



Sleeping Sound

Primary School Children: 'Camping Out' Method

If your child is anxious about going to sleep or you think it may be hard to keep them in their bedroom, then 'camping out' may be helpful.

The *camping out method* involves putting a chair or camp bed next to your child's bed and gradually removing the chair as your child begins to fall asleep alone.

- On the first one to two nights, the parent sits in the chair/camp bed until the child falls asleep.
- On the next two nights, the parent moves their chair or camp bed a metre away from the child's bed and the same process is repeated.
- Continue this process until your child is able to fall asleep with the chair/bed and parent outside of the bedroom.

Remember, this is sleep time not play time! If your child tries to play with you, calmly tell them it is sleep time and say you will only stay in their room if they lie down and go to sleep. If they continue to try to play, leave the room for a short time (say 1-2 minutes). When you return after this short time, tell them again you will only stay if they lie down and go to sleep.

Reward your child in the morning for being able to stay in their own bed at the start of the night.

Overnight, if your child wakes up, you need to return to your chair/camp bed and stay there until they fall back to sleep again.

Camping out can take between 7-21 nights to work.

Remember: Try your strategies for a number of nights (3 to 7 days). Being consistent will increase your chances of success with improving your child's sleep patterns. If possible, make sure you and others caring for your child do the same thing as well.

