.

Try to switch off all screens between 45-90 minutes before bed to allow the brain time to settle, ready for sleep.

Be consistent for a few weeks in order to change habits and promote conditioning.

# Relaxation/breathing techniques



**Balloon  
Breaths**



**4-7-8  
Breathing**



**Rainbow  
Breathing**



**Box  
Breathing**



**Square  
Breathing**



**5 Finger  
Breathing**



**Belly  
Breathe  
Song**



**Diaphragm  
Breathing**



**Body  
Scan  
Meditation**

# Worry Time

Some children find that worries can sneak in at night time, without the distractions available in the day. For some children these worries can prevent them from falling asleep.

It can be helpful to arrange worry time at a time when there is at least one different activity before bed e.g. after school, before dinner, after dinner.

Make sure your child knows when the next worry time will be.

Try metaphorically or literally putting worries away e.g. in a worry jar.

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/how-to-make-a-worry-box-a-guide-for-parents/>





**ANY  
QUESTIONS?**

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# Helpful Resources

## Books

- Dawn Huebner - What to Do When You Dread Your Bed: A Kid's Guide to Overcoming Problems with Sleep
- Matthew Walker - Why We Sleep
- Richard Ferber - Solve Your Child's Sleep Problems

## Websites

- NHS - [www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/healthy-sleep-tips-for-children/](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/healthy-sleep-tips-for-children/)
- The Sleep Charity - <https://thesleepcharity.org.uk/information-support/children/>
- Guided body scan script - <https://www.mindful.org/body-scan-kids/>

## Apps

- Calm, Headspace, Sleepio, Pzizz

Speak to a GP if you are still having issues with your child's sleep after making these changes.



# Thank you!

If you have any further questions or would like further support please contact Sue Jakob, who will be happy to point you in our direction