

SLEEP HABITS FOR CHILDREN

Sleep research shows that children who develop good sleep patterns usually carry these into adolescence, and beyond. If you are a parent of young children struggling to get them asleep or battling kids who want to stay up longer then a proper working knowledge of good sleep habits and sleep hygiene is a must...

GREAT SLEEP HABITS INCLUDE:

- 1. Regular bedtimes.** Kids may fight this but be regular during the week and let kids stay up a little later on the weekends.
- 2. A wind down time of up to 45 minutes prior to bed.** This includes, removing TV and other stimuli, calming children down and limiting food intake (and caffeine for teenagers).
- 3. Bedtime routine** such as story, teeth cleaning that signals psychologically that it is time for sleep.
- 4. Keeping bedrooms for sleep** and not TV or devices. Bedrooms that resemble caves seem to be recommended.
- 5. Maximising the 3 sleep cues** of: darkness (cave-like bedroom), lowering body temperature (baths can be good for this) and melatonin (hormone that prepares you to sleep).

It seems sleep is one thing we can all be educated about. We take it for granted and often view poor sleepers through a behavioural lens. Better knowledge of the biology of sleep and also sleep patterns will go a long way to helping kids and teens get a good night's sleep. I believe it is an absolute essential for good modern parenting.