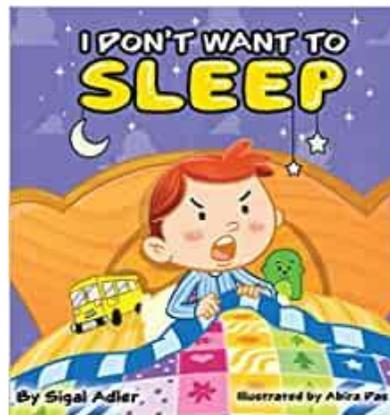




Moorside Primary School and Nursery

Sleep support



This information has been collated from a range of sources and resources (listed) to provide support, advice and strategies for parents and carers of children at Moorside Primary School and Nursery.

Why is Sleep Important?

*'Children need consistent, quality rest in order to be successful. It helps them learn better and it helps them **stay healthy**. Children benefit greatly when they get enough rest, but they also suffer when they do not get an adequate amount. It is the **parents' responsibility** to ensure that their children get enough rest.*

One reason sleep is crucial for children is because it allows them to learn better. Sleep enhances their overall cognitive development and will help them reach their full academic potential. Studies have shown that students who regularly get enough sleep have better memories than students who do not get enough. When their brains are well-rested, students can solve problems, concentrate better, and learn new information well. Their brains use sleeping hours to sort through the day's information, which allows for long-term retention of the knowledge they have learned. Children are also more motivated, pay better attention, and behave better when they are well-rested and alert'.

<https://www.mpfoundation.org/the-importance-of-sleep-for-children/>

Further information about the importance of sleep can be found in the Good night Guide for children in Appendix 1.

Further support

If you have tried all of the recommendations in this booklet and your child continues to have problems getting to sleep, contact your GP or Health Visitor and they will be able to offer further support.

Keeping a 'sleep diary' to track and patterns / changes along side all of the strategies that you have already tried will enable you to give very specific details when you speak to a Health professional.

The NHS also has some very useful advice and tips on their website.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/healthy-sleep-tips-for-children/>

Anxiety and sleep

‘During this uncertain time, we must remember that children are also feeling anxious and worried. Anxiety is often a cause of difficulties settling to sleep at the start of the night but also overnight. Many children cannot say exactly what is worrying them but may be anxious about day-to-day life in general.

***Listen to your child and try to understand their fears.** Acknowledge that being scared or worried is normal and that all people feel scared or worried sometimes. Let your child know that they can always talk to you about things they feel worried about and together you can work out a solution. Try discussing fear during the day (not just before bedtime). Talk about how they can be less scared at night and reassure them that their bedroom is a safe place’.*

<https://www.kidshealth.org.nz/sleep-anxiety>

Moorside’s Top Tips to promote a good bedtime/ sleep routine

- ❖ Make sure that your child’s **room is quiet and dark**
- ❖ Wake your child at a regular hour each morning, so that their **body clock cycle** is strengthened.
- ❖ Keep a **regular bedtime** for your child.
- ❖ Keep room **temperature** to a comfortable level. High temperatures disturb sleep.
- ❖ Environmental **noise** should be kept to a minimum (no loud TVs)
- ❖ Make sure your child does not go to bed **hungry**, but do not give feeds during the night.
- ❖ Help your child to learn to fall asleep alone in **his/her bed**, without your presence.
- ❖ **Avoid stimulating activity** before bedtime. The use of electronic devices before bedtime have a negative impact on their ability to fall asleep.
- ❖ If your child still needs to sleep in the afternoon, schedule a **short nap** for early afternoon.
- ❖ Ensure bedrooms are **tidy and comfortable**.
- ❖ **Avoid drinks** that contain caffeine or additives (eg cola, chocolate, tea and coffee), instead promote a drink of warm milk before bedtime.
- ❖ If your child is **anxious**, get them to practice getting rid of their fears by imagining their favourite colour as a big cloud that pushes 'fear' away or making fear into a big balloon that they can blow away into the sky.

Timetable for children (times will vary depending on age)

Bedtime:

- Consistent bedtime and wakening will reinforce circadian rhythm.
- Carry out steps in the same order each night.
- Relaxing bath, toothbrush then into bedroom (best not to return to living room)
- Bedtime story (don't let it drag on).
- Light out – door left ajar if needed and left to settle alone.
- Lots of praise in the morning.

