I’m Tired of This

Sleep Routines, Sleep Problems, and How to Get More ZZZZZZZzs

Presented by Matt McNiff, Ph.D.
Problems by the numbers

7-14

- Settling at bedtime - 43
- Wakes at night - 51
- Sleeps with parents - 28
- Sleeps with sibling - 12
- Night wetting - 38

11-17

- Settling at bedtime - 26
- Wakes at night - 34
- Sleeps with parents - 11
- Sleeps with sibling - 3
- Night wetting - 19
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sleep Disorders - Initiation</th>
<th>Children with DS</th>
<th>Children without DS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Settling</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waking in night</td>
<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early waking</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reluctant to go to bed</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insists on sleeping with someone</td>
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<td>Sleep Disorders - Breathing Disorders</td>
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<td>Children without DS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mouth breathing</td>
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<td>33</td>
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<td>Restlessness</td>
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<td>Loud Snoring</td>
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<td>Sleeps with neck extended</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apneic Episodes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gags/chokes</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sleep Disorders – Other disorders/behaviors during sleep</td>
<td>Children with DS</td>
<td>Children without DS</td>
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<td>Sleep Talking</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>Teeth grinding</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedwetting</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headbanging</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sleep walking</td>
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Sleep Apnea

Sleep apnea is the process in which a person stops breathing for a short period of time and suddenly resumes with a rapid gulping of air.

- Children with DS are more vulnerable.
- Obstructive apnea – most common form
  - Partial obstruction of upper airways
  - Children with DS tend to have smaller upper airways and obstruction by tonsils and adenoids
  - Usually treated with surgery and highly successful.
- Central apnea – is more of a neurological disorder
  - Can be treated with an oxygen mask - CPAP Machines
Sleep problems and behavior

Two main types of sleep problems with a behavior cause

Sleep onset difficulties
- Problems going to bed
- Can’t settle without a parent
- Insistence on sleeping with someone

Sleep maintenance difficulties
- Night waking problems
- Getting up early
- Wanderers
Effects of sleep problems

- Link between sleep disturbances and daytime behavior difficulties
- Link between sleep disturbances and mothers’ stress levels
- Irritability, aggression, hyperactivity, lower attention span
Create a Safe and Positive Environment

- Take time before bed to relax
- Make it positive so child looks forward to preparing for bed
- If they are anxious before bed, it could be because they feel like they are just left there
- Safe and reassuring environment
  - Play soft music
  - Cuddling
  - Talking quietly
  - Story
- Associate bedroom with peacefulness so should not be used for active play or for punishment
Clear and Regular Routines

- Have the same bedtime each night (within half hour) and wake at same time every day including weekends and holidays
- Break routine down into steps
- Keep the routine under a half hour if possible
- Use visual prompts or an egg timer
- Make sure all parents agree on the routine
- Use a check off schedule
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**Getting Ready for Bed Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
<th>Sun</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Get school books together</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take a bath</td>
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<tr>
<td>Put on pajamas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brush teeth</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wash face</td>
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<td>Go potty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Read story</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kiss family good night</td>
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<td>Get into bed and turn out light</td>
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Checklist
Create an Environment for Sleeping

- Avoid rough housing before sleep
- Keep toys put away that can stimulate play
- Use nightlights for those scared of the dark – Don’t leave lights on
- Children with DS are notoriously restless sleepers so you may want to use long pajamas so that they are warm enough if they become uncovered.
- Using white noise or soft sounds may drown out “bumps in the night”
Reward Good Bedtime Behavior

- Find a reinforcer that is desirable
- Each child is unique so may be rewarded by different things
- Use language about what they do instead of what they don’t do
  - i.e. – Good job! You went right upstairs when it was 7:00
- You can use a sticker chart, dot to dot, etc. to document when something goes well
Getting Rid of the Old Behaviors

- Controlled ignoring
- Systematic ignoring with parental presence
- Using reinforcement programming
- Expect an extinction burst
- Plan ahead and set a date for the new routine to take place
- Look at what they behavior is and why they are doing it
- Once you start the program, any change back can turn back your program for awhile and make change resistant
Resources

- Solving Children’s Sleep Problems: A Step by Step Guide for Parents – Lyn Quine
- Solve Your Child’s Sleep Problems – Richard Ferber
Contact Information

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