

Early mornings

Its normal to find it harder to get back to sleep in the early morning. These tips can help to stretch out your child's sleep however this is rarely a quick fix.

- Is your child hungry? Have they eaten enough the day before? This is particularly important for children at nursery. They have a main lunch time meal and snacky tea. They will want something else when they get home. Avoid sugary snacks, breadsticks and hummous, banana, toast, egg, cereal are all good options.
- How light is the room? It doesn't need to be completely dark but black out blinds will help.
- Temperature: make sure your child is not too hot or too cold, especially in the winter.
- A sunrise and sunset clock gives your child a visual cue when it is time to start the day. Have a realistic start time which you can adjust once they understand the concept. If your child is waking at 5am, start by setting it for 5.30am. Treat any waking before the clock light comes on as the middle of the night. Once the light comes on you can start the day. When they are happy to wait you can lengthen out the time by 10 minutes every 4 to 5 days. Anything from 6am is an acceptable time to start the day, especially in the summer months.
- Do not let your child overcompensate for an early start with extra day time sleep. A normal day time sleep can be brought forward by 20 to 30 minutes but don't add on extra nap time. You want them to consolidate that sleep during the night.
- Keep any interaction to a minimum and avoid eye contact. When you get your child up to start the day, make it an event so they know the social cues to look for.

