

Sleep



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Understanding the importance of sleep and how we can support this

- ▶ Why sleep is important
- ▶ The impact of sleep problems
- ▶ How much sleep their child could be getting
- ▶ Common sleep issues in childhood
- ▶ Top Tips to help if children have settling issues

What are the
Common sleep
problems in your
household?

Why is sleep so important?

- ▶ Sleep is essential to support children's development. Well rested children are more able to meet their full potential in every aspect of their lives.
- ▶ Every living creature needs to sleep, Circadian rhythms, or the sleep wake cycle are regulated by light and dark, these rhythms develop at about 6 weeks and by three to six months most infants have a regular sleep pattern.
- ▶ Sleep is especially important for children as it directly impacts their mental health and physical development.

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS



How much sleep is recommended for each age group?

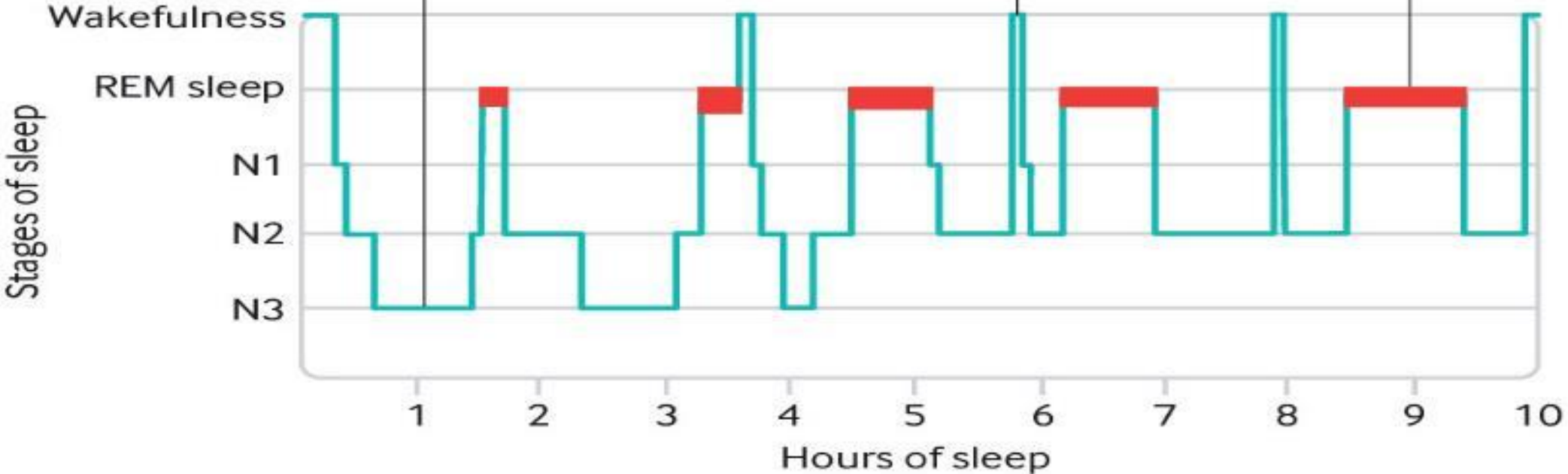
| | Age Range | Recommended Hours of Sleep |
|-------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Newborn | 0-3 months old | 14-17 hours |
| Infant | 4-11 months old | 12-15 hours |
| Toddler | 1-2 years old | 11-14 hours |
| Preschool | 3-5 years old | 10-13 hours |
| School-age | 6-13 years old | 9-11 hours |
| Teen | 14-17 years old | 8-10 hours |
| Young Adult | 18-25 years old | 7-9 hours |
| Adult | 26-64 years old | 7-9 hours |
| Older Adult | 65 or more years old | 7-8 hours |

Hypnogram of a normal sleep pattern

Brief arousals from sleep occur multiple times in night but are not always remembered

