

# Physical and Cognitive Activity



Daytime activity, why it's important and how we can improve it

## About



What we do in the day can have a big impact on how we sleep at night.

Physical activity and cognitive demand (brain-draining activities) can help promote better sleep. This is because activities that work our mind and body, help to build up the neurotransmitters in our brain that give us the drive and pressure to sleep.

Activities that are boring or reduce physical activity can contribute to sleep difficulties. Computer games can be very stimulating for the brain and make it difficult for some people to settle to sleep.

## Did you know?

According to John Hopkins Medicine, just 30 minutes of activity that gets our heart pumping faster, can lead to better sleep that same night.



## Top Tip Toolbox

Increase your child's physical activity during the day. This can be particularly important during school holidays when your child isn't walking to school, or running around the playground or doing PE.

Simple activities such as walking the dog, helping with chores or going to the park after school can all help.

Exposure to daylight in the morning, for example by walking to school or playing outside, can also help with settling to sleep at bedtime, as it helps to regulate our body clock.

Make sure your child is not doing lots of high-energy activities in the 1-2 hours before bed, as this will increase body temperature, which can make it more difficult to sleep.

For some children having reading time before going to sleep can increase cognitive demand and help them settle to sleep, for other children games and puzzles such as word searches and sudoku can help. Other children may enjoy having a story read to them.