



Getting Your Zzzzz's

The following information is from the Mayo Clinic website:

Sleep is an important part of your child's daily routine. Regular and adequate sleep not only gives your child energy and motivation for the day ahead, but also can enhance his or her learning abilities and decrease many behavioral problems.

Because each child is different, it's not possible to set an absolute amount of sleep that all children require. In general, children between 1 and 3 years of age seem to thrive on about 10 to 13 hours of sleep at night, with maybe a nap during the day. Preschoolers and school-age children need a similar amount of sleep — approximately 10 to 12 hours of sleep for preschoolers and 11 to 12 hours of sleep for school-age children. When your child reaches 12 years of age, he or she may need slightly less sleep — about 10 hours a night. By their teens, children's sleeping needs are slightly greater than those of adults — about 9 hours a night.

To find out if your child is getting enough sleep, monitor his or her behavior during the day. Factors that might clue you in to a possible sleep deficit in your child include:

- Having a short attention span, or being irritable or restless
- Having unusually low energy and activity levels
- Being more tearful, anxious, touchy, defensive or impatient than usual

It's important to maintain a regular schedule with your child, with consistent wake and sleep times. Lack of sleep can have a serious effect on concentration, memory, physical performance and decision making. Sleep gives the body a chance to slow down and repair itself. Therefore, helping your child develop good sleeping habits will serve him or her well both now and into adulthood.