



# YMCA WA EARLY LEARNING CENTRES

Nurturing children in body, mind and spirit



## SLEEP TIPS FOR CHILDREN

A good night's sleep is about getting to sleep and staying asleep. There are a number of benefits on why sleep is important for your children from promoting growth, helping the heart and beating germs.

**So, how do you ensure your child has a good night's sleep?**

1. **Establish a regular sleep pattern** - Regular hours of sleep are important. It will help your child understand when it's time to sleep. It's important to stick to these wake up and bed time hours (give or take 1-2 hours) between day care, school nights and during the weekends.
2. **A consistent bed time routine** - By having the same routine before bed each night it will help prepare your child for sleep and establishes good sleeping patterns. A routine for bath, story and bed can help younger children feel ready for sleep. There are some things you don't want your child to do, such as activity games, playing outside and watching television.
3. **Make sure the bedroom is comfortable** - The bedroom should be quiet, comfortable, dark and safe. Some children like a night light which is fine.
4. **Bed is for sleeping, not entertainment** - Keep TVs, computers and mobiles out of the bedroom as these smart devices can distract your child and is not good for sleep.
5. **A snack before bed may help** - It's harder to sleep on an empty stomach, and so a light snack may help. Your child should not have a heavy meal within one to two hours of going to bed. Avoid stimulants, like caffeine which is in tea and soft drinks.
6. **Take care with day time naps** - It is normal for young children to nap during the day. As your child gets older (over 5 years of age) they will need less sleep and shouldn't need a nap. By sharing your child's day time sleep routine with one of our educators, we can support these routines the best way possible.
7. **Exercise and time outside** - Daily exercise is an important part of healthy living. Time spent in the bright daylight suppresses melatonin, which helps your child feel awake and alert during the day and sleepy towards bed time.

### References:

<https://www.sleephealthfoundation.org.au/pdfs/Sleep-Tips-for-Children.pdf>

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/sleep/better-sleep-settling/sleep-better-tips>