

## WHY DO STUDENTS NEED SLEEP?

Sleep has many health benefits for a child. Sleep helps a child's growth and physical and mental development. Proper sleep can protect a child's heart, stimulate their immune system to fight illnesses, and promote healthy weight. Sleep also allows time for the brain to relax and recharge.

Getting the right amount of sleep will help students succeed in the classroom. Sleep helps a student learn because it helps develop:

- Longer attention spans
- Stronger comprehension skills
- Stronger memory
- Critical thinking skills

### How much sleep do students need?

The hours of sleep a child should have **each night** depends on their age. As they become older, the amount of nightly sleep needed will decrease.

- **Newborns-2 years old:** 10-15 hours of sleep
- **3 years old to 5 years old:** 9-14 hours of sleep
- **6 years old to 13 years old:** 8-12 hours of sleep

### What are signs a student is not getting enough sleep?

As a teacher, you may be able to tell when a student is not getting enough sleep at home every night. The following signs could indicate a lack of nighttime sleep:

- Sleeping during the day in class
- Irritable/emotional moods (more sensitive, angrier)
- Declining academic performance
- Change in physical appearance (too thin, too much weight, looks "out of it")

### What can I do as a teacher?

If you think a student is not getting enough sleep, you can try talking to their parent about getting the right amount of sleep and refer them to some useful materials. Be sure to use supportive language so parents do not feel like you are judging their parenting skills. Some helpful talking points include:

- Sleep will help their child to do better in school. They will be able to focus more and develop critical thinking and comprehension skills.
- A well-rested child is much easier to get ready in the morning. This could mean less stress and less fighting in the morning.
- Sleep affects behavior, and it can reduce negative behavior during the school day and at home.
- Setting a consistent nighttime routine from an early age can help make sure a child gets enough sleep each night.

<http://www.parents.com/health/healthy-happy-kids/why-your-kid-needs-sleep/>  
<https://sleepfoundation.org/sleep-topics/children-and-sleep/page/0/1>