

Sensory Strategies for Better Sleep

Proprioception (*'how the body senses itself', our subconscious sense that tells us where our arms and legs are in space without us having to look at them. It is also the sense that helps us to grade the force we place through objects and impacts on the resting tone of our muscles*)

- Massage / back rubs
- Swaddling / tucking sheets in tight
- Close fitting PJ's

Vestibular (*'how the body handles movement', the vestibular sense gives us physical and emotional security when moving in space and keeps us upright against gravity. It stabilises our visual field and impacts upon our attention and arousal levels*)

- Place mattress on floor (or as low as possible) if child is afraid of heights

Tactile (*touch*)

- Ensure sheets, PJ's and blankets are a tolerable texture
- Experiment with tight / stretchy / loose / cotton / flannel PJ textures
- Cover seams with soft fabric
- Warm sheets ready for bedtime

Visual

- Neutral colours on the walls
- Black out curtains to block the light
- Provide a night light / lamp

Auditory (*noise*)

- Close windows
- Read quietly
- White noise
- Slow, rhythmic music

Olfactory (*smell*)

- Provide familiar scents in the room
- Provide a pillow with parent / carer scent on

Other Ideas

- Predictable bedtime routine
- Tidy, clutter free bedroom
- Use visual schedule
- Tell social stories about bedtime
- Avoid over stimulating activities at bedtime
- Minimise screentime later in the day / in the evening