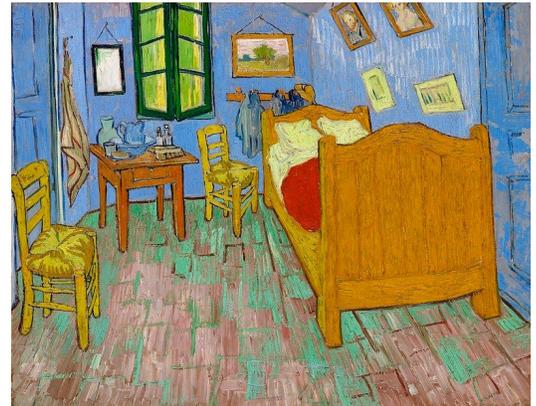


Elementary aged children need between 9 and 12 hours of sleep a night. When kids don't get enough sleep at night, especially for several days, they usually act more active and moody. Sleep loss can also lead to emotional instability, which can cause behavioral problems among children and adolescents. Kids may be more aggressive, have easier meltdowns, or have trouble paying attention in the classroom. To help your kids to get a better night's sleep here are some recommendations.



- Limit access to electronics, especially at night. Limit screen time to no more than one to two hours a day, if for entertainment purposes. It's especially important for them to avoid using electronic devices at night at least one hour before their bed time.
- Teach them that the bed is for sleep only. Many children use their phones or laptops in their beds, which can make it more difficult to fall asleep even when these devices are turned off. When the bed is associated with sleep only, it's much easier to relax and fall asleep in bed at night.
- Create a healthy bedtime routine. If your child prefers to go to sleep at a later hour, try setting back her bedtime in 15 minute increments each night. This will help her adjust to an earlier bedtime that allows her to wake up feeling refreshed.
- Make sleep a priority. Quite possibly the simplest thing parents can do is to make sleep a priority in their children's lives. Avoid scheduling activities such as music lessons, sports, social events, etc. at times that would delay bedtime (or nap time for younger children).

Setting the stage for good sleep now is an important habit that can make a difference in your child's future health. If you have concerns, talk to a pediatrician, or check out the [National Institutes of Health web page](#).

