

Dear Children's Center Families and Staff,

We had a wonderful turnout on Wednesday April 30th as we gathered at Creekside to hear Dr. Mark Rosekind and his wife Dr. Debra Babcock talk about the importance of sleep. The presentation was very informative and practical for parents living in today's sleep-deprived society. They spoke about both adult and children sleep needs and offered many helpful ideas for meeting those needs. Some of the main points that I thought were valuable were:

- **Sleep is a VITAL physical need and required for survival, alertness and performance**
 - Quantity and quality are very important!
 - If you are lethargic and dragging through your day, you aren't getting enough sleep
- **Number of hours needed:**
 - Adults: approximately 8 hours (ranges between 7-9)
 - Jr. High and High School: approximately 9 hours
 - Elementary School: 10 hours
 - Preschool: approximately 11-13 hours (including naps)
- **When we do not get the amount of sleep we need, we accumulate a "sleep debt":**
 - If you get 6 hours of actual sleep (out of 8 required), 5 nights in a row: you accumulate 10 hours of sleep debt
 - People often think that more wakefulness= more productivity
 - In reality, the bigger the sleep debt, the less productive we are
 - Recover from sleep debt by sleeping deeper
- **Most causes of sleep problems in children are behavioral:**
 - Sleep associations are maladaptive
 - Inconsistent limit setting
- **Helping kids with bedtime:**
 - Don't have unreal expectations
 - Establish a routine
 - Allow children to have a transitional object (i.e. blanket, stuffed animal, etc)
 - Bedtime is a time of separation from parents so make it calm and comforting (i.e. singing, reading, etc)
 - Set limits (i.e. can only get up one time after going to bed)
 - Most kids and adults wake up during the night: if children wake up in the same familiar environment in which they fell asleep, they are more likely to feel secure and put themselves back to sleep
- **Good sleep habits**
 - Protect your sleep time (get your 8 hours!)
 - Keep a regular schedule for bed/wake

- Use a regular pre-sleep routine (start routine 15-30 minutes before sleep)
- Avoid work and worry in the bedroom (be aware of what you watch on TV and what you are reading: no “10 O’clock News,” action thrillers or “page-turners”)
- Use relaxation techniques
- Use a white noise generator or fan if you have problems with noise in your environment
- Light snack or drink if needed but not excessive (harder to fall asleep when you are hungry)
- Don’t toss and turn for more than 30 minutes in your bed (get up and do something relaxing)
- Turn the clock around (to avoid constantly looking at the time)
- Keep your bedroom at a comfortable temperature (cool is better than warm: 67/68 degrees)

For more information on sleep, please visit Mark’s website: www.alertness-solutions.com/index.html. If you click on “Resources & Info,” links are provided for online sleep resources and recommended books.

Thanks to all who were able to attend!

Jenny Morgan

Program Coordinator

The Family Resource Center