

# WHAT CAN I DO?

When practicing sleep hygiene, remember that consistency is key. Sleep strategies take time and repetition to be effective.

- **Create a Routine:** Humans are creatures of habit. A consistent bedtime routine lets your child's body and mind know that it's time to settle down and should last around 20 minutes and consist of 3-4 quiet, soothing activities
- **Implement a Screen Curfew:** This rule is hard to implement, but worth it. Screens emit a type of blue light that suppresses melatonin, a hormone that promotes sleep. Children may be particularly vulnerable to the effects of light from screens. Screen time also stimulates the brain, making it harder to wind down for sleep. Electronic devices should be kept out of the bedroom and ideally not used within one hour of bedtime.
- **Set a Bedtime:** Bedtimes are most useful when they're consistent, so try to keep the same bedtime on weekends as on school nights.



# WHAT CAN MY CHILD DO



- **Get Exercise:** Physical activity is proven to help people of all ages fall asleep faster and stay asleep. Most children need at least one hour of exercise per day. Be sure to avoid vigorous activity within two hours of bedtime.
- **Nix Caffeine:** Caffeine is a stimulant that can both make it harder to fall asleep and reduce the quality of sleep. Even small amounts of caffeine can have a big impact in a little body. Don't let your child consume caffeine within six hours of bedtime, or preferably, avoid it all together.



Saginaw County  
HEALTH DEPARTMENT



# SLEEP HYGIENE FOR KIDS



**BWELL**  Saginaw

# TIPS FOR A SLEEPY BEDROOM

Optimizing your child's bedroom is an important part of quick and seamless shuteye. Kids are more likely to be distracted by an uncomfortable bedroom making sleep even harder.

- **Room Temperature:** The body and brain both cool down in preparation for sleep, and this can be disrupted by a stuffy bedroom. Try to avoid this by keeping the thermostat around 65 degrees.
- **Noise:** Even mild sound disturbances can affect the quality of slumber. Consider noise-blocking curtains or use of a fan or white noise machine to drown out distracting sounds.
- **Light Level:** Start dimming indoor lights as bedtime approaches, and keep your child's bedroom as dark as possible. This promotes healthy levels of melatonin and supports your child's natural biological clock. If your child is afraid of the dark, a small nightlight is okay.
- **Soothing smells:** Calming scents like lavender can have mild sedative effects. You might try using essential oils, a room diffuser, or dried potpourri sachet to provide a soothing, sleep-inducing smell.

# SLEEP RECOMMENDATIONS

## INFANTS UNDER 1 YEAR:

12 - 16 hours

## TODDLERS 1-2 YEARS:

11 - 14 hours

## CHILDREN 3-5 YEARS:

10 - 13 hours

## CHILDREN 6-12 YEARS:

10 - 13 hours

## TEENAGERS 13-18 YEARS:

8 - 10 hours



# AFFECTS OF NOT ENOUGH SLEEP

Proper sleep is essential to a child's development. Sleep hygiene — a collection of habits and behaviors that promote good sleep — is vital for children.

Some of the outcomes consistently associated with poor sleep include:

- Sleepiness throughout the day
- Tardiness at school due to oversleeping
- Poor concentration, slower reaction time, shorter attention span, and less creativity
- Lower grades in school
- Increased risk for mental health problems like anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts/behaviors