SPOTLIGHT ON SAFEGUARDING

Working together to keep our young people safe

Primary | February 2025

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Children's Mental Health Week 3rd-9th February. 'Know Yourself, Grow Yourself'

The week of 3rd to 9th February, marks Children's Mental Health Week, and this year's theme is 'Know Yourself, Grow Yourself.' It's a wonderful opportunity for parents and carers to open up conversations with their children about mental health and well-being.

What does 'Know Yourself, Grow Yourself' mean for our children?

As children grow, they face new challenges, responsibilities and opportunities to discover who they are. The theme *'Know Yourself, Grow Yourself'* encourages self-awareness and personal growth, two essential building blocks for mental health and well-being.

Why self-awareness matters

Self-awareness is the ability to recognise and understand your emotions, strengths, weaknesses, and values. For children, this skill is crucial as they navigate friendships, academic pressures, and personal identity. When children are self-aware, they can:

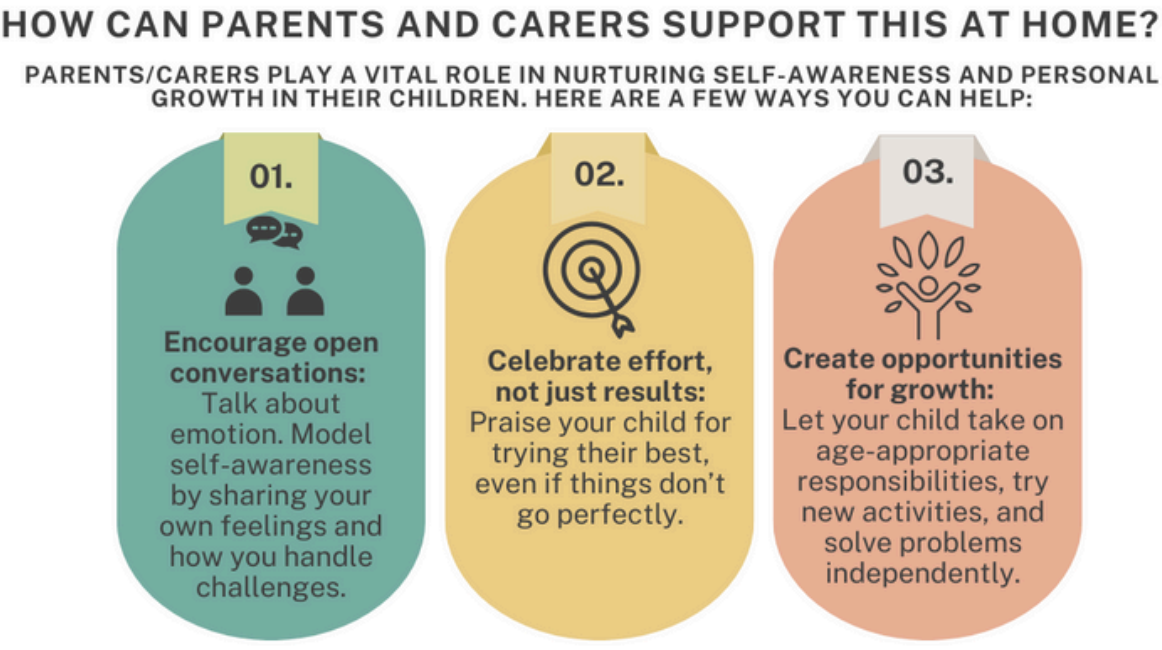
- **Manage their emotions:** recognise when they're feeling stressed, anxious, or overwhelmed and take steps to cope.
- **Make better decisions:** understand their values and priorities, which helps them avoid peer pressure.
- **Build stronger relationships:** communicate more effectively and empathise with others.

How personal growth builds resilience and confidence

Personal growth happens when young people challenge themselves to learn, improve, and step out of their comfort zones. It's about progress, not perfection.

Through personal growth, young people can:

- Develop resilience: learn to bounce back from setbacks and see failure as a stepping stone to success.
- Build confidence: gain a sense of achievement by setting and reaching goals.
- Adopt a growth mindset: believe that abilities and intelligence can improve with effort and persistence.



