

EXPECT SUCCESS



HEALTHY SLEEP HABITS: HOW MUCH?

"Sleep is the best meditation." Dalai Lama

The healing power of sleep, for adults and children, is often underestimated. Numerous sleep studies are conducted each year giving us the same great news; getting adequate sleep leads to a healthier immune system, better school/job performance, better behavior, better memory and more positive mental health. And the best news of all, it's absolutely FREE! As we get ready for daylight savings and less daylight hours, now is a good time to reexamine your child's sleep habits and consider ways to make some healthy changes that can benefit your family. This month's article is taken in part from healthychildren.org, *Healthy Sleep Habits: How Many Hours Does Your Child Need?*



Childhood Sleep Guidelines and Healthy Sleep Habits

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine provides some helpful guidelines regarding how much sleep children need at different stages in their development. These numbers reflect total sleep hours in a 24-hour period.

AGE	RECOMMENDED SLEEP HOURS PER 24 HOUR PERIOD
Infants: 4 to 12 months	12 to 16 hours (including naps)
Toddlers: 1 to 2 years	11 to 14 hours (including naps)
Preschoolers: 3 to 5 years	10 to 13 hours (including naps)
Grade-schoolers: 6 to 12 years	9 to 12 hours
Teens: 13 to 18 years	8 to 10 hours

- ◆ **Make sufficient sleep a family priority.** Remember you are a role model to your child; set good examples.
- ◆ **Keep to a regular daily routine.** The same waking time, meal times, play times will help your child feel secure and comfortable, and help with a smooth bedtime.
- ◆ **Monitor screen time.** The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends keeping all screens-TV's, phones, computers, tablets-OUT of kids' bedrooms and turning screens off 30 minutes before bedtime.
- ◆ **Avoid overscheduling.** In addition to homework, many children have scheduled evening activities (ie, sports games, practices, lessons, appointments) that pose challenges to getting a good night's sleep. Take time to wind down and give your children the downtime that they need.
- ◆ **Create a sleep-supportive and safe bedroom and home environment.** Dim the lights prior to bedtime. Limit the bed to only a few things-a doll, favorite teddy bear, security blanket. Keep your child's bed a place to sleep, rather than a place to play. Teens need the same limits with their "toys"-music, phone, laptop, TV.