**Mayo Clinic Minute**

How much sleep do kids need?

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<td>It’s one of the most important keys to their success, but as kids are heading back to school, too many of them aren’t getting enough sleep.</td>
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<td>Mayo Clinic's Dr. Suresh Kotagal says younger kids should be getting at least eight to nine hours of sleep every night...while teenagers can get by on seven-and-a-half to eight-and-a-half.</td>
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SURESH KOTAGAL, M.D.
PEDIATRIC NEUROLOGY
Mayo Clinic

“That would be the ideal for ensuring optimum level of alertness during the day.”

Getting exercise every day also is important for a child’s alertness and sleep quality.

And while Dr. Kotagal says it’s probably ok for kids to be a bit lax about their sleeping habits during the summer, they should start a gradual shift back to a normal sleep schedule about two to three weeks before school starts.

That gradual shift should focus on wakeup time.

“If we have a fixed morning wakeup time, the bedtime itself will take care of itself. So, I think just having a fixed morning wakeup time seven days a week is a good idea.”

That means even on the weekends, kids shouldn’t sleep in too late.

For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I’m Ian Roth.