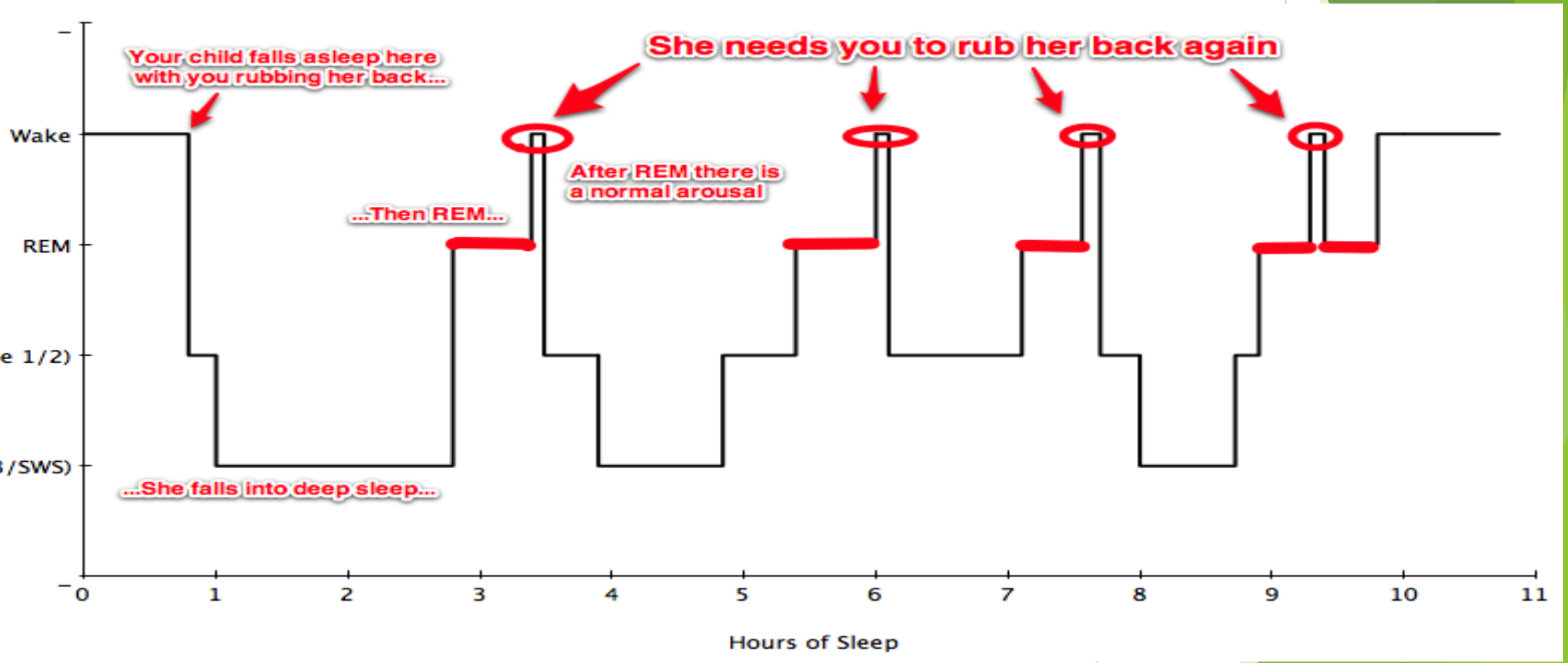
Stage N3 sleep (deepest sleep) occurs mostly in first half of night

REM sleep (dream sleep) is mostly in second half of night



REM sleep: rapid eye movement sleep

Hypnogram showing a child with a common sleep issue (Sleep onset association)



Different stages of sleep

Non-REM Sleep

- ▶ Stage 1 - a very light sleep, where your child will be easily woken.
- ▶ Stage 2 - still quite a light sleep but the body is preparing for a deep sleep.
- ▶ Stage 3 - This is a very deep sleep. The body needs this sleep so that repair can take place

REM Sleep

- ▶ REM sleep or rapid eye movement sleep as you may hear it referred to is when dreams occur. It is vital for mental and emotional development. Our brains can become very active during REM sleep yet our bodies are relaxed.

Impact of sleep problems on children (and their parents!!)

