

Wellbeing Poster

This week we our well being poster looks at Sleep.

Good sleep **improves your brain performance, mood, and health**. Not getting enough quality sleep regularly raises the risk of many diseases and disorders. These range from heart disease and stroke to obesity and dementia.

The NHS states: *Sleep is especially important for children and young people because **it helps with mental, physical, social and emotional development**. Sleep helps our brains to remember, memorise and analyse important information. These skills improve performance at school. Sleep can also affect our mood.*



The following is taken from [The Sleep Charity website](#):

Children's sleep problems

The most common issues children have a bedtime: setting, changes in routine, bed wetting, fear/anxiety, sensory issues, feeling hungry or thirsty, discomfort.

Bedtime Routines

Bedtime routine is important in getting a good night's sleep. A routine helps support children's body clocks and aids relaxation.

Bedroom Environment

The bedroom environment plays an important role in getting a good night's sleep. Decorate with neutral colours and put away toys and gadgets. Check the room temperature and ensuring a dark environment aids melatonin production.

Relaxation

Feeling relaxed is important in the run up to bedtime for both parent and child. Youngsters often pick up on levels of stress so try to create a relaxing and calm environment. Turn off all screens an hour before bedtime and set aside time earlier in the day to enable children to share any worries. Dim lights, fine motor activities (craft or jigsaws), massage and classical music can aid relaxation.

Diet & Sleep

What we consume during the day can impact on our ability to sleep at night. A light snack in the hour before bedtime may be helpful for some children, but avoid heavy meals last thing at night. It is best to avoid processed and natural sugar and caffeine (which can also be found in hot chocolate and fizzy drinks).

Melatonin

Melatonin is a naturally occurring hormone that is produced by the brain and it plays an important role in supporting the body's circadian rhythm and promoting restful sleep. The best way of ensuring optimal melatonin production is to ensure the environment is as dark as possible and in the run up to bedtime, dim the lights and avoid screen time.

Children with SEND

Whether struggling to communicate how they feel, having increased anxiety, sensory issues or social clueing problems, sleep may well be difficult. Explore reason for the sleep issues, keep a sleep diary, use visual aids to support understanding and ensure your child is in a reassuring routine, going to bed at the same time every night.

