

Setting solid rules for nighttime is one of the best ways parents can guarantee their children are getting the rest they need.

## Successful days begin with good nights

### Parents can help their children develop a bedtime routine

The sleep needs of your child are very important. The amount of rest they receive can affect their behavior at school and at home.

Lack of sleep can cause problems in young children and adolescents including hyperactivity, decreased attentiveness, short-term memory loss and delayed response times.

It can be hard for parents to develop a consistent schedule for bedtime. Also difficult is finding what is the right amount of sleep your child needs.

Most children's sleep needs fall within a range of hours that varies by age. The younger the child, the more bedtime that is generally needed.

Every child is different and there are no magic formulas. There are guidelines that parents can follow to create a routine that will help develop good sleep practices at home.

### What parents can do

- Bedtime routines should begin at least an hour before the actual "in-bed" time.
- Later in the evening, make sure that activities are more calming and involve less activity.
- Bedtime should not be used to finish last-minute homework.

- Avoid starting arguments or disagreements close to bedtime.
- Give your child a 5-10-minute warning to let them know that bedtime is coming soon.
- Keep a consistent routine every night that includes washing hands and face, brushing teeth, putting on pajamas and telling a story or saying prayers.
- As a parent, make sure you set solid rules about getting up during the night or making requests for a drink.

### Suggested sleep hours

These are actual sleep hours. The average 6 to 11-year-old takes 20 minutes to fall asleep.

Age	Sleep hours
4-year-olds	10 to 11
<small>(Note: Many children at this age still takes naps.)</small>	
5-year-olds	10
6 to 7-year-olds	9
8 to 9-year-olds	8.5
10 to 11-year-olds	8