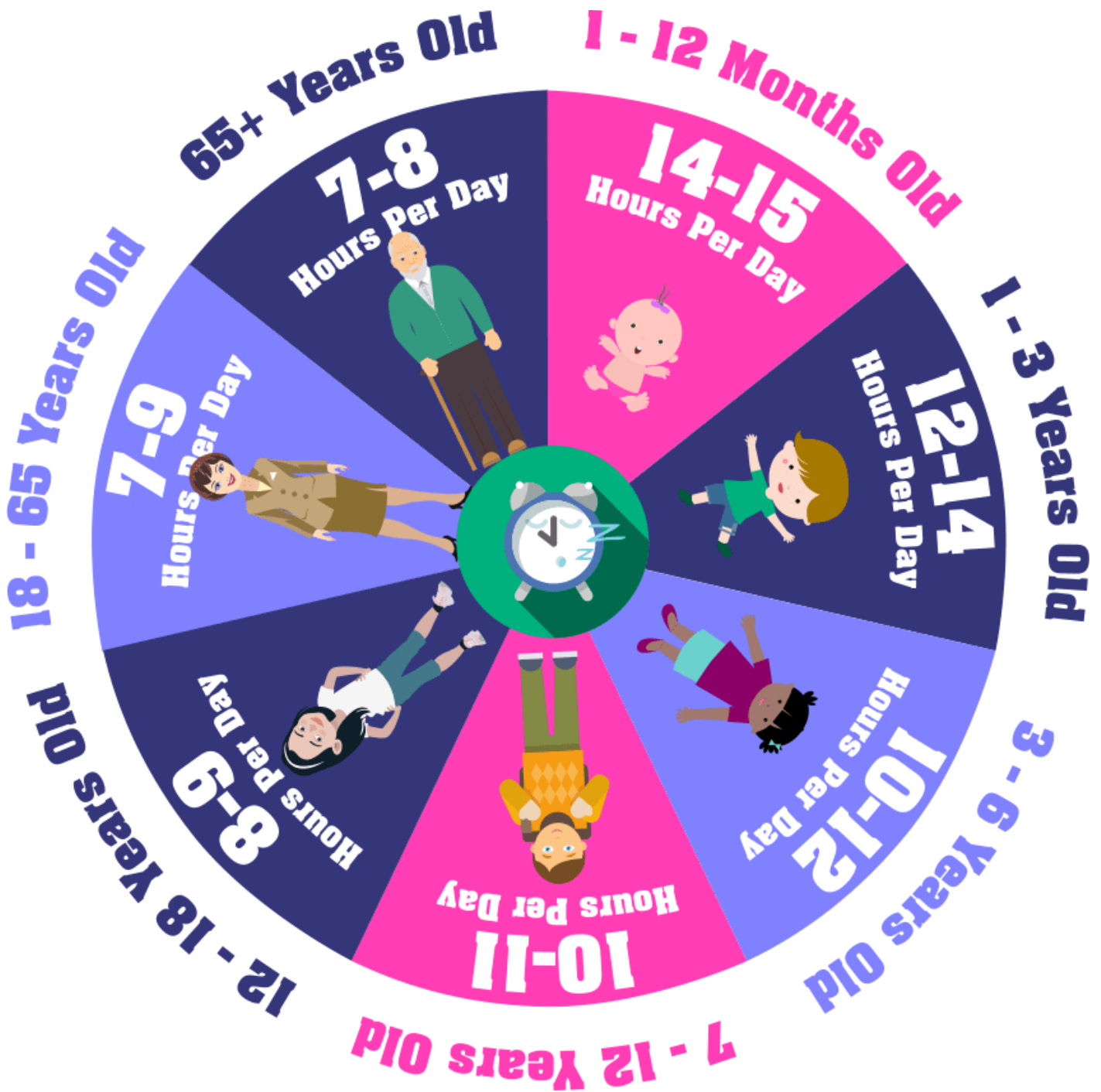




## 'Feeding Body, Mind and Soul'

Dear Parents,

A common question parents/carers may have is how much sleep my child should be getting? As a general rule, the below shows how much sleep your child should be getting, based upon their age.



**Sleep is important for a child's development and learning. It helps with:**

<p><b>Cognitive development and education performance:</b> Adequate sleep supports good cognitive function, including memory, attention, and problem-solving skills. Well-rested children have better concentration and focus, leading to improved educational performance.</p>	<p><b>Emotional regulation:</b> Consistent sleep patterns help regulate mood and emotions, reducing irritability and promoting emotional well-being.</p>	<p><b>Physical growth:</b> During sleep, growth hormone is released, aiding in physical growth and development, such as bone and muscle growth.</p>
<p><b>Immune system support:</b> Quality sleep strengthens the immune system, helping children fight off illnesses and infections more effectively.</p>	<p><b>Behaviour:</b> Establishing a bedtime routine can reduce behavioural problems such as hyperactivity and impulsivity, promoting better behaviour during the day.</p>	<p><b>Enhanced problem-solving skills:</b> A good night's sleep enhances a child's ability to think creatively and solve problems effectively, fostering intellectual development.</p>
<p><b>Stress reduction:</b> Quality sleep reduces stress levels in children, helping them cope better with daily challenges and preventing the negative effects of chronic stress.</p>	<p><b>Regulated appetite:</b> Proper sleep helps regulate appetite hormones, reducing the risk of obesity and promoting healthy eating habits in children.</p>	<p><b>Social interaction:</b> Children who get enough sleep tend to be more sociable and cooperative, improving their relationships with peers and adults alike.</p>

Lots of young children find it difficult to settle down to sleep and will wake up during the night. For some people, this might not be a problem but if you or your child are suffering from a lack of sleep, there are some simple things you can try:

- Do not let your child look at laptops, tablets or phones in the 30 to 60 minutes before bed – the light from screens can interfere with sleep.
- If your child complains that they're hungry at night, try giving them a bowl of cereal and milk before bed (make sure you brush their teeth afterwards).
- Decide what time you want your child to go to bed.
- Start a "winding down" bedtime routine around 30 minutes before the time that your child usually falls asleep. Make this a calming, predictable bedtime routine that happens at the same time and includes the same things every night.
- Bring this forward by 5 to 10 minutes each week – or 15 minutes if your child is in the habit of going to bed very late – until you get to the bedtime you want.
- Set a limit on how much time you spend with your child when you put them to bed. For example, read only 1 or 2 stories, then tuck your child in and say goodnight.
- Give your child their favourite cuddly toy before settling into bed.
- Leave a dim light on if necessary.
- If your child gets up or wakes up in the night, keep taking them back to bed again with as little fuss as possible - be as boring as possible to avoid exciting them and leave lights off.
- Avoid allowing your child to have long naps in the afternoon.
- Remember to be consistent!

If you have concerns about your child's sleep and they are under 5 years old, you can access professional support from your local Health Visitor team. To contact the Health Visiting Team please email [health.visiting@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:health.visiting@achievingforchildren.org.uk) or call the Duty Health Visitor on 0300 365 6523.

Alternatively, if your child is over 5 years old, please contact your GP service for further advice.

Further advice and support can also be found here:  
<https://thesleepcharity.org.uk/information-support/children/>

If you have any other concerns about your child's development, please feel free to talk to your class teacher or contact our SENCo, Mrs Quinn ([senco@boynhillschool.org](mailto:senco@boynhillschool.org)) who will be happy to assist further if you so wish.

Kind regards,  
The Boyne Hill Early Years Team