The importance of sleep in mental health

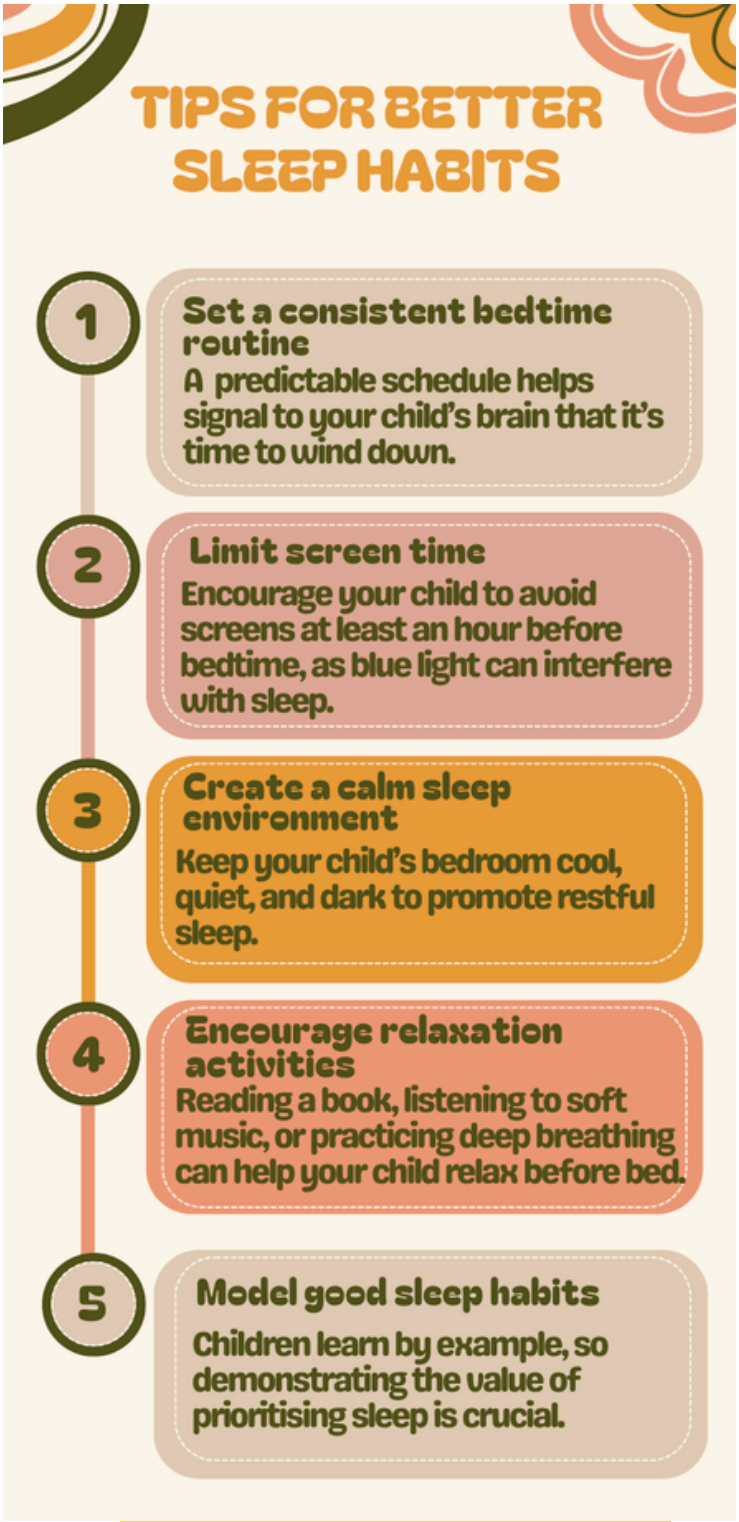
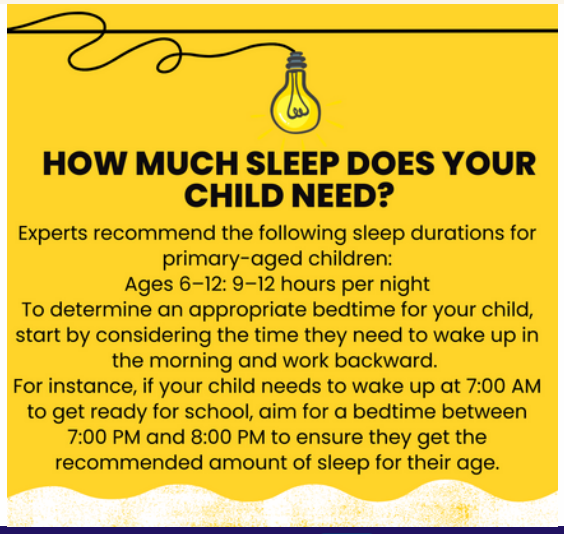
Sleep plays a vital role in your child's mental health and overall well-being. For primary-aged children, a good night's sleep is essential for emotional balance, learning, and physical health. Yet, with busy schedules, screen time, and excitement about the day ahead, many children don't get the rest they need.

Why sleep matters for your child

Sleep isn't just about rest— it's when your child's brain and body do some of their most important work. Here's how sleep supports your child's mental health and development:

- I**mproves mood and emotional regulation:** a well-rested child is better equipped to handle frustrations, challenges, and social interactions.
- **Boosts learning and memory:** sleep helps consolidate what your child has learned during the day, making it easier to retain new information.
- **Reduces stress and anxiety:** consistent sleep patterns can lower stress levels, helping your child feel calm and focused.
- **Supports physical health:** sleep strengthens the immune system and promotes healthy growth.

Signs your child might not be getting enough sleep

It's not always obvious when children are sleep-deprived, but here are some common signs to watch for:

- difficulty waking up in the morning
- frequent mood swings or irritability
- trouble focusing or remembering things at school
- increased hyperactivity or impulsivity.