- Lack of concentration
- Reduced physical capability to recover from illness
- Incorrect diagnosis of conditions such as ADHD
- Daytime functioning
- Academic performance
- Poor Behaviour
- Lethargy
- Anxiety
- Affects on development

Most common bedtime issues

- ▶ Child getting up and returning to the living area after lights out -say it's bedtime' and gently lead them back to bed, this may need to be completed more than once, staying calm is key to being consistent
- ▶ Child getting into parents bed during the night - consider how the child fell asleep, did the parent sit with them, rub their back or lay with them? It's natural for children to wake during the night, however if the environment is different this could be why the child can't settle. Follow the above advise.
- ▶ Night Terrors - There is advise on NHS choices for this issue along with advise for dealing with nightmares. Being a watchful parent during these episodes to help keep them safe, try not to wake the child. If they are awake calm and reassure before returning them to bed.
- ▶ Wake up siblings - it is helpful to teach our children, if they share a room what they should do when they go to bed. When Mum/Dad have settled the children into bed and turned out the lights, it is time to sleep. Stay in the room, by the door with little/no interaction just to reassure them. If you do this consistently, you can then open the door and stand outside: this should lead to them getting used to this routine of self settling and going to sleep.

What is helpful at bedtime?

- ▶ Routine - A good bedtime routine can help children sleep better, maintain good oral health, and promote their cognitive, language, emotional, and prosocial development.
- ▶ Predictability – A predictable routine also gives your child a sense of security and teaches them how to fall asleep on their own.
- ▶ Consistency - *routine is consistency. Children thrive on routine and predictability, so it's essential to establish a consistent night-time routine that follows a similar pattern each evening.*

What does a bedtime routine look like?

EXAMPLE OF A SLEEP ROUTINE - PRIMARY AGE

The times stated are simply a guide and can be adjusted to suit your family

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Home from school | Outside play/messy play |
| 5-6pm | Family meal/share worries/talk about school (No TV/Screens*) |
| 6-7pm | Playtime/Homework |
| 7pm | All screens* off 1 hour before bedtime/quiet time |
| 7.30pm | Upstairs: Bath/Pyjamas/Brush Teeth |
| 7.50pm | Into bed/night light on/story/say goodnight/leave |

*screens include: TV, phone, tablet, games console, hand-held games

Ensure your child has opportunity to tell you about their day/any worries

BEFORE bedtime.

Give your child **lots** of praise when it goes well.

Examples of visuals for bedtime routines.



MY * BEDTIME * ROUTINE

| | |
|--|----------------|
| | TAKE A BATH |
| | PUT ON PAJAMAS |
| | COMB HAIR |
| | BRUSH TEETH |
| | READ A BOOK |
| | GO TO BED |

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Place

Your attitude to the child is important. Dan Hughes spells out the qualities that can help children grow a healthy sense of themselves and make up the best background atmosphere for emotional learning :

P=Playful

L=Loving

A=Accepting

C=Curious

E=Empathic



Top Tips

- Children who are physically tired will sleep better.
- Spend quality time with your child before bed.
- Avoid computers, TV or video games 1 hour before bed, mobile phones and tablets can also be an issue.
- Be clear and firm about bedtime.
- Ensure your child has had a small drink, brushed their teeth and been to the toilet.
- The bedroom environment plays an important role in getting a good nights sleep. Consider including temperature, light and comfort.
- Encourage your child to settle down and sleep in their own bed.
- Don't send children to their bedroom/bed if they have been challenging. Their bedrooms should be a safe haven and not one where they feel anxious, stressed or worried.
- Establish a good routine and stick to it consistently.
- Give your child lots of praise when it goes well and acknowledge your child's efforts.
- What your child eats during the day may impact on their ability to sleep at night.

- ▶ Make sure bedtime is realistic, if your child isn't falling asleep until 11pm there is no point starting the routine at 6pm.
- ▶ Wake them up the same time each morning to help strengthen their body clock.
- ▶ Dim the lights in the hour before bedtime, close the curtains if needs be and create some darkness to help promote melatonin (sleep hormone) production.

Helpful Websites

Safer sleep advice - www.lullabytrust.org.uk/safer-sleep-advice

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

National Sleep Foundation- www.sleepfoundation.org/articles/how-blue-light-affects-kids-sleep

Common sleep problems - www.sleepcouncil.org.uk/advice-support/sleep-hub/family-matters/common-sleep-problems-in-children

Children with additional needs - www.sleepcouncil.org.uk/advice-support/sleep-hub/family-matters/children-with-additional-needs

Thesleepcharity.org.uk

Chat Health 0-5 07520 615720 Text messaging service set up to support parents, carers and families of under 5's

Chat Health 5-19year olds 07507 332417