

Dear Counselling Corner

Our child is struggling with sleeping through the night. Even though we are at elementary school now, the evening bedtime 'event' is still a battle which can last for hours. Even during the night, we are still experiencing frequent interruptions involving whining, crying and then crawling into bed with us. I am not sure how much sleep kids should be getting but we are all tired. My wife and I are truly exhausted and are looking for any suggestions, advice or ideas. I am sure that our child's learning is not at their best and I apologize to all you teachers who have to teach our child all day! Lol!

Tired out Dad

Dear Sleepy Dad:

Good sleep is critical for good health and bedtime routines help prepare your child for sleep by having them wind down and relax. Having a predictable, repetitive set of activities in place to be carried out before bed every night can help to give your child a sense of security and can teach them how to fall asleep on their own, an invaluable skill, for everyone. I found some great websites to help your child's bedtime routine:

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/kids-and-bedtime-routines-2634260>

<https://www.webmd.com/parenting/bedtime-routine-tips#1>

<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/children-and-sleep/bedtime-routine>

I also did some research and Medical News Today lists many benefits associated with sleeping well (see:

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/325353>):

- Better productivity, focus and concentration
- Lower weight gain risk
- Greater athletic performance
- Healthier heart
- Increased social and emotional intelligence
- Lower rates of depression
- Stronger immune system

According to the Centre of Disease Control and Prevention, individuals generally require less sleep as they age (see: https://www.cdc.gov/sleep/about_sleep/how_much_sleep.html):

Newborns (0–3 months): 14–17 hours

Infants (4–12 months): 12–16 hours

Toddler (1–2 years): 11–14 hours

Preschool (3–5 years): 10–13 hours

School age (6–12 years): 9–12 hours

Teen (13–18 years): 8–10 hours

Adult (18–60 years): 7-plus hours

Adult (61–64 years): 7–9 hours

Adult (65+ years): 7–8 hours

Best of luck!

The Counselling Corner is intended to offer some helpful ideas, encouragement, and insight on a variety of topics to support your child's social and emotional learning. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns at hchang@sd43.bc.ca.

Harriette Chang, School Counsellor