

Something to try at home...

Creating a Calming Bedtime Routine

Yoga is a great way to wind down from the day's activities as there are so many calming postures you can do as part of the bedtime routine. It will help to settle your child before they climb into bed and prepare them for a good night's sleep. So here are a few ideas you can incorporate into your evening routine.

Start by sitting on the floor with your child. S/he can be seated on your lap, beside you or face to face.

Inhale a few deep breathes, filling your belly with lots of air. Then place your hand on your belly. Count to four as you inhale, hold for one count and then breathe out smoothly as you count to four again. Repeat this three to four times.

Now you can introduce some yoga poses, always starting in a quiet pose such as child's pose. Then move into more active poses to help the muscles to unwind. End in a child's pose to quieten the body and the mind. Finish the routine with a relaxation pose; a guided visualisation will make this time extra special.

Child's pose: Sit on your heels, with your arms at your side. Lean forward, head to floor.

Cat pose: Kneel on the floor on all fours. Arch your back like an angry cat!

Cow pose: Kneel on the floor on all fours. Raise your head up and sink your back down into a deep curve.

Dog pose: Hands and feet on the floor with buttocks in the air (the shape of an upside-down triangle)

Gentle Spinal Twist: Sitting with your legs out-stretched, twist to one side with your back straight. Place your hands on the floor and look behind you. Rest in the twist for a few moments; then repeat the twist on the other side.

Sleepy Star: Sitting upright, bring your legs into a diamond shape. Extend your arms out to the side. Sway gently over to one side then to the other, singing Twinkle Twinkle Little Star as you do so.

Kiss Your Knee: Sit opposite your child. Stretch one leg out in front and bring the other foot against your thigh. Inhale to stretch your spine. As you exhale, bend forward to kiss your knee! Repeat on the other side.

Relaxation Pose: Lie flat on your back, arms at sides, feet slightly apart. Close your eyes and rest. End with guided visualisation:

Imagine you are lying outside, looking up at the dark, velvet sky. The sky is so clear that you can see lots and lots of stars twinkling brightly. Each star has a special meaning. When you look at the Peace Star, you feel calm and silent inside. When you look at the Love Star, you feel warm and loving. And when you look at the Happy Star, you feel bright and happy. Spend a few moments looking at your favourite star.

I am a beautiful, twinkly star!

