



## Sleep Medicine

### AAP endorses new recommendations on sleep times

by Melissa Jenco, News Content Editor

Teens should sleep eight to 10 hours per night while younger children need even more sleep, according to new recommendations from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM).

The group lays out optimal amounts of sleep for children of different ages in the June 13 statement [Recommended Amount of Sleep for Pediatric Populations](#), which has been endorsed by the AAP.



"Regularly sleeping fewer than the number of recommended hours is associated with attention, behavior, and learning problems," according to the statement. "Insufficient sleep also increases the risk of accidents, injuries, hypertension, obesity, diabetes and depression."

Likewise, too much sleep has been linked to obesity, diabetes and mental health problems, the group said.

The AASM released the guidance in a two-page statement and plans to detail the research behind it at a later date. Following are the recommended minimum and maximum hours each age group should regularly sleep during a 24-hour period for optimal health:

- Ages 4-12 months: 12-16 hours (including naps)
- Ages 1-2 years: 11-14 hours (including naps)
- Ages 3-5 years: 10-13 hours (including naps)
- Age 6-12 years: 9-12 hours
- Age 13-18 years: 8-10 hours

A panel of 13 sleep experts reviewed 864 scientific articles to formulate the recommendations. It noted that sleep also must be appropriately timed and without disturbances.

While parents may determine their children's bedtime, their wakeup call may be determined by their school start time, said Lee J. Brooks, M.D., FAAP, a member of the AASM panel and the AAP Section on Pediatric Pulmonology and Sleep Medicine Executive Committee. In 2014, the [AAP released a policy](#) calling for middle



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and high schools to start no earlier than 8:30 a.m.

If schools start earlier, parents should make sure their children go to bed early enough to get the recommended amount of sleep, which may mean leaving some activities off the schedule, according to Dr. Brooks, attending pulmonologist at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

"They cannot play three sports, play in the band and join the chess club and still get enough sleep to do well in school," he said.

Consistency also is key when adjusting to a sleep schedule, even on the weekends, he said.

Pediatricians should ask children and their parents about sleep regularly to get a better picture of the influences on their health, according to Dr. Brooks.

"You might see poor school performance, you might see kids labeled as troublemakers when in reality they just don't get enough sleep," he said.

## Resources

- [AAP technical report "Insufficient Sleep in Adolescents and Young Adults: An Update on Causes and Consequences"](#)
- [AAP News story "CDC: Lack of sleep associated with risky behavior among teens"](#)
- [Healthy People 2020 and sleep health.](#)