



ENCOURAGING HEALTHY SLEEP HABITS IN YOUNG CHILDREN

Sleep is essential for your child's health and wellbeing. It is important to establish healthy sleep habits from an early age to promote growth, good concentration, and reduce the risk of illness.

Your child's sleep needs will vary depending on their age, developmental stage, health, home environment, family and cultural background, and daily activities and routines.

The *Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (birth to 5 years)* recommend the following amount of sleep for young children:

- **Infants (aged birth - 1 year)** - 14 to 17 hours (for those aged 0-3 months) and 12 to 16 hours (for those aged 4-11 months) of good quality sleep, including naps.
- **Toddlers (aged 1-2 years)** - 11 to 14 hours of good quality sleep, including naps, with consistent sleep and wake-up times.
- **Pre-schoolers (aged 3-5 years)** - 10 to 13 hours of good quality sleep, which may include a nap, with consistent sleep and wake-up times.

Tips for parents/carers

- Recognise and respond to the common signs of sleep - yawning, eye rubbing, irritability, seeking comfort and a lack of interest in activities.
- Make sure your child feels safe and secure by providing a comfortable and familiar place for them to sleep or rest.
- Provide a comfortable and safe environment for your child to sleep. Such as reducing the light, noise and temperature (21-22°C) in your child's room.
- Use calm, consistent and familiar routines to encourage your child to sleep. Start routines (bathing, toileting, brushing teeth etc.) at the same time each night and in the same order. Do quiet activities before bed time such as reading a book together.
- Limit screen time before bed which can reduce your child's ability to sleep.
- If your child does not wish to sleep, encourage other activities that support rest and relaxation. Such as yoga, reading, puzzles or drawing.
- To reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), it is important to follow safe sleeping guidelines. This includes positioning your baby correctly and checking the sleep environment. For current safe sleeping guidelines, visit the Red Nose website at www.rednose.com.au/news/guidelines-for-new-parents-to-reduce-risk-of-sids

For more information about the *Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines* visit the Department of Health website at www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/npra-0-5yrs-brochure

Sources: Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Health (2017). *Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (birth to 5 years): An Integration of Physical Activity, Sedentary Behaviour, and Sleep*.

Queensland Government, Sleep in Early Childhood Research Group (2017). *Meeting children's sleep, rest, and relaxation needs - Babies and toddlers in ECEC*.

Queensland Government, Sleep in Early Childhood Research Group (2017). *Meeting children's sleep, rest, and relaxation needs - Children aged 3-5 years*.

**MAKE
HEALTHY
NORMAL**

