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# YOUTH HEALTH BULLETIN

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## ZZZZZZZZ... SLEEP IS IMPORTANT!

**D**o you hate having to go to bed? Would you rather stay up and read a book or watch TV? Maybe you think that sleep is boring or that you will miss out on something. Actually, sleep is very important. In fact, all animals need sleep, especially Wally Cat!

Have you ever not had enough sleep? Maybe the next day you felt tired all day or maybe you were just not at your best. Your body needs sleep! Kids need sleep so that they can get their bodies a break and prepare for the next day.

**Wally would like to remind you of the reasons to get sleep:**

- You may feel tired and cranky without it
- You may be unable to think
- You may feel clumsy participating in sports or other activities
- You may not grow as well

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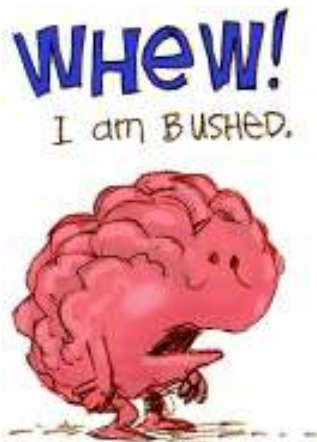
## Children need 9 to 10 hours of sleep each night.

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#### Sleep and your brain

Not only does your body need sleep, so does your brain. When you sleep your brain:

- Sorts through information
- Stores information
- Solves problems



#### The stages of sleep

Just because your body is resting does not mean that everything shuts down. Your brain continues to work.

There are 5 stages of sleep:

##### Stage 1 – Starting to go to sleep

- Brain tells muscles to relax
- Heart beats a little slower
- Body temperature drops a little

##### Stage 2 – Light sleep

- Body starts to fall asleep
- Can still be awakened easily

##### Stage 3 – Slow wave sleep

- Blood pressure drops a little
- Harder to wake up in this stage
- Some people sleepwalk or talk in their sleep during this stage

##### Stage 4 – Deep sleep

- Hard to wake up from this stage
- May sleepwalk or talk in sleep

##### Stage 5 – REM sleep

- Stands for Rapid Eye Movement
- Dreaming occurs in this stage
- Although muscles are totally relaxed, eyes move around quickly

When you are asleep, your body goes through stages 2- 5 about every 90 minutes.

#### Tips to help you sleep

- Go to bed at the same time every night
- Follow a routine when you are getting ready for bed
- Limit foods and drinks that have caffeine
- Do not watch TV in bed
- Do not exercise right before bed
- Use your bed for sleep only. Do not eat or do homework while sitting in bed

If you are having trouble sleeping, talk to your parents. They will help you get to sleep. Remember, it is important for you and your body to get plenty of sleep.



#### SOURCES:

- Kids Health. Aug 2007. "What sleep is and why you need it". The Nemours Foundation. <http://kidshealth.org/>

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