

Dear Parent/Carer

Talk with your child about the importance of rest and getting enough sleep each night.

Then think about bedtimes. Talk about why our bodies need rest? Does your child get enough sleep? What helps them get to sleep? What stops them getting to sleep? What happens the next day if they stay up late?

**Relaxation,
sleep and
well-being**



Relaxation at Bedtime

Try this guided relaxation exercise with your child.

Sit comfortably. I want you to close your eyes and keep them closed until I tell you to open them.

Imagine that it is a beautiful, warm day. We are going on a lovely walk in the countryside. I want you to imagine the sky is very blue and there are clouds drifting along. Feel the warmth and gentle breeze on your skin. You are very relaxed and happy.

We are walking underneath a big tree. Look up into the branches and leaves. Listen to the sound of the leaves blowing in the breeze.

Now we are walking by a lake. There is a pair of ducks on an island in the lake. They have a nest. One of the ducks is sitting on some eggs in the nest. The other duck is bringing her some food.

(Pause.) Oh look, just around the corner is another pair of ducks and they have some baby ducks. Can you count how many there are? They are safe there on the island. (Pause.)

Quietly walk away from the lake so that we do not disturb the ducks. (Pause.)

Now you can open your eyes.



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Winding down before bedtime

Helping a child to relax after a busy day is important and switching off the screens an hour before bedtime helps a lot. Get your child to try these simple mindfulness activities during the day or before bedtime.

Which of these exercises relax you most?

Squeeze and let go

Tense different muscles in the body as tightly as possible for 5 seconds then slowly let go. Start by squeezing your hands into fists and letting go, then pull up your shoulders to your ears and relax. Try to move every muscle in your body.

Imagine pumping up balloons

Make a fist, pretend it's a very big balloon. Take a deep breath in through the nose and out through the mouth as slowly as possible then slowly blow up the balloon.

Bedtime buddy

Lie down and place a favourite toy or stuffed animal on your tummy. Take deep breaths slowly in through the nose and out through the mouth and watch the toy go slowly up and down. (Giggling not allowed.)

Star fingers

With eyes closed breathe in slowly and with one index finger trace up and down the fingers of the other hand making a star shape. As you breathe out slowly imagine being one star in the night sky, looking down on the earth and watching the stars twinkle.

