



Sweet dreams: Tips for a good night's sleep for kids

A good night's sleep is essential for a child's overall wellbeing and development. Quality sleep helps recharge their bodies and minds, setting the stage for a successful day ahead.

During sleep, the brain organizes and stores memories, making it easier for kids to absorb new information in school. A well-rested child is more alert, focused, and better able to handle emotions, which helps to improve behaviour and build friendships.

The [Canadian 24 Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth](#) suggest that children ages 5-

13 years old sleep 9 to 11 hours each night. Some kids need more sleep than others; it's up to you to decide what works best for your family.

Here are a few ideas to help your child get a good night's sleep:

Keep a consistent sleep schedule

Set the time your child goes to bed and wakes up to be at the same time each day. This makes it easier for them to fall asleep and to wake up. Having a regular bedtime routine, that can include calming activities like deep

Healthy Children

April 2024 Family Newsletter

breathing, reading a book, taking a warm bath, or practicing gentle stretches, also helps. Keeping this same sleep schedule and bedtime routine, even on weekends, makes it more likely your child will get restful sleep.

Create a comfortable sleep environment

Try your best to make the bedroom easy to sleep in by keeping it dark, quiet, and cool. Consider using black out curtains to block out any outside light or ask them if they'd like to try wearing a sleep mask. Some kids might benefit from strategies that mask sounds that might keep them awake, such as using a white noise machine or listen to relaxing music or audiobooks.

Limit screen time before bed

The blue light given off by electronic devices like phones, tablets, computers, and TVs, can mess with hormones that regulate sleep. Have your child power down devices one hour before bedtime and instead do activities like reading a book, drawing, or listening to soothing music.

Encourage regular physical activity

Physical activity is linked to improved sleep quality in children. Encourage your child to move their body daily in ways that gets them breathing heavier and is fun for them. Try to avoid energetic exercise close to bedtime, as this can have the opposite effect and make it harder for children to wind down.

Be a positive role model

Kids who see adults with healthy sleep habits are likely to follow their lead. Talk with your child about what helps you fall asleep, stay asleep, and what doesn't.

Healthy sleep habits for children are an important part of their overall growth and development. A good night's sleep is within reach for every child with the right support, tools, and practices.

Speak with a health professional if you or your child have sleep challenges.

For more information, go to:

- [Sleep: Helping your child and yourself – sleep well](#)
- [Sleep for children and youth](#)