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## Do 5 year olds take naps

A reader wrote in this question about toddler naps: "I am struggling. Does my 4 year old need a nap? On weekdays, she goes to 1/2 day preschool, naps afterwards in her room with dim lights and a sound machine from about 12:45pm until between 2 and 2.45, and I to put her to bed between 7.30 and 8pm but she stalls/makes excuses, etc. and sometimes ends up staying up until after 9 (in her room, keeps coming out to pee or something else). Most weekdays she naps easily, but usually 1 day/week she will come out 20 minutes after I tuck her in saying she is not tired and "will just go to bed early tonight" (this is unpredictable and inconsistent). On the days she doesn't nap, I put her to bed by around 6.30pm. Without the nap she falls apart and we rush at the end of the day. We are stuck in a cycle since when she naps for 2 hours, she struggles at bedtime, resulting in too late a bedtime, resulting in exhaustion the next day, too long of a nap, then the late bedtime again. Is 11.5 hours enough sleep for her (if she skips the nap)? Or do I wake her after an hour of naptime and try to salvage a reasonable (7.30ish) bedtime? Any advice would be greatly appreciated. Thank you, Jessica N." This is a great question, and the answer involves: Whether she needs a nap Transitioning to Quiet Time Naps for younger kids Sleepy cues Does a 4 Year Old Need a Nap? This is a common question about toddler naps...to nap or not to nap?! The average sleep needs for a 4 year old are 11.5 hrs. at night. Of course her behavior matters even more than numbers. I would start by shortening her nap to 1.5 hrs. and if even that is too much — causing a late bedtime — then shorten it to 45 minutes. Wondering about the best schedules for your child? Read: Sample Schedules: Sleep and Naps From 6 Months to Preschool Once the "I will just go to bed early tonight" chant — it shows how smart she is — becomes a regular occurrence or you notice that even a short daily nap results in a delayed bedtime then I would put her down for a nap every other day and have quiet time on the opposite days. This helps a child when they are weaning off a nap altogether. I often find that there is a "personality change" for the worse after 3 days of no naps. This can include increased temper tantrums and meltdowns at dinner time. Alternating naps with quiet time can help this transition. Transitioning Toddler Naps to Quiet Time Naps to quiet time can bring a big transition for the whole family! Many families ask me at what age do children give up their naps. On average children give up their afternoon nap at 4 years old. That being said, I have worked with many 3-3 1/2 year olds who successfully give up their daily afternoon nap (these children are sleeping through the night). Watching your child's behavior is of course more important than averages. Younger Kids Still Need Naps With the two-and-a-half- or three-year-old, you still need to be vigilant about daily naps. He can skip an occasional one, but put him to bed earlier that night. Naps also remain essential for older children who aren't sleeping through the night or who are obviously tired during the day. Even when your child stops napping, quiet time in the late afternoon or before dinner is a must for three and four-year-olds, and a wise idea for five-year-olds. Need more info about naps? Read: Baby Nap Basics for All Ages: Your Daytime Sleep Questions Answered Keep Track of Sleep and Sleepy Cues The simplest way to tell whether a preschooler or kindergartner needs a nap is to watch him. If your child is getting about eleven hours of unfragmented sleep at night and seems well rested, cheerful and easy going during the day, it may be time to go from naps to quiet time. You might want to cut out naps every other day, rather than eliminate them completely, or you may find that he naps great on the days he's with his sitter or at preschool but won't nap on days he's with you (or vice versa). If he is cranky, teary or frequently melting down, he probably needs at least a few naps a week. Car behavior is also a good clue. If he conks out every time you start your engine, he probably still needs that afternoon snooze. Children who were good nappers but who now take a very long time to fall asleep in the afternoon may also be ready to phase out the nap and start quiet time. Quiet time is exactly what it sounds like: about forty- five minutes of structured, solitary play, preferably at about the same time every afternoon. It's a time for children to rest their bodies and, to a lesser extent, their minds. It helps pave the way for a peaceful dinner hour and easy bedtime. Good activities include looking at books, watching an age-appropriate, calm children's video (leave fast-paced, action-packed cartoons for another time), coloring, or playing in their room with dolls, trains, trucks, or the like. The activity should not need a lot of adult interaction or mentorship, so make sure the child is in a safe place. Some parents use a timer or alarm clock in their child's room or in the hallway so their child knows when quiet time is over. Want to know more about dropping naps? Read: Dropping The Afternoon Nap — Transitioning To Quiet Time For Toddlers Remind your child that in all-day preschool, all children have to lie down on a cot for quiet time- to read, relax their body and brain or snooze if they need to! Don't forget quiet time can be a powerful tool to recharge parents, too! Make sure you take time to practice what you preach and enjoy the quiet time away from your child. Dishes and laundry do NOT recharge our minds and bodies no matter how hard we try! Find a quiet space to go to and enjoy your own piece of peace! Author: The Sleep Lady My name is Kim West, and I'm the mother of two beautiful girls, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who has been a practicing child and family therapist for more than 21 years, and the creator of the original gentle, proven method to get a good night's sleep for you and your child. My sleep journey began when I started experimenting with gently shaping my daughter's sleep by not following the conventional wisdom at the time. After having success (and then more success with my second daughter!), I began helping family and friends and my step-by-step method spread like wildfire, exactly like an excellent night of sleep for a tired parent should! Back to school means getting kids back to their regular sleep patterns.For many the adjustment can be difficult.Now, a new study finds taking a little daytime nap might be just what the doctor ordered.Sleep was Destiny Hernandez's best friend during the summer, but she knows when school starts she won't be able