

# Healthy Sleep, Healthy Kids!

*Importance of sleep to keep your kids safe and healthy!*



Everyone knows that a good night's sleep is important to feel alert and clear headed the next day. It is hard for a child to concentrate, learn, and to do well in school if they are too tired. But, did you know that not getting enough sleep is also associated with several serious health risks including being overweight, drinking alcohol, using drugs, and poor mental health?

## Insufficient sleep for children has been linked to:

- Anxiety & depression
- Increased suicide risk (suicide risk for teens decreases 11% with each one hour of additional sleep!)
- Engage in risky behaviors such as drinking, smoking, using drugs, and sexual activities.
- Be overweight due to changes in hormones that regulate appetite and poorer food choices.
- Increased car crashes (by up to 70%)
- Increased sports injuries (by up to 68%)

## How caregivers can help:

You can model and encourage good sleep habits. Set a regular bedtime and rise time, including weekends for everyone in household. Sleep in a dark room. People who are exposed to more light in the evening from lighting or electronics are less likely to get enough sleep.

Try not to overschedule your child with activities every evening. This tends to push dinner and bedtime even later giving them less time to unwind.

Start a "media curfew." Parents should consider banning the use of technology – computers, cell phones, video games, TVs – after a certain time or removing them from the bedroom.

Contact your local school district about later school start times. The American Academy of Pediatrics has recommended that middle and high school students start at 8:30am to give students an opportunity to get the amount of sleep they need. But keep in mind school may have barriers such as potential increases in transportation costs and scheduling difficulties.

HOW MUCH SLEEP DO WE NEED EACH DAY?	
Toddler: 1-3 years old	12 to 14 hours
Preschool: 3-5 years old	11 to 13 hours
Elementary: 5-11 years old	10 to 11 hours
Adolescent: 12-25 years old	8 to 10 hours
Adult: 26 years and older	7 to 9 hours



If you are concerned about your child, contact your family physician, reach out to your child's teacher and school counselor, or call a local mental health professional. Visit [mental-health-recovery.org](http://mental-health-recovery.org) for resources. Call or text **988** for immediate support.