

# A SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL YEAR



## THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

### What does sleep do?

Sleep is a restorative biologically regulated state which replenishes the system on all levels including cellular, endocrine, immune, metabolic, physical and emotional levels. It is a time when we make neurochemicals for the brain. Sufficient sleep positively affects attention, memory, problem solving, overall health and reduces the risks of accidents.



### How can we improve our child's sleep?

Develop good sleep hygiene by establishing a regular sleep routine:

- Have your child go to bed at the same time each night
- Keep electronics e.g. TV, video games out of the bedroom. Avoid engaging in viewing TV or playing electronic games one hour before bedtime. *Studies have shown electronic media in bedrooms is related to falling asleep in class or during homework.*
- Preschoolers: 7.00-7.30; school age 8.00-8.30.

### Bedtime Routine

- *Start 30 mins before bedtime*
- *15 minute warm bath*
- *Deep rubdown that is rhythmic and sustained*
- *Quietly read a bedtime story – 2-3 pages; rhyming words can help*
- *Play soft lullabies – instrumental preferably to music with lyrics*
- *Dim the bedroom light; once asleep turn it off; make room dark!*
- *Make sure room is cool*
- *Follow the same routine every night; and keep the same time with not too much variation on the weekend*

## Other things to consider:

- *Exercise – regular exercise at least 4-5 hours before sleep has been shown to improve sleep states. Exercise too close to bedtime can disrupt sleep.*
- *Stress reduction – make sure there is sufficient “down time” in the schedule to just relax*
- *Use aromatherapy e.g. lavender bath; lavender pillow*
- *Sleep apnea – if your child snores, consult a physician re: adenoids or other issues that may affect quality of sleep and thus attention at school.*
- *For more information: <http://www.sleepfoundation.org/>*