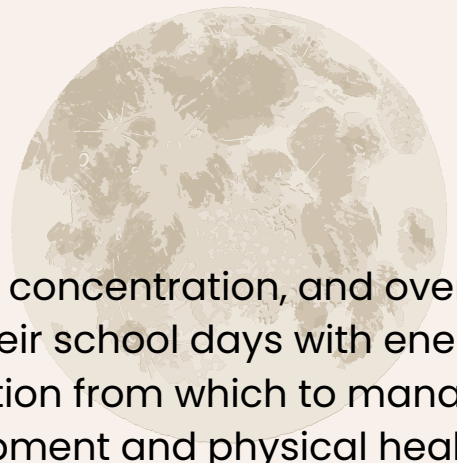


# SLEEP

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Quality sleep supports the emotional regulation, concentration, and overall well-being of our kids. Helping them navigate their school days with energy and confidence and giving them a solid foundation from which to manage their relationships. It's essential for brain development and physical health.

The Aussie Sleep Health Foundation recommends:

- Ages 5-7: 9-11 hours per night
- Ages 8-12: 8-10 hours per night

## A BOMBER ROUTINE

**Make sure your child has had some exercise and sunshine during the day.**

Both key to a good night sleep. Sunshine for melatonin production and exercise to burn off energy. Make sure it isn't of the vigorous variety less than an hour before bedtime.

**Try to eat dinner at least 1 hour before bed time.**

If your child feels hungry before bed, offer a light snack such as a banana, yogurt, or a small handful of nuts, which contain sleep-supporting nutrients like magnesium and tryptophan. Avoid sugary snacks.

**Avoid screen time an hour before bed.**

Get them away from T.V & phones at least an hour before you hope they'll get to sleeping. Initiate quiet activities like reading, drawing, chatting to family or taking a warm bath.

**Keep bedtime routine time regular.**

Keep the timings regular; 'at this time, we will turn off the telly, at this time we will do a night time chat, and at this time we will turn off the lights'. Get them involved in when these will be (using any parental 'facilitation' you may need to get these times to what might be best for them).

**Regular wake up times.**

Do your very best to keep the time the kids are up and at 'em regular.

# A FEW OTHER TIPS

## **Connection before bed**

Spending calm and connected time before bed with a parent helps a kiddos nervous system to quiet down, and lowers stress and cortisol.

This can be as easy as a ten minute routine that involves reading a bed time story, or talking about your kids day.

It can be a time to run through a kids concerns, so they feel heard and protected before spending hours in the dark in their bedrooms alone (a recipe for anxious thoughts to get louder).

## **Meditations**

There are apps that have great sleep meditations.

Headspace, Calm, Insight Timer.

Youtube will also have sleep meditations and white noise tracks.

If the concern is screen time, recording devices can be purchased online (Amazon) where tracks can be either downloaded, or that you can record yourself.

Recording these yourself adds a level of safety to your childs sleep routine. Scripts for these can be googled.

## **Gratitude**

Its cliché - but a gratitude practice helps build resilience, and strengthens optimistic outlooks. Perhaps before lights out, ask your child to share a couple of things they are thankful for. These can be big or small.

## **Sensory Supports**

Our bodies and brains responded to sensory inputs, especially at bed time, when we need to slow down. Lavender oil can be purchased at the supermarket or pharmacy and can be made into a pillow spray, or added to a diffuser. Pillow spray - water, a dash of witch hazel (found at Chemist Wharehouse) and a few drops of lavender into a spray bottle. Weighted blankets can be helpful for our kiddos who have bigger struggles with sleep.

## **The Doctor**

The doctor maybe able to offer support in the form of Melatonin (a naturally occurring hormone that can be given sythetically). Different forms of magnesium can also support sleep, and your doctor is the place to go for these things.