

Welcome back to school. *We, the special education staff of Sevier County Schools, hope your child is adjusting well to the beginning of a new school year. If you have questions or concerns, do not hesitate to call us at your child's school. Come to meet us at parent-teacher conference time. We are a vital part of your child's school day and want to hear from you. Below are several articles to "help you help us" as we teach your child daily.*

SLEEP – How important is it? Sleep needs do not decrease with age and remain vitally important to your child's health, development, and well-being. Without the proper amount of sleep, your child will become increasingly sleepy during the day. Those children with a history of sleep problems see them persist. They do not "outgrow them."

In his book *Healthy Sleep Habits, Happy Child*, Marc Weissbluth, MD, sums up what you may find in children who routinely do not get the sleep they need: **"School achievement difficulties were found more often among poor sleepers compared to good sleepers.... Young children who have difficulty sleeping become older children with more academic problems."**

From numerous studies and summaries of studies, it is apparent that the proper amount and quality of sleep are very important for your child's development. So, **how much is enough?** There's no magical number of hours required by **all** children in a certain age group, however most children's sleep requirements fall within a predictable range of hours based on their age.

Children - ages 6 to 9 need about 10 hours of sleep a night.

Children ages 10 to 12 need a little over 9 hours of shuteye a night. Lack of sleep for children of this age can cause irritable or hyper types of behavior and can make a condition like attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) worse.

Adolescents need about 8 to 9.5 hours of sleep per night. As they progress through puberty, teens actually need more sleep. Sleep deprivation adds up over time, so an hour less per night is like a full night without sleep by the end of the week. Among other things, **lack of sleep can lead to: decreased attentiveness and short-term memory, inconsistent performance and delayed response time.**

Needless to say, these are just guidelines, but you can judge you child and his sleep needs. **SO – set those bedtimes and stick to them.** KidsHealth

Parental Involvement In study after study, researchers discover how important it is for parents to be actively involved in their child's education. Below are some of the findings of major research on parental involvement:

The family makes critical contributions to student achievement from preschool through high school. A home environment that encourages learning is more important to student achievement than income, education level or cultural background.

Reading achievement is more dependent on learning activities in the home than is math or science. **Reading aloud to children is the most important activity that parents can do**

to increase their child's chance of reading success. Talking to children about books and stories read to them also supports reading achievement.

When children and parents talk regularly about school, children perform better academically.

Three kinds of parental involvement at home are consistently associated with higher student achievement: actively organizing and monitoring a child's time, helping with homework and discussing school matters.

The earlier that parent involvement begins in a child's educational process, the more powerful the effects.

Positive results of parental involvement include improved student achievement, reduced absenteeism, improved behavior, and restored confidence among parents in their children's schooling.

How Can Parents Get Involved?

Involvement in your child's education can mean:

- Reading to your child
- Checking homework every night
- Discussing your children's progress with teachers
- Voting in school board elections
- Helping your school to set challenging academic standards
- Limiting TV viewing on school nights
- Becoming an advocate for better education in your community and state.

Or, it can be as simple as asking your children, "How was school today?" But ask every day. That will send your children the clear message that their schoolwork is important to you and you expect them to learn.

Some parents and families are able to be involved in their child's education in many ways. Others

may only have time for one or two activities. Whatever your level of involvement, do it consistently and stick with it because **you will make an important difference in your child's life.**

Encourage school attendance. Your child must attend school in order to be successful in the classroom. Try these suggestions for happier mornings:

Set school-night routines. Lay out the next day's clothes and load the backpack before going to bed. This alleviates those last minute decisions and searches for lost shoes or homework.

Set a bedtime. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, all children, including adolescents, require nine to 10 hours of sleep. Insist that your child get enough sleep. (See article on sleep in newsletter.)

Keep mornings simple. Dressing, eating breakfast and leaving for school may be all that your child can handle in the mornings.

Area 10 Special Olympics

2007-08

- **Bowling** October 4, West End Lanes
- **Basketball** November 16, Seymour

- **Skills Volleyball and Basketball**
January 18, Russellville Int.
- **Volleyball** February 8, Morristown East
- **Power Lifting** February 22,
Rutledge High
- **Aquatics** March 11,
Carson Newman
- **Track & Field** April 9 & 10,
Jefferson County

Join your child in Special Olympics this year. Contact your child's teacher for more details.