The Children's Sleep Charity

Reg Charity No: 1150585

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www.thechildrenssleepcharity.org.uk

Relaxation Tips for Bedtime

Feeling relaxed is important in the run up to bedtime for both you and your child. If your child is experiencing difficulties sleeping it can make you both feel anxious. Children quickly pick up on the stress levels of those around them so it is important to try to keep calm as bedtime approaches.

The tips below may help:

- Turn off all screen activities an hour before bedtime eg computers, television and mobile phones. This will help your child to calm their mind. Screen activities can also inhibit the production of melatonin (the sleep hormone that makes us feel drowsy).
- Avoid physical activity in the run up to bedtime. Exercising too close to bedtime can actually wake your child up.
- If your child is a worrier set aside some time during the day to give them your full attention and to find out how their day has been.

Continued overleaf

- Dimming the lights in the hour before bedtime can help to promote relaxation.

- Fine motor skill activities such as jigsaws and colouring can be very relaxing and a great activity to do together.

- Massage can help some children to unwind.

- Classical music can be very soothing and makes perfect background music in the evening.

- Teach your child to progressively relax the muscles in their body. They can begin by tensing their feet to the count of 5 and then letting them become relaxed. Work up to the calf muscles, thighs and so on until they have relaxed each part of their body.

- Encourage your child to concentrate on their breathing and imagine breathing in a beautiful white light and blowing out any worries or troubles each time they exhale.

- There are a number of relaxation CDs on the market that may help your child to feel calmer during the evening. You may however wish to talk them through an imaginary scene such as a favourite trip to the beach, asking them to visualise the scene and to feel the warm sun on their face.

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