Time	Activity
5.30pm	Evening meal
6.00pm	Playtime
7.00pm	Quiet play eg Jigsaw puzzles, train set, snack or some Yoga/Mindfulness activities (see suggested activities)
7.20pm	Relaxing bath
7.30pm	Snack if required (toast, cereal, milky drink - avoid sweets/biscuits and fizzy/ sugary drinks)
7.40pm	Pyjamas, teeth cleaned and into bed
7.45pm	A bedtime story
7.55pm	Cuddles from family member
8.00pm	Leave to settle

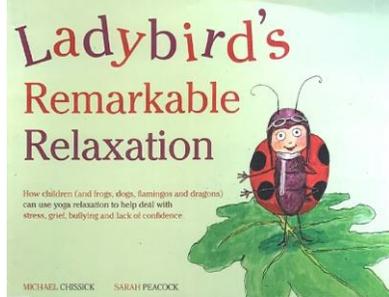


Average Sleep Needs

The average hours of sleep are required for are recommended below. The number of hours decreases as children get older.

Age	Number of hours	Age	Number of hours
4 Years	11 ½ hours of sleep	11 Years	9 ½ hours of sleep
5 Years	11 hours of sleep	12 Years	9 ¼ hours of sleep
6 Years	10 ¾ hours of sleep	13 Years	9 ¼ hours of sleep
7 Years	10 ½ hours of sleep	14 Years	9 hours of sleep
8 Years	10 ¼ hours of sleep	15 Years	8 ¾ hours of sleep
9 Years	10 hours of sleep	16 Years	8 ½ hours of sleep
10 Years	9 ¾ hours of sleep		

Taken from Lyn Quine "Solving Children's Sleep problems2"



Ladybird Relaxation Script

Set up

Have the children lie on mats on their backs with their arms by their sides, palms upwards. Make sure each child has enough space so as not to disturb anyone else. Allow the children time to settle and become comfortable. Ask the children to close their eyes gently. When everyone is ready proceed with Phase I using the script that follows. Please feel free to change it to match the needs of your child or your class.

The script

A tiny, shy, tired ladybird needs to find somewhere safe to rest for a while. She looks down and sees you lying so still and calmly. She thinks you look kind so she lands carefully on...

your **big toe**; and stays for a moment.

Then Ladybird flaps her wings and flies in the air and lands gently on... your **knee**; and stays there for another moment.

Ladybird flaps her wings again, flies in the air and lands softly on... the **tip of your thumb**; and stays there for a moment too.

Ladybird flaps her wings again, flies in the air and lands softly on... your **shoulder**; happy to stay there for a moment.

Ladybird flaps her wings and flies in the air and this time lands gently on...

the **tip of your nose**; and stays there for a tiny moment, sharing your stillness.

Ladybird flaps her wings and flies in the air and lands softly on... your **other shoulder**; and is so comfortable that she stays there for another moment.

Ladybird flaps her wings and flies in the air and lands carefully on... your **other thumb**; she is so happy to share your calmness she stays there for a few moments more.

Ladybird flaps her wings and flies in the air and lands softly on... your **other knee**; where she stays for just another moment, very still, like you.

Ladybird flaps her wings and flies in the air and lands carefully on... your **other big toe**; and settles down quietly, calmly and happily.

This is the best bit. Allow the children to relax in silence for 1-2 minutes. Trust your judgement to bring them up when you think the time is right. Complete the relaxation by saying:

And then Ladybird flaps her wings and flies away, back to her home in the trees.

Allow and enjoy a few more moments of silence as the children re-orientate themselves.

Fun 5 MINDFULNESS ACTIVITIES for children by Big Life Journal

1 "JUST ONE BREATH" BREATHING ACTIVITY

- Find a relaxing place, sit comfortably, and set a timer for one minute.
- Breathe deeply in and out while paying attention to any sensations you notice or sounds you hear.
- Take another slow deep breath, imagine the air moving down into the lungs and back up.
- Take one more deep breath and hold for a moment, then release it.



2 CREATE A GLITTER JAR

- Finding a jar or plastic bottle and allow your child to decorate it however they like.
- Fill the bottle up 3/4 of the way with water. Next, add clear glue, food coloring, and glitter then shake.
- Seal the lid and you are ready to go.



