

# Experts unveil new sleep guidelines for children

'Most parents don't really know how much sleep children should be getting'

By Kas Roussy, [CBC News](#) Posted: Jun 13, 2016 6:48 PM ET Last Updated: Jun 13, 2016 9:25 PM ET

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine, with the help of a panel of experts, has released its first ever official recommendations for how much shut-eye children need.

UBC sleep specialist and nursing professor Wendy Hall, the only Canadian on the 13-member panel, says the recommendations are important because lack of sleep is a growing trend.

"Most parents and care providers don't really know how much sleep children should be getting," she said in a news release. Few people are educated about sleep, she added.

The [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) has endorsed the new childhood sleep guidelines, which were published Monday in the Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine.

They are similar to ones issued by the Canadian Paediatric Society (CPS), says society member Dr. Tracey Bridger. She says people don't take sleep as seriously as they should, and that a good night's sleep is as important as what you eat and whether you exercise.

That's why CPS will endorse the [Canadian 24 Hour Movement Behaviour Guidelines for Children and Youth](#) later this month, she says.

Those guidelines "will harmonize recommendations for physical activity, sedentary behaviour, and sleep, and will represent the first time these behaviours are integrated as a single recommendation," according to its website.



## Recommended Daily Sleep for Kids

4-12 MONTHS

**12-16**  
HOURS\*

1-2 YEARS

**11-14**  
HOURS\*

3-5 YEARS

**10-13**  
HOURS\*

6-12 YEARS

**9-12**  
HOURS

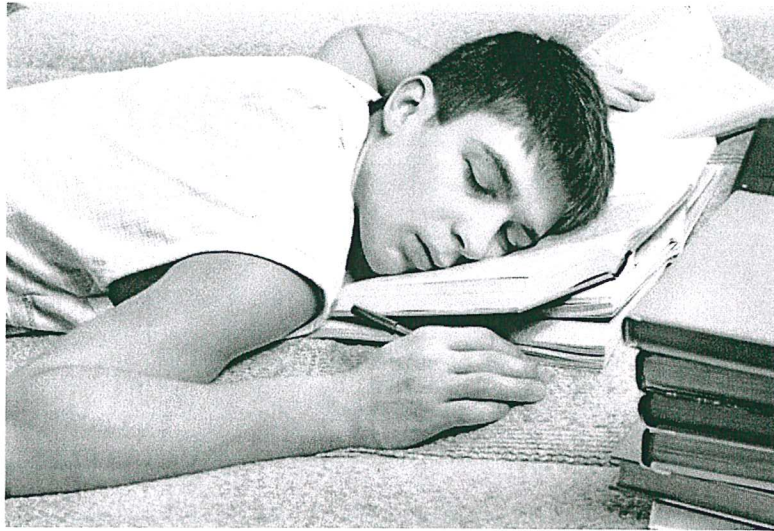
13-18 YEARS

**8-10**  
HOURS

\*Includes naps/American Academy of Sleep Medicine



# SLEEP



Teenagers are more likely to suffer athletic injuries if they sleep less than eight hours a night, experts say.

"Sleep is absolutely integral to physical growth as well as development, cognitive and emotional development," says Dr. Hilary Myron, a pediatric sleep specialist at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario in Ottawa. "It's absolutely critical."

To make sure parents are informed, the pediatrician says she has the current Canadian guidelines "plastered" on the walls of her clinics.

For people of all ages, the right amount of sleep improves attention, behaviour, memory, and overall mental and physical health. Failing to get enough sleep has dire consequences: it is associated with an increase in injuries, hypertension, obesity and depression.

So what can parents do to avoid sleep-deprived and cranky children? "It's having a consistent sleep routine, seven days a week, with a consistent sleep time and wake time," Myron told CBC News. "And removing screens from their children's bedroom."

That means, no iPads, iPhones or TV.

