



Sleeping Sound

Primary School Children: 'Checking' Method

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

The *checking method* involves going in to your child at regular time intervals to check on them. The purpose of returning to their room is to reassure your child that you are still there and to reassure yourself that your child is ok.

- After your child has got into bed, say "good night" and leave, but promise to come back and check on them
- for some children, frequent checking is good – say every 2 minutes
- for others, less checking works best – say every 5 or 10 or 15 minutes
- continue to check on your child as long as they are upset, gradually stretching the interval times
- the checks should be *brief* (1 minute) and *boring*. Calmly tell your child it's time to go to sleep but don't play any games!

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.

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 be back to check on them.

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