3 HEARTBEAT EXERCISE

- Ask your child to stand up and either jump up and down or do jumping jacks for one minute.
- At the end of that minute, have them place their hand on their heart and pay attention to how their heartbeat and their breathing feels.



4 GOING ON A SAFARI

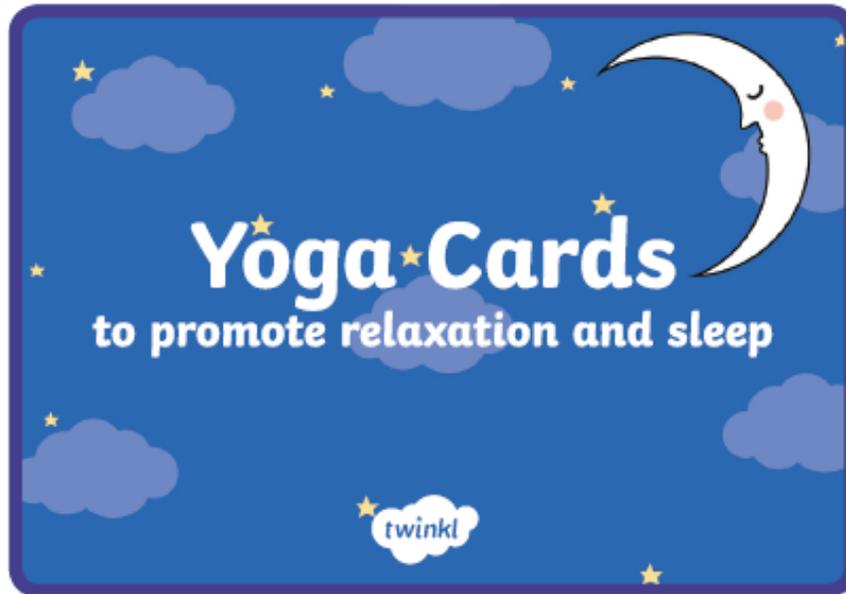
- Go outside on an exciting adventure, try picking up a small rock or touching a plant or flower.
- Notice the bugs or the birds. Take a moment to kneel down and touch the earth.
- Walk mindfully paying close attention to everything. Make sure you walk in silence because you want to notice all those little details.



5 TENSE AND RELEASE MUSCLE RELAXATION

- Starting at the feet, gently squeeze the muscles in the feet by tightening them, then slowly releasing.
- Next, squeeze the large muscles in the calves for 5 seconds, then gently release. Working your way up the body, squeeze the thigh muscles for 5 seconds then gently release.
- Continue moving up the body for more relaxation.





Yoga Cards

Preparation and Safety

Time Can be adapted to any setting or time frame.

Preparation Session to happen on a carpeted floor or mats with enough space to stretch out arms and legs. If possible, have a bag with animals, pictures and stories inside to promote discussion.

Safety Session to happen on a carpeted floor or mats with enough space to stretch out arms and legs. Hold each pose for at least two breaths and always change sides when instructed to. Keep breathing, move slowly into the pose, never overstretch and if any pain is felt stop immediately.

Yoga Cards

Mountain Pose - Tadasana

Benefits Improves posture, strengthens core, muscles and legs.

- 1 Stand tall with your weight balanced evenly on your feet.
- 2 Firm your thigh muscles and pull in your tummy.
- 3 Press your shoulders back and hold your arms out straight, a little way from your body.
- 4 Breathe deeply and hold as long as needed (at least two long breaths).

A cartoon illustration of a girl with brown hair in a ponytail, wearing a grey t-shirt and purple pants, standing with her feet together and arms at her sides.

Yoga Cards

Frog Pose - Bhekasana

Benefits Tones legs; increases hamstring flexibility.

- 1 Squat on the floor, balancing on your toes, knees spread wide, hands on the floor between your legs.
- 2 Look up and inhale.
- 3 As you exhale, straighten your legs and lower your head toward your knees.
- 4 Return to squatting position, then repeat.

A cartoon illustration of a girl with black hair in pigtails, wearing a green t-shirt and green pants, in a frog-like squatting position with her hands on the floor.

Butterfly Pose

Benefits Calms the body and mind, helps relieve stress, headaches and fatigue.

- 1 Begin by sitting with soles of feet together.
- 2 Touch fingers to the side of your head like antennae.
- 3 Gently bounce your knees to flap your butterfly wings.
- 4 Exhale, and slowly lower your hands back to your lap.



