

Effects of noise during sleep

Noise tends to be most disruptive during light stages of sleep, which occur at the beginning of the night and in recurring periods throughout the night. It is also possible for noises to rouse your child from deep sleep and REM sleep.

To get the sleep that your child needs, it's important to protect their sleep environment against unwanted sounds for the duration of their night's rest.

Noise at night can prevent your child from falling asleep initially, and sounds during the night can wake them, leaving them unable to return to sleep.

While your child sleeps, the sleeping brain continues to register and process sounds. **Noises can create restlessness in sleep even if they don't wake your child fully**, and these interruptions affect sleep quality.

Top tips:

- **Try using a fan or other source of white noise** that is safe to remain on all night. If a child is used to sleeping with a certain sound, they are likely to wake if it is turned off.
- **Make sure your child's bedroom door is closed.** You can also fit a draught excluder to the bottom of the door to help block out noise.
- **Consider flooring and soft furnishings** – carpets, rugs and curtains, for example, will absorb more noise in a room than a bare wooden floor and blinds.
- If your child can tolerate them, **use soft foam earplugs** for sleeping that will expand and mould to your child's ear.
- Remind family members about noise levels once your child/children are in bed. For instance, **keeping the volume turned down** on any devices you or they use, or **plugging in headphones**, would be helpful.
- **Think about the location of your child's bedroom.** For example, young children who have a boiler next to their room may wake up more during the winter months when the heating is on. If your child's room is next to the bathroom, they may wake when others use the bathroom. If it is possible, you may wish to consider moving your child to a different bedroom or using white noise to mask environmental noises.

