



# Peace at last....

Practical sleep advice.

Ensuring your child has a regular bedtime routine can be difficult, but it can help improve the quality of their sleep.



## A note from your special carer:

## Relaxation techniques to aid sleep

Winding down is a critical stage in preparing your child for bed. There are many ways for them to relax:

- A warm (not hot) bath will help their body reach a temperature where it's most likely to rest.
- Relaxation exercises, such as light yoga stretches, will help relax their muscles.
- Relaxation CDs work by relaxing the listener with carefully chosen words and gentle hypnotic music and sound effects.

## Kirstie thinks:



*"For families sleep is a vital element to their smooth running of life, so that everyone can 'function' properly. Being sleep deprived is no fun for anyone. I know it is sometimes seen as easier to allow your child to sleep in your bed when the household is tired but no matter how tired you are, I strongly believe that you should avoid allowing your child into your bed, be persistent with your little one, they will soon learn that their room is where they should be on a night time. Make it as relaxing as possible."*

## Get a comfy, relaxing bed:

"It's important to create an environment that's favourable for sleep," says Alexander. "Keep the bedroom just for sleeping."

The bedroom needs to be dark, quiet and tidy. It should smell fresh and be kept at a temperature of 18-24°C. Jessica adds: "Fit some thick curtains. If there's noise outside, consider investing in double glazing or, for a cheaper option, earplugs."

A comfortable bed is essential. Research by The Sleep Council shows that a good-quality mattress and bed frame will give you an extra hour's sleep a night.

Dr Chris Izikowski of the Edinburgh Sleep Centre, who led the research, says people benefit from changing their bed if it's uncomfortable. "It's likely that long-term insomniacs and those with inadequate sleep habits would benefit most," he says.



**Reading is a great way to unwind and relax your child at the end of the day.**

## Avoid TVs in the bedroom: The bedroom should be a relaxed environment.

Experts strongly advise that bedrooms are strongly associated with sleep, but that certain things weaken a child's association; this includes TVs, mobiles/smartphones and other electronic gadgets, light or noise, and a bad mattress or uncomfortable bed.

Try to keep your child's bedroom a TV-free zone and get them to charge their phones and other devices downstairs. That way they'll be out of temptation