



Poor Sleep Can Have A Big Impact on Kids

Sleep-related breathing and movement disorders in children are linked to attention-deficits and behavioral problems, researchers report.

These problems can affect kids' memory, academic performance, functioning and ability to socialize, say studies in the current issue of *Sleep*.

One study analyzed previous research on the relationship between childhood sleep-disordered breathing (SDB) and neurobehavioral functioning. SDB is a group of disorders that includes obstructive sleep apnea and snoring.

About 10 to 12 percent of children snore. While obstructive sleep apnea is more common in adults, it may be diagnosed in children with large tonsils.

A University of Cincinnati study found strong evidence of an association between childhood SDB and deficits in behavior and emotion regulation, school performance, sustained attention, selective attention and alertness. It also found some evidence that SDB can affect a child's mood, expressive language skills, visual perception and working memory.

A second study, by researchers at Drexel University in Philadelphia, found that many children with bruxism-grinding or clenching of teeth during sleep-also suffered disturbed sleep and were at increased risk for attention and behavior problems.

This study of ten children found that eight of them had bruxism. Of those, 66 percent experienced disturbed sleep and, in this subset, 40 percent had significant attention and behavior problems. About 14 to 17 percent of children have bruxism, and about a third of children with bruxism will have it into adulthood. The study authors recommended that children undergo early screening for bruxism.

A third study found that, among people younger than age 40, "periodic leg movements" occur more often during the daytime. In people over age 40, they occur more often during sleep.

Periodic leg movements refer to episodes of simple, repetitive uncontrollable muscle movements. It most often occurs in the lower legs. It can reach the level of a condition called "periodic limb movement disorder," which may be a factor in depression, poor memory, short attention span, or fatigue.



People whose sleep is severely disturbed by periodic leg movements can suffer extreme daytime tiredness, researchers said. It can also disrupt the lives of people who experience it during the daytime, the study authors said.

Source: HealthDay News. (2006, September 8). Poor sleep can have big impact on kids. Kids Newsletter, September 25, 2006, ed. Scout News LLC.

About MINES & Associates

For over 25 years MINES & Associates has been a nationally recognized business psychology firm that provides a variety of services to corporate employers including employee assistance programs (EAP), managed mental healthcare, organizational development and psychology services, wellness programs, behavioral risk management, disease management, PPO services, and a number of other technology based services. MINES & Associates is divided into two main divisions, Organizational Psychology and Health Psychology, and currently serves a diverse portfolio of clients in all 50 states, Canada, Mexico, and the UK. Please log on to <http://www.minesandassociates.com> for the latest news and information on MINES & Associates.