Cat Cow Pose - Marjaryasana Bitilasana

Benefits Stretches torso and neck, gently massages spine and internal organs.

- 1 Start by kneeling on hands and knees. Make sure hands are below shoulders, and knees are below hips.
- 2 Inhale, look up to the ceiling, and allow your belly to sink toward the floor.
- 3 Exhale, round your back towards the ceiling and look at your belly.
- 4 Repeat.



Child's Pose - Balasana

Benefits Stretches the hips, thighs, and ankles; calms the mind; relieves stress and fatigue.

- 1 Kneel on the floor, touching your big toes together.
- 2 Sit back on your heels and separate your knees hip-width apart.
- 3 Exhale, bringing your head down, and rest it on the floor in front of you.
- 4 Place your hands wherever they are comfortable by your head, your knees, etc.
- 5 Relax and breathe, holding this pose.



Corpse Pose - Savasana

Benefits Calms the body and mind; helps relieve stress, headaches and fatigue.

- 1 Lie down on your back, with arms next to your body and legs slightly apart.
- 2 Close your eyes, focus on deep breathing and relaxation. For full benefit, relax for 2-5 minutes depending on age.



Paper Plate Dream Catcher

Making a dream catcher is a great way for children to show off their creativity, have some time with a parent and help relieve anxiety at bedtime by hanging one in their bedroom... this one is from [https://www.bakerross.co.uk/craft-ids/kids/paper-plate-dream-catcher/](https://www.bakerross.co.uk/craft-ideas/kids/paper-plate-dream-catcher/)

What You Need: Paper plate, coloured wool, some sticky stars, some beads or buttons, PVA glue, needle with a large eyelet (blunt), scissors, hole punch

How to Make

1. Fold one of the small coloured paper plates in half and cut out the middle by cutting out a semi-circle along the dimpled edge of the plate.
2. Unfold the plate to reveal a neat circle cut out of the middle of the plate.
3. Punch 3 holes in a row at the bottom of the circle. This is where the feathers and beads will hang.
4. Punch a hole at the top of the circle in line with the 3 punched holes below. This is where the dream catcher will be hung.
5. Cut 3 pieces of coloured wool 15cm long. Tie each piece to each of the 3 punched holes at the bottom of the circle. Tie with a double knot and trim off the excess wool from the knot.
6. Hole punch a few more holes around the rim of the circle.
7. Tie a piece of different coloured wool roughly 12cm long to the top centre circle where the dream catcher will be hung. Tie the wool into a loop and secure with a double knot. Trim off the excess wool from the knot.
8. Using the same coloured wool as the 3 long strips at the bottom of the dream catcher, thread the wool through the holes around the edge of the dream catcher. Thread the wool sideways, upwards and diagonal to make a web-like appearance. Don't forget to still thread the wool through the bottom three holes and the hole at the top used for hanging the dream catcher so that the wool is spread evenly around the circle.
9. Once you have finished making your web, cut the wool leaving enough at the end to tie it to a secure piece of wool in the web at the back of the dream catcher. Try to tie it behind the circle edge so that it can't be seen. Tie with a double knot.
10. To stop the knot from untying, place a small amount of super tacky glue onto the knot and leave to dry.
11. Thread a plastic needle through the end of one of the long pieces of wool at the bottom of the dream catcher and thread through 4 wooden painted flower beads. Repeat with the other 2 pieces of wool.
12. Place a blob of super tacky glue into the hole of the bead at the bottom. Put 2 speckled feathers back to back inside the bottom bead attached to the glue. Leave the glue to dry for the feathers and beads to stay in place. Repeat with the other 2 pieces of wool. Leave to dry.
13. Decorate around the edge of the dream catcher with Gold & Silver Glitter Star stickers and Self-Adhesive Acrylic Stars.

Top Tip

To prevent the wool from fraying, use plastic needles to thread the wool through the punched holes.

