

## Sleep

### Helping your child to self-settle, a summary

This is intended to be a quick overview of some steps to help your child learn to self-settle. We have other help sheets which cover this in more detail.

- Step 1:** Choose a reasonable bedtime when the child is tired, but not overtired.
- Step 2:** Start a regular relaxing routine about 1 hour before bedtime.
- Step 3:** Use visuals to reinforce what is going to happen.
- Step 4:** Go to the night-time rooms (bedroom and bathroom) and don't go back downstairs.
- Step 5:** Have a relaxing bath that could last up to 15-20 minutes.
- Step 6:** Take time to rub and cuddle the child with a towel and put on pyjamas.
- Step 7:** Take the child to the bedroom and read a story or put on a story tape.
- Step 8:** Once the routine is complete, say goodnight.

**Your goal is now to distance yourself gradually from the child's room is a series of steps. This could take days or weeks according to the circumstances of each family.**

- Step 9:** If necessary, begin by sitting by the side of the bed, with a hand resting (still, no patting or rubbing) on your child for reassurance.
- Step 10:** Reduce your contact until you are able to sit next to the bed without touching your child.
- Step 11:** Gradually move the chair away
- Step 12:** Be boring – no talking and limited eye contact, just redirect your child to their bed when necessary.
- Step 13:** Wake your child at the same time every day, even at weekends.

Written in May 2020. The above advice is based on training from Sleep Scotland and our experiences at Freemantles of working with children who have autism and related difficulties