



HOW MUCH SLEEP DOES YOUR CHILD NEED?

Below are some general guidelines as to how many hours of sleep the AVERAGE child requires at various ages (taken from "Solve Your Child's Sleep Problems" by Dr. Richard Ferber). Remember, every child is different- some need more or less sleep than others- but variations should not be huge.

AGE	NIGHTTIME SLEEP	DAYTIME SLEEP	TOTAL SLEEP
1 week	8 ½	8 (4 naps)	16 ½
1 month	8 ½	7 (3 naps)	15 ½
3 months	10	5 (3 naps)	15
6 months	11	3 ¼ (2 naps)	14 ¼
9 months	11	3 (2 naps)	14
12 months	11 ¼	2 ½ (2 naps)	13 ¾
18 months	11 ¼	2 ¼ (1 nap)	13 ½
2 years	11	2 (1 nap)	13
3 years	10 ½	1 ½ (1 nap)	12
4 years	11 ½		11 ½
5 years	11		11
6 years	10 ¾		10 ¾
7 years	10 ½		10 ½
8 years	10 ¼		10 ¼
9 years	10		10
10 years	9 ¾		9 ¾
11 years	9 ½		9 ½
12 years	9 ¼		9 ¼
13 years	9 ¼		9 ¼
14 years	9		9
15 years	8 ¾		8 ¾
16 years	8 ½		8 ½
17 years	8 ¼		8 ¼
18 years	8 ¼		8 ¼

Remember, most children require A LOT of sleep! Many parents think that if their child refuses to go to bed by 11pm that they "just don't need that much sleep". In fact, that child may actually be sleep deprived.

The right AMOUNT and QUALITY of sleep affect our children's:

- Irritability
- Adaptability
- Attention span
- Ability to play independently
- Ability to take in and learn from their environment

Ask yourself these questions:

- Does your child almost always fall asleep in the car?
- Does your child seem cranky, irritable, or over-tired during the day?
- Does your child need to be held, fed, or rocked to sleep?
- Does your child wake you more than 3 times a night?
- Do you dread naptime and/or bedtime?
- Do you feel exhausted all of the time?
- Does your child wake for the day before 6am?

If you answered YES to any of these questions, your child may not be getting enough sleep. It is important to focus on your child's behavior than the actual number of hours of sleep. "In general, the more children sleep at night, the better behaved they'll be," says Dr. Weissbluth. How true that is!



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