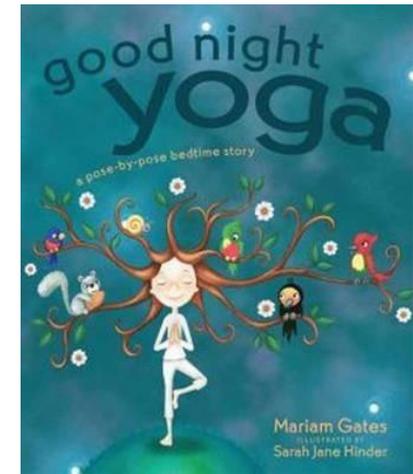
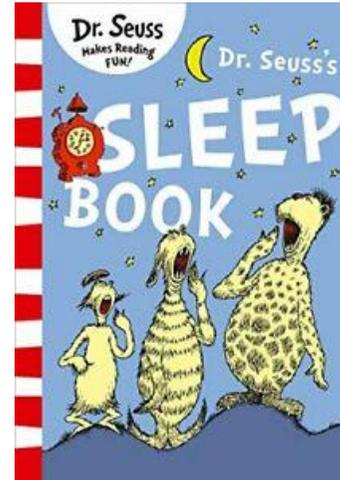
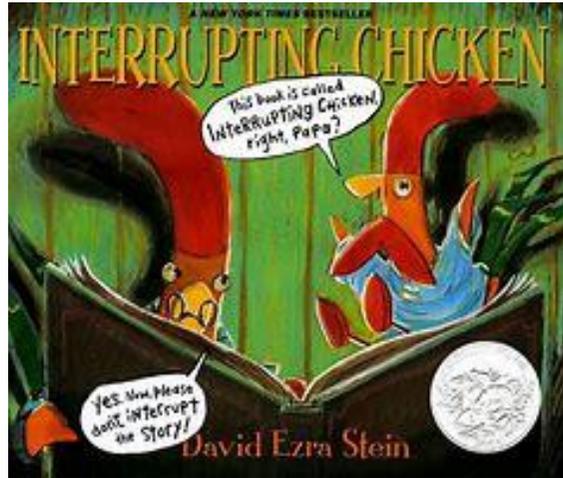
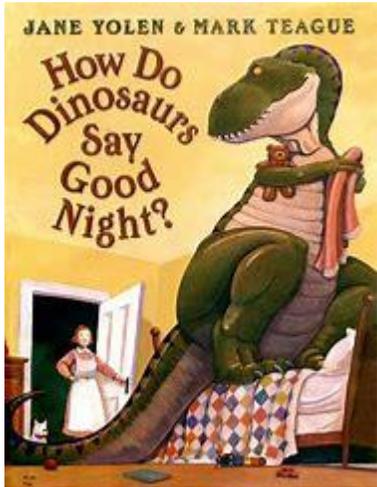


The Sleep Reward Box

- Work with your child to decorate a special 'sleep' box.
- Every night which they spend sleeping in their own bed they will find a treat in the box the next morning when they get up.
- The treat only needs to be something small and it doesn't have to be expensive. It could even be a 'voucher' that you have made to say the family will have your child's favourite meal (or pudding) for dinner , you will play a game or do an activity that your child is particularly fond of.
- There is only a treat in the box if your child has slept in their own bed.
- The element of surprise every morning and the excitement of checking the box to see what has been left with them is sometimes enough of a motivation for your child to sleep in their own bed.
- We wouldn't withhold a treat in the box if your child wakes during the night and needs comforting. Only if they spend the night somewhere other than their bed.



Recommended Stories to share with your child about going to sleep:



Alternatively, children might have a favourite Fairytale. They might like to have the same story read to them each night which makes their routine predictable.

Useful Contacts in North Yorkshire

Contact for Healthy Child Team: Tel 01609 798266

Or visit 'Growing Healthy North Yorkshire

<https://www.hdft.nhs.uk/services/childrens-services/growing-healthy-north-yorkshire/0-5-childrens-service-ny/>

References and other useful websites:

Ladybird's Remarkable relaxation – Michael Chissik and Sarah Peacock :

www.yogaatschool.org.uk/ladybirds-remarkable-relaxation/

Yoga for relaxation:

<https://www.cosmickids.com/>

NHS advice:

www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/healthy-sleep-tips-for-children/

Mindfulness activities

<https://biglifejournal.com/blogs/blog/5-fun-mindfulness-activities-children-breathing-exercises>

Importance of sleep for children

<https://www.mpfoundation.org/the-importance-of-sleep-for-children/>

Appendices

Appendix 1: Good night Guide – Twinkl

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/t-c-254520-getting-a-good-nights-sleep-guide>

Appendix 2: My Sleep Diary

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/t2-t-255-my-sleep-diary-activity-sheets>