

## KidsHealth® KidsPoll: Tip Sheet for Kids Do You Get Enough Sleep?

Don't you hate it when the alarm beeps – or your mom wakes you up – and you just want to keep sleeping? Some kids might have trouble falling asleep, or worry about nightmares, but the biggest sleep problem facing kids is not getting enough of it. You'll wake up happier if you get the zzzs you need, so follow these three steps:

### 1. Find Out How Much Sleep You Get

Count how many hours of sleep you get on a normal night. Kids ages 9 to 12 need about 10-11 hours of sleep every night. Kids 13 and older need a little more than 9 hours. If you don't get enough, talk with your mom or dad about it. It's important to get some extra rest if you find you're having trouble getting up or you're feeling sleepy at school. Going to bed at the same time each night – and waking up around the same time every morning – can help. It helps train your body to expect sleep at the certain times.

### 2. Follow a Relaxing Bedtime Routine

Sleep doesn't just happen. You have to ease into it. That's why it's a good idea to follow a relaxing routine at bedtime. Here are some ideas:

- Take a warm bath or shower.
- Read alone or with a parent.
- Listen to music.
- Limit foods and drinks that contain caffeine. These include sodas, chocolate, iced tea, and coffee-flavored ice cream.
- Don't have a TV in your room. Research shows that kids who have one in their rooms sleep less.
- Don't fall asleep watching TV.
- Don't watch scary TV shows or movies close to bedtime because these can sometimes make it hard to fall asleep.
- Use your bed just for sleeping - not doing homework, reading, playing games, or talking on the phone. That way, you'll train your body to connect your bed with sleep.

### 3. Make Sleep a Must

Everything that's alive needs to sleep – especially you! Sleep is like a little vacation for your body and mind. After a good night's sleep you'll wake up refreshed and ready for another busy day. But it's easy for other stuff to steal your sleep time. Sometimes you're having too much fun to go to sleep – like when you're watching TV or playing a computer game. Other times, you might feel like you have too much work to do - like when you're working on a big homework assignment.

But try to make sleeping a top priority. Ask your mom or dad how you can cut down on nighttime activities or make your bedtime routine more relaxing. You'll be glad you did when the sun comes up and you hear, "Wake up, sleepyhead!"

For more information on sleep, read *What Sleep Is and Why All Kids Need It* [http://www.kidshealth.org/kid/stay\\_healthy/body/not\\_tired.html](http://www.kidshealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/body/not_tired.html)