**Helping Children Sleep**

When children do not get enough sleep, they have trouble controlling their moods and behavior. Sometimes children who do not get enough sleep can show symptoms that look like ADHD. Some signs that your child is not getting enough sleep include, crankiness, irritability, and being emotional. The child could have trouble concentrating at school or at home, they might fall asleep while riding in the car, or have trouble following conversations or seem to “space out” a lot. They might have trouble waking up or go back to sleep after they have gotten up for the day.

Children and teens typically need more sleep than adults. The recommended hours of sleep needed for an infant (4-12months) is 12-16 hours, Toddlers (1 to 2 years) need 11-14 hours, Children (3 to 5 years) need 10-13 hours, Children (6-12 years) need 9-12 hours, Teens (13 to 18 years) need 8- 12 hours.

There are several contributing factors that could affect the child’s quality of sleep including; 1) Stress: being bullied at school, changes in the living environment, family conflict, or a change in sleeping arrangements. 2) Caffeine: soda and other caffeinated drinks should be limited and not consumed past lunchtime. 3) Medication: Some medications prescribed to treat ADHD and antidepressants are stimulates and can make it difficult for children to fall asleep. 4) Medical Issues: A child could suffer from sleep apnea or restless leg syndrome, allergies, growing pains and itchy skin.

Some children suffer from insomnia which is the inability to fall asleep or stay asleep at night. If this occurs more than three times per week, continues for at least three months, and impairs daytime functioning for both the child and the parents, these may be indicators of a sleep disorder. If you are concerned that your child might have a sleep disorder, please consult your child’s pediatrician or doctor.

Having a relaxing bedtime routine will help children prepare for sleep and help them have a more restful night. Screens (i.e. TV, cell phones, tables, and video games) should be turned off at least an hour prior to bedtime. The child should participate in soothing activities such as taking a bath, being read to, reading to themselves, drawing or coloring to help them relax before bedtime.

Daytimes habits can also help with supporting nighttime rest. Making sure that the child only uses their bed for sleeping, and not for other activities such as doing homework, watching TV or playing. Try to keep the same sleep schedule even on the weekend, this will make it easier for them to wake up and fall asleep naturally. Give the child a light snack before bedtime so they don’t wake up from hunger. Avoid caffeine after lunch time. Encourage your child to exercise at least an hour daily. Make sure that the room is comfortable for the child, that its not to hot in the room, that their bed does not have too many toys in it, and that a night light is used if needed. Avoid using the child’s room for timeout, this could cause them to associate the room with punishment rather than relaxation. Make sure that the child is not napping too long during the day or too late in the day. Electronic devices should not be in the child’s bedroom at night. Spend quality time with the child before bedtime by reading to them, talking with them about their day, or what they are looking forward to the next day. This little bit of time could help the child feel more secure and relaxed before bedtime.

Article Resource: https://www.helpguide.org/articles/sleep/childhood-insomnia-and-sleep-problems.htm

**Between Families Newsletter**

**Training Questions**

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Please Complete the following questionnaire for ½ hour credit.

1. When children do not get enough sleep, they have trouble controlling their and
2. Multiple choice: What are symptoms that children are not getting enough sleep?
   1. Crankiness
   2. Falling asleep in the car
   3. Taking a walk
   4. Seem to “space out” a lot
3. True or False: Children need the same amount of sleep as adults
4. The recommended amount of sleep for a Toddler is
5. The recommended amount of sleep for a Teenager is
6. List two indicators that a child might have a sleep disorder such as insomnia.

1. True or false: Having a relaxing bedtime routine will help children prepare for sleep and have a more restful night.
2. Screens (i.e. TV, cell phones, tables, and video games) should be turned off at least prior to bedtime.
3. True or false: Children should only use their beds for sleeping.
4. Avoid using the child’s room for timeout, this could cause them to associate the room with

rather than