

Sleep Matters

WHY IS SLEEP SO IMPORTANT FOR KIDS?

- Helps them feel prepared for the next day
- Helps their tissues, muscles and bones grow
- Helps keep their immune systems healthy (which helps to fight illness)
- Allows their brains to sort and store information
- Makes it easier for them to think, focus, remember and solve problems
- Restores their energy to be active during the day

HOW MUCH SLEEP IS ENOUGH?

Adults need 7-9 hours of sleep a night, but children need quite a bit more. All kids are different, and some need more sleep than others. When asked, most kids (and their parents) agree they don't get enough.

- 3 to 5 year olds need about 11-13 hours of sleep a night
- 5 to 12 year olds need about 10-11 hours of sleep a night
- 13 to 17 year olds need about 9-10 hours of sleep a night

NEED MORE ZZZZZZS!!

A lack of sleep can make it hard to handle the challenges of day to day life. Not getting enough sleep can leave kids feeling:

- Cranky
- Clumsy
- Confused or forgetful
- Hyper
- Lazy or sluggish
- Sad or depressed



MY GOAL: _____



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MAKING SLEEP BETTER

- Allow time for plenty of exercise during the daytime – at least one hour of physical activity a day
- Limit evening activities and allow time for a relaxing bedtime routine
- Encourage kids to go to sleep and wake up at the same time each day
- Avoid caffeinated drinks, especially after 2 p.m.
- Create a quiet, dark and comfortable environment
- Turn off television, video games, cell phones and other screens at least 1-2 hours before bedtime

TROUBLE FALLING ASLEEP?

Sometimes kids feel scared or worried at bedtime, making it hard to fall asleep. Encourage kids to try these tips:

- Bring a soft, comforting object to bed – like a favorite stuffed animal or special blanket
- Turn on a fan
- Write in a journal or draw before going to bed
- Put happy pictures or photos near the bed
- Think good thoughts – try to imagine a peaceful place with friends and family
- Listen to relaxing music or sounds
- Read a book
- Count backwards from 100 with eyes closed
- Talk with someone about nightmares – sometimes just talking about scary thoughts can help

