**Toddlers, Preschool and Junior School Children**

Follow this link to hear Sarah Blunden talk about toddler sleep for Parenting SA - <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/parenting-and-child-care/parenting/parenting-sa/parent-easy-guides/sleep-and-toddlers-sarah-blunden>

Many problems in this age group stem from a child's struggles between a need to develop independence and the need to be close to those they love. Common sleep disturbance in this age group include:

* Inability or unwillingness to fall sleep or stay asleep alone
* Bedtime fears, bedtime refusal
* Chronic and persistent nighttime waking
* Sleep walking, sleep talking and nightmares

There are quite a few things that contribute to these sleep problems.

* Poor sleep habits or poor sleep "hygiene". This includes things like irregular bed and wake times or too much television before bed. (See list on [Sleep Facts](http://www.sleepeducation.net.au/sleep%20facts.php) page)
* Parent's being inconsistent or unable to follow through on bedtime rules or routines or in the middle of the night.
* The child associates something which stops them from being able to get to sleep alone. Sometimes a parent will stay or sleep with a child until they fall asleep or the child will sleep in the parental bed.

**WHAT CAN YOU DO?**

* Teach young children how to put themselves back to sleep alone. Withdraw your presence form their sleep environment slowly but surely.
* Regulate bed and wake times. Set limits at bedtime.
* Be aware of the signs of fatigue in this age group during the day (hyperactivity, acting out, irritability).
* Have a soothing and gentle routine before bed. Negotiate the routine with your child and make a deal.  
  For example:
  + "We can ???? (e.g. read two books) if you want, but then you have to do ???? (e.g. go to bed now) "
  + "Would you like to do ???, then you have to do ???"

Free downloads

* [Sleep diary – younger children](https://sensiblesleep.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sleep-Diary-young-children.pdf)
* [Wake up sleep test](https://sensiblesleep.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Wake-up-call-sleep-test-1.pdf)
* [Garfield sleep focussed word jumble activity](https://sensiblesleep.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Garfield-word-jumble-activity.pdf)

Please also visit [www.sleephealthfoundation.org.au](http://www.sleephealthfoundation.org.au/) for more information.