

Gradual exit



The aim is to help your child to fall asleep alone.

- Step one:** Choose a reasonable bedtime when your child is tired, but not overtired. Start a regular relaxing routine about one hour before bedtime.
- Step two:** At the start of the routine give your child their snack.
- Step three:** The first half hour before bath activities should be calming and non-stimulating. For example doing jigsaws, reading books or playing with building blocks.
- Step four:** Go to the bathroom - the aim of the bath is to relax your child. Once your child is bathed go straight into their bedroom, don't take your child downstairs again.
- Step five:** Once in the bedroom take time to rub or massage and cuddle your child with a towel before putting their pyjamas on.
- Step six:** Settle your child into their bed and read a story.
- Step seven:** Once the routine is complete, say goodnight. Your goal is now to distance yourself gradually from your child's room in a series of steps.
- Step eight:** Your child will eventually learn the new bedtime routine. You can begin by sitting on a chair at the side of their bed.
- Step nine:** Gradually move the chair away, initially to the end of the bed, then by the door and finally outside the door.

Any daytime naps after 1pm, particularly on the school bus or taxi should be phased out.

Each week, you can begin the routine 15 minutes earlier if your child is falling to sleep later than is required by their average sleep needs. Continue this until your child is at the appropriate bedtime.