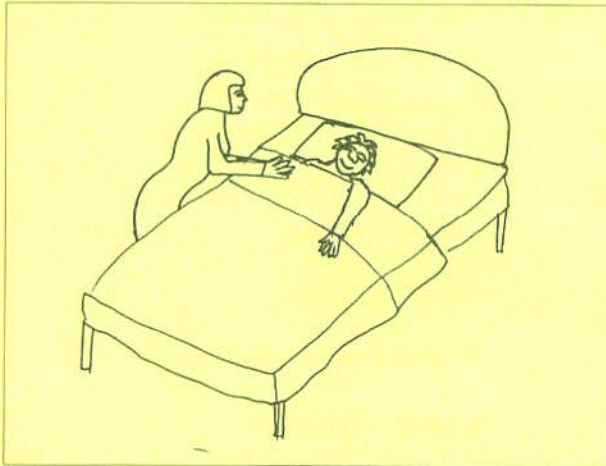


DO: Be prepared to give your child your full attention during the routine.

DO: Make it a 'winding down' time - a time for calming activities and quiet voices.

DO: Build fun and pleasure into the routine to reward the child for completing the least enjoyable steps eg. -having a story after getting into bed; having supper after a wash.

DO: Make it a time for cuddles and closeness.



And 'don'ts'

DON'T: Expect children to put themselves to bed.

DON'T: (As far as possible!) Make phone calls, cook the dinner, entertain visitors, watch television, read the paper etc. while children are getting ready for bed.

DON'T: Get the children over excited - no play fighting, pillow fights etc. There is a time for this kind of having fun but not 'bedtime' if you want the children to sleep!

After bedtime what if they don't settle?

- ❖ Be clear about what is allowed if they can't sleep eg. look at a book, listen to a story tape, draw (with pencil!) ... but should stay in bed.
- ❖ Say you will come up and see them again in 5, 10 or 15 minutes time to check they are OK but they must stay in bed.
- ❖ Consider a 'night light' if you think they might be frightened of the dark.

Good Night !!

A developing series of leaflets which provide guidelines for parents about a range of learning and behaviour difficulties. Phone (01302) 737291.

BEDTIME

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

Bringing up children is a difficult job and no-one teaches us how to do it. We do not claim to have all the answers, but we hope these leaflets will help you to understand why some of these problems occur ... and how to deal with them.



DONCASTER EDUCATIONAL
PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

It seems to be one of Nature's flaws that some children have an aversion to sleep while adults can't get enough of it! Other children genuinely look forward to bedtime. Different strategies need to be considered depending on the age and attitude of your child.

Why do children hate bedtime?.....

- ❖ because they don't always feel sleepy when we think they should.
- ❖ because bedtime is boring.
- ❖ because bedtime means an end to attention from you until morning.

Remember.....

'You can take a horse to water but you can't make it drink!' If children stay awake after they have gone to bed you cannot make them sleep. You can encourage sleep but you can not force it.



Children vary in the amount of sleep they need. The average 7 year old sleeps between 8 and 11 hours a night. If the conditions are right a child will take all the sleep he needs.

Smoothing the way

'This is the way we go to bed

Go to bed

Go to bed

This the way we go to bed

And stay there till the morning!!'



Some 'dos'

DO: Develop a bedtime routine: children like a predictable routine and will come to associate the routine with feeling sleepy and falling asleep.

DO: Decide when bedtime should be: but be flexible within reason. Sticking to a routine is more important than being rigid about the timing.

DO: Devote at least half an hour of your time to the bedtime routine.

DO: Plan steps in the process -

one routine might be:-

- ❖ get washed,
- ❖ get into pyjamas,
- ❖ have supper,
- ❖ brush teeth,
- ❖ read a story in bed.

another might be:-

- ❖ have a bath,
- ❖ get into pyjamas,
- ❖ play a game,
- ❖ have a warm drink,
- ❖ brush teeth,
- ❖ cuddle and chat in bed.