Sleep and Your Child

Help Your Child Get Enough Sleep for a Healthy Weight

Why is sleep important?

- Your child needs enough sleep to grow and develop.1
- Sleep is important to your child’s weight.2,3,4,5
- Sleep allows your child’s physical, mental and emotional functions to reset. Sleep can help your child do better in school because it helps improve focus.6,7

How much sleep does my child need?
The National Sleep Foundation suggests that children get the following hours of restful sleep7:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Recommended number of hours of sleep per night</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 5 years old</td>
<td>11+ hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5–10 years old</td>
<td>10+ hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10+ years old</td>
<td>8.5–9.25 hours</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Studies show that shortage of sleep creates changes in hormone secretions that regulate hunger and appetite.7,8
Over time, this can slow metabolism and contribute to weight gain in children.3,4,5
Children who get enough sleep are less likely to suffer obesity-related health problems like diabetes, heart disease, and sleep apnea.4,9 Even one extra hour of sleep per night for kids who don’t get enough sleep can lower the risk of becoming overweight.3

Source: National Sleep Foundation     www.sleepfoundation.org

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How can I help my child get enough sleep?

• Talk with your child about getting enough sleep.

• Set and agree on a bedtime with your child and be consistent in sleeping at the agreed time every night.\(^7\)

• Limit or remove all caffeinated drinks from your child’s diet. This includes soft drinks, tea, and energy drinks.\(^7\)

• Make the hours before sleep calm and relaxing by developing a bedtime routine. Bedtime routines may include a bath, reading a story, or quiet time before bed.\(^7\)

• Be aware of the amount of hours your child sleeps each night. Make adjustments in bedtime routine if needed to insure adequate sleep.

• Make the bed only for sleeping and not watching TV, doing homework, or playing video games.\(^7\)

• Remove the television, video games, and cell phone from the bedroom.\(^7\)

References:


