

BEDTIME PROBLEMS



Sleep plays a crucial role in the development of young minds. It not only impacts a child's mood but research has shown that sleep also impacts alertness, attention, cognitive performance, resiliency, vocabulary acquisition, learning and memory. In addition, sleep is also key in a child's growth.

A good night's sleep will provide a child with enough energy for the following day's activities. Toddlers can learn to become more independent in their sleep routine with parental support. The goal should be for a child to develop healthy, independent sleep patterns.



Squirrels Nursery Ltd
squirrelsdaycare@yahoo.co.uk



Waterlooville 02392 263270 / 02392 250070
Haselworth 02392 502568 / St Marys 02393 813161

Bedtime problems...

Common Problems include

- Protesting & refusing to go or stay in bed
- Crying when put to bed
- Waking throughout night
- Constantly getting out of bed
- Refusing to sleep in their own bed

Other problematic factors

- Changes in routine
- Discomfort due to bed or environment
- Hungry / Thirsty
- Fear / Anxiety
- Difficulty in self – settling
- Night-time wetting
- Sensory issues
- Sleep disorders
- Illness

Why do problems occur?

All children with have one- or two-nights bad sleep but constant sleep disturbances are not good for either child nor parent.

Sometimes sleep problems may be a result of a medical issues or an illness.

However, quite often consistent toddler sleep issues may stem from them being rocked or fed to sleep as infants, so having no bed routine.

Once these situations become a pattern a child will then struggle to settle off to sleep or to stay asleep all night.

Preventing problems...

Establish a bedtime routine

- Snack or bottle
- Go to toilet/nappy change
- Clean teeth
- Read book / sing a song or lullaby
- Cuddles
- Say Goodnight
- Keep bedtime at a set time

Prepare the child ahead of time.

About 30 minutes before bedtime tell your child they will be going to bed soon – this will allow them time to process. It is then a good idea to encourage them 10 minutes before bedtime to start their bedtime routine.

Set a regular bedtime:

A common bedtime for a toddler is around 7 – 7.30 pm. Once a bedtime has been chosen stick with that time.

Make sure your child's room is comfortable:

The room should be well ventilated and if the child fears the dark use a night light.

Check-ups: Tell your child that you will check on them (to reassure them) but then gradually increase the amount of time between these check-ups until they fall asleep. Praise your child for staying quietly in their bed.

Getting out of bed: If your child gets out of bed (at bedtime or in the middle of the night) then return them to their own bed straight away giving them minimal attention & interaction in the process. Consistently keep doing this until the child settles.

Stick with the bedtime routine and ensure that it is consistent & predictable so that it becomes a habit for the child.

Key points to remember...

Prevent Problems:

- Set a regular bedtime & establish a bedtime routine
- Routine should be predictable to the child
- Do quiet activities 30 mins before bedtime
- Explain & help your child to complete bedtime routine steps
- Take your child to bed at a set time
- Say goodnight & then leave encouraging your child to stay in bed
- Tell your child that you will check on them – gradually increase the amount of time between these check-ups until they are asleep
- If your child gets out of bed at any point just return them to their own bed giving minimal attention & interactions saying goodnight again as you leave

