





**COMMUNITY PAEDIATRIC OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY AND
PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES**

Problems with Sleep

DIFFICULTY	IDEAS TO TRY
<p><u>The Environment</u></p> 	<p>Keep the bedroom if possible for sleep and/or quiet relaxing activities.</p>
<p>Equipment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If electronic items e.g. TV, computers, Playstation or X-box type or sports equipment is used in the bedroom, try to keep it separate, if possible with a curtain or partition to screen it off at bed time. • The same needs to happen with any school work related area.
<p>Calming down for sleep</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the sleep area as clutter free as possible. • Involve your child in choosing calming colours and soft furnishings. • Don't put up too many posters, keep pictures that can be seen from the bed calming.
<p>Scared of the Dark</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use soft toys, comfort blankets that help them to feel secure. • Use a night light or lamp, agree with your child what is an acceptable level of light. Do not leave the main light on at night unless it dimmed right down as it is important that the brain has a period of low light during 24 hours.

<p>Smells</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use all of the senses to create calmness, including the sense of smell, lavender and camomile are known for calming but there are many others. • Bathing in the evening is often more calming than showering but both can be relaxing. • Use Calming scented toiletries.
<p>Music</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use quiet music of your child's choice or natural sounds such as waves or bird sounds.
<p>Touch</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow your child to choose the types and feel of bedding items e.g. fleecy, furry, or crisp cotton. • Experiment with lighter or heavier quilts and blankets. • Try tucking a sheet in tightly on both sides of the bed across the body area over the duvet to provide some pressure as they sleep. • Weighted blankets, lap pads and weighted neck wraps can be used to help your child calm ready for bed, but should not be used when they are in bed. • A large stuffed toy can work just as well.
<p>Scared of what is under the bed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check with them to make sure they know there is nothing there. • A trusted toy under the bed to guard them • Lower the bed to the floor, or use a futon type bed.
<p><u>Bedtime Routine</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a good routine which is carried out regularly. • Avoid computer games, TV or other bright screen activities for one hour before bed time. • Use quiet activities, such as reading a book, having a bath, colouring or quiet crafts. • Supper needs to be finished at least one hour before bedtime.

NAME:

DATE:

Ideas to try	Outcome
1.	
2.	
3.	
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5.	
6	

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Provision of Weighted Blanket/lap pads etc. Guidelines for Use

Weighted blankets and lap pads are used to provide proprioceptive sensory input in a controlled way. Weight has a calming effect on the system. The use of weighted items needs to be carefully monitored to ensure they are used safely.

Please follow the guidelines below:

- The weighted blanket/pad should only be used for its intended purpose and in the way that you have been shown.
- Supervise your child at all times when using the weighted blanket. Do not leave the weighted blanket on when unsupervised.
- Use the weighted blanket/pad in situations where the child needs to calm i.e. when he/she is over aroused. We recommend applying the weighted blanket 10 minutes before any situation where you know your child can become over aroused. After 10 minutes, any calming effect should be apparent.
- The weighted blanket/pad could be used on the child's lap over legs, or around the child's shoulders but do not cover the head.
- We would advise using the weighted blanket/pad for no longer than 20 minutes at a time as the nervous system becomes used to the sensation. Allow at least 40 minutes break before using it again.
- The weighted blanket/pad may be used with the child as part of the bedtime routine to help your child calm ready for bed but should not be used whilst they are in bed.
- Allow the child to remove the weighted item at any time if they wish to. Remind the child that they can take it off if it's feeling too heavy or hot.
- The weighted blanket should never be used as a restraint.
- Ensure you can observe the child's vital signs at all times when using the weighted blanket e.g. that breathing is OK and not laboured, the airway is not restricted, the weight of the blanket is not concentrated on the chest where it might restrict breathing, that the child's colour remains constant (does not become pale, red or blue) or that they start sweating. If you observe any of these signs, stop using the weighted blanket immediately.
- If the weighted item causes any pain or discomfort, remove it immediately.
- Do not use the weighted item if it is defective in any way.

- Once you have decided on the best product for your needs, make sure you get the correct weight.

IMPORTANT the weight of the blanket/pad should be no more than 10% plus 1lb of your child's weight. Lap pads, wraparounds and small blankets come in standard weights of 2lb, 3lb and 6lb respectively. When deciding upon weight for medium and large blankets the general rule recommended by Occupational Therapists is 10% of body weight plus 1lb.

N.B It is not recommended that weighted blankets are used when there is a diagnosis of epilepsy.

Weighted Blankets are available from:-

www.bearhugblankets.co.uk

www.sensamart.co.uk

www.tts-group.co.uk

www.weight2goblankets.co.uk

www.rompa.com