

Eating And Sleeping (Pre-School)

Information for
Parents / Carers

Children's Service: Educational Psychology Service

Eating

Your child will need plenty of food to help them grow.

Don't restrict your child's diet for fear of making them fat; if your child is eating healthy food, let them eat what they want.

Picky Eaters

It is quite normal for children to go through phases of faddy eating. Refusing to eat vegetables at this age is common.

- ◆ Remember there is no one vital food and important vitamins and minerals can be found in lots of different foods eg fruits and cereals.
- ◆ Encourage your child to try new and different foods.
- ◆ Try to present food to them in different ways eg mashed, in an omelette, pancake etc. If they refuse to eat what you have made, offer them a choice between two - if they won't eat the one they chose - they will have to wait until next mealtime for something else.



My child won't eat at a table

- ◆ Have set mealtime routines.
- ◆ Involve your child in organising and setting the table. If you don't have a table try to have a set time and place where you eat, without the TV on.
- ◆ Encourage your child's interest in meal times by involving them in the buying and preparation of food.
- ◆ Sit down with your child while he is eating.

Remember having a meal together is an opportunity for you and your child to relax and enjoy each other's company.

Sleep

Although sleep is thought of as a time to rest, a lot happens while we sleep. Sleep is necessary for the brain and body to develop, this is one of the reasons why young children need a lot of sleep.

However, young children have many other things to be getting on with and sometimes sleep is the last thing on their mind!

- ◆ Set up a bedtime routine; doing the same thing every night will help prepare your child.
- ◆ Keep the routine calm and positive, like spending time reading a story together.
- ◆ Boisterous play before bedtime will make it harder for your child to settle.

Before you say goodnight remind your child that you expect them to stay quietly in bed.

If your child gets out of bed, return them calmly without any discussion. Be patient as it may take many returns before your child stays in bed all night.

My child has nightmares

After a nightmare, your child will be wide awake.

Stay with your child and give comfort and reassurance until he goes back to sleep.

Talk through the nightmare, as it will make it seem less scary.

If nightmares are frequent, consider what may be causing them eg watching something scary on TV, changes at home, worried about something.

Make going to bed a relaxed time

If your child is sent to their room for being naughty they are unlikely to feel happy about going to bed at night.

Make time to settle your child, tuck them in and tell them to think about something happy.





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