to get as many hours of sleep."I wake up more sleepy, unfocused," Hernandez said.The American Academy of Pediatrics said kids 6 to 12 years old need 9 to 12 hours of sleep. And even those a little older still need 10 hours, but many children and adolescents are falling short."Children who don't get enough sleep, the next day they're wired, they're tired, they're anxious," said Pediatrician Dr. Martha Rivera of Optimal Healthcare. "They don't focus in school."Taking a nap is an essential part of a young toddler's day. But most kids give up napping by the age of five.University of California Irvine researchers studied kids age 10 to 12 years old.They found those who had a midday nap were happier and had more self-control, fewer behavior problems and a higher IQ.Rivera agrees it could be beneficial.Naps around 20 to 30 minutes when you get home if you didn't get a good night's sleep could be helpful, she suggests. But not much longer than that so you can fall asleep again by 9 p.m.Another tip: limit your screen time.Twelve-year-old Deserie Galeano knows to stop using electronics two hours before bedtime."I'm going to start going to sleep earlier and putting my phone away because I'm usually always on my phone," she said.Naps are a daily part of life in countries like China, Mexico, Greece and the Philippines. Naps there can last 20 minutes to an hour and maybe even more."Do what the farmers do," Rivera said. "Go to sleep when the sun goes down and wake when the sun rises. And do your homework in the morning. You'll be fresher and you'll get twice as much done." Report a correction or typo Sleep is a big part of a child's good health. For young kids to get enough of it, most need some daytime sleep. Naps: Provide much-needed downtime that aids the important physical and mental development that happens in early childhood. Help keep kids from becoming overtired, which can affect their moods and make it harder for them to fall asleep at night. Give parents a break during the day and time to tackle household chores or just unwind. There's no one rule about how much daytime sleep kids need. It depends on their age, the child, and the sleep total during a 24-hour period. For example, one toddler may sleep 13 hours at night with only some daytime catnapping, while another gets 9 hours at night but takes a solid 2-hour nap each afternoon. Still, these age-by-age guidelines give an idea of average daily sleep needs: Birth to 6 months: Infants need about 14–18 total hours of sleep per day. Younger infants tend to sleep on and off around the clock, waking every 1–3 hours to eat. As they near 4 months of age, sleep rhythms become more set. Most babies sleep 9–12 hours at night, usually with an interruption for feeding, and have 2–3 daytime naps lasting about 30 minutes to 2 hours each. 6 to 12 months: Babies this age usually sleep about 14 hours total for the day. This usually includes two naps a day, which may last 20 minutes for some babies, for others a few hours. At this age, infants may not need to wake at night to feed, but may begin to have separation anxiety, which can add to sleep disturbances. Toddlers (1 to 3 years): Toddlers need 12–14 hours of sleep, including an afternoon nap of 1–3 hours. Young toddlers might still be taking two naps, but naps should not be too close to bedtime, as they may make it harder for toddlers to fall asleep at night. Preschoolers (3 to 5 years): Preschoolers average about 11–12 hours at night, plus an afternoon nap. Most give up this nap by 5 years of age. School-age (5 to 12 years): School-age kids need about 10–11 hours at night. Some 5-year-olds might still need a nap, and if a regular nap isn't possible, they might need an earlier bedtime. How Can I Tell if My Child Gets Enough Sleep? Most parents underestimate the amount of sleep kids need. So watch for signs of a lack of sleep, which can range from the obvious — like being tired — to more subtle problems with behavior and schoolwork. Ask yourself: Does my child act sleepy during the day? Does my child get cranky and irritable in the late afternoon? Is it a battle to get my child out of bed in the morning? Is my child inattentive, impatient, hyperactive, or aggressive? Does my child have trouble focusing on schoolwork and other tasks? If you answered yes to any of these questions, consider adjusting your child's sleep or nap schedule. It may take several weeks to find a routine that works. Talk to your doctor if you have concerns about your child's sleep. Naptime Routines and Other Concerns The key to good napping can be as simple as setting up a good nap routine early on and sticking to it. With infants, watch for cues like fussing and rubbing eyes, then put your baby to bed while sleepy but not yet asleep. This teaches kids how to fall asleep themselves — a skill that gets even more important as they get older. Soft music, dim lights, or a quiet story or rhyme at bedtime can help ease the transition to sleep and become a source of comfort for your child. For toddlers and preschoolers, sticking to a naptime schedule can a challenge. Many do still love their nap, but others don't want to miss a thing and will fight sleep even as their eyes are closing. In this case, don't let naptime become a battle — you can't force your child to sleep, but you can insist on some quiet time. Let your child read books or play quietly in their room. Parents are often surprised by how quickly quiet time can lead to sleep time — but even if it doesn't, at least your child is getting some much-needed rest. If your child has given up daytime naps, consider setting an earlier bedtime. Many parents worry that naptime will interfere with kids' bedtime, especially on days when a child takes a late-afternoon nap. But before you end naps entirely in an effort to wear out your child by bedtime, consider this: Well-rested kids are quicker to settle down at night than overtired ones. Overtired kids are often "wired" and restless, unable to self-soothe at bedtime, and more likely to wake through the night. If you feel your child's late naptime is the cause of bedtime problems, try making the nap a little bit earlier, which may mean waking your child a little earlier in the morning so the nap can begin sooner. You might also try waking kids from a nap earlier than usual so they have a longer active period before bedtime. In other words, try to make some adjustments before abandoning the nap — both you and your child will feel much better if there is one! Reviewed by: Rupal Christine Gupta, MD Date reviewed: April 2016 do 50 year olds take naps. do 5 year olds still take naps. should 5 year olds take naps. do five year olds take naps. should five year olds take naps

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