



Sleep Tips for Parents, Children & Teens

From the PDSB Mental Health Resource Team

Many parents face difficulties getting their children back into regular sleep routines, especially after holiday breaks. Studies have shown that a lack of quality sleep in children can increase the likelihood of anxiety, depression, poor grades and school performance, and even physical pain. Research has proven that kids need a lot of sleep in order to function adequately during the day, and sleep deprived children often overcompensate for lack of sleep by becoming fidgety or even disruptive in school.

How much sleep does your child need every night?

Children ages 5-8 need the most sleep, requiring about 10-11 hours every night. Children ages 9-12 need between 9.5-10 hours nightly. And teenagers 13-18 need between 8.5-9.5.

Knowing how much sleep your child needs every night is key in establishing a proper bedtime. And it's important to remember that the above times aren't set in stone, but merely general approximations. Your child will have their own individual sleep needs, and you may need to fine-tune their bedtimes a little bit until you find your child less groggy and sleepy in the mornings, and more alert and aware.

Tips for getting your children on a regular sleep routine

1. Keep a regular bedtime schedule, including weekends.
2. Begin a relaxing bedtime routine such as baths, books, prayers, goodnights.
3. Turn off electronics at least an hour before bedtime.
4. Bedrooms should be cool, quiet, dimly lit, comfortable and associated with sleep.
5. Limit caffeine and sugar intake after lunch and none within three hours before bed.
6. Make sure they eat healthy and have regular exercise.
7. Communicate with your children about why regular bedtimes are important.
8. Practice these tips yourself and set a good example.

For updates and to follow along with the work of the PDSB Mental Health Resource Team, find them on Twitter @MHRTPeel.

Adapted from Alaska Sleep Clinic (2018)