

CHILDREN'S SLEEP

Common Sleep Problems in Children

- Trouble falling or staying asleep
- Nightmares, night terrors, sleepwalking, bed-wetting.

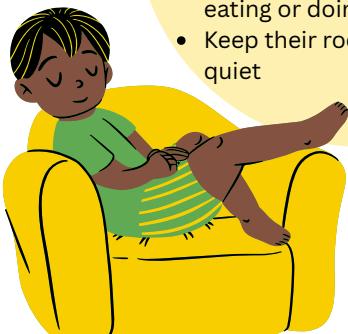


Healthy Daily Habits

- Regular physical activity
- Balanced meals (follow Canada's Food Guide)
- Limit caffeine in the afternoon (pop, energy drinks, chocolate)

Relaxing Bedtime Routine

- Include 20–30 minutes of quiet time: reading, calm music, dim lighting
- Avoid screens and electronics at least 1 hour before bed
- Associate bed only with sleep (no eating or doing homework)
- Keep their room cool, dark and quiet



ZZZ

What Helps?

- Same bedtime and wake-up time every day, including weekends, and a calming sleep environment
- Make sure the home is safe, especially if your child sleepwalks



When to call a health care provider

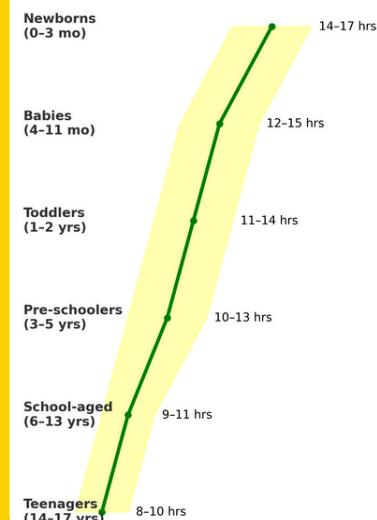
- Loud snoring, pauses in breathing during sleep
- Daytime sleepiness, irritability, or trouble focusing
- Frequent nightmares, night terrors, or sleepwalking
- If bed-wetting starts again after a dry period
- If both day and night wetting occur past age 6
- If it causes social anxiety or interferes with activities like sleepovers

Interfering Habits

- Bottles or rocking to sleep (moreso for toddlers)
- Giving milk or juice in bed (can cause tooth decay)
- Not encouraging children to self-soothe during night wakings



Recommended Sleep By Age



Bed-Wetting (Nocturnal Enuresis)

- Very common: about 20% of 5-year-olds, decreasing with age
- Do not punish, shame, or tease your child
- Avoid waking your child just to use the toilet ("lifting")



How to Help?

- Reassure your child—it's not their fault and it's common
- Encourage toilet use right before bed
- Clear path to the bathroom at night
- Use a mattress protector to make clean-up easier



Speech-Language Pathology
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

