

The Importance of Sleep

There has been a lot of research into sleep and how it impacts our mood and behaviour. Sleep plays a significant role in brain development so it's important for children to get enough sleep as their bodies grow and mature. As well as brain development, sleep is also key for our brain's day-to-day function. Lack of sleep make sit much harder for us to concentrate, and we can become forgetful, irritable and prone to being clumsy and make mistakes.

The benefits of sleep in young people are:

- Growth
- Improved daytime behaviour
- Relationships
- Appearance
- Emotional regulation
- Learning
- Better mental health
- Weight
- Immune system

The benefits of sleep for families:

- More consistent parenting
- More consistent relationships
- Finances improved
- Social life
- Better sibling relationships
- Reduced feelings of isolation
- Better mental health

How much sleep should my child have?

It's important for children to have a healthy established bedtime routine and good sleep diet. Whilst there will be variations, the table below are the approximate hours of sleep needed by children of different ages according to the NHS:

Age Group	Hours of Sleep
Babies 4 - 12 months old	12 – 16 hours including naps
Toddlers 1 – 2 years old	11 – 14 hours including naps
Children 3 – 5 years old	10 – 13 hours including naps
Children 6 – 12 years old	9 – 12 hours
Teenagers 13 – 18 years old	8– 10 hours

I am currently trained with The Sleep Charity and hope to offer the Sleep Tight workshop to parents very soon.

Their website has links to a number of sleep related resources which may be useful to you – www.thesleepcharity.org

They also operate the National Sleep Helpline: [03303 530 541](tel:03303530541)