

[IMAGE]

Lack of Sleep Ups Obesity Risk in Kids

Recent studies have shown that the number of overweight children between the ages of 6 and 11 in the United States has doubled in the past 20 years. At the same time, research has shown that an increasing number of children and adolescents are suffering from sleep deprivation. Are the two events related? A study published in the *International Journal of Obesity* suggests so.

To confirm the link between a lack of sleep and childhood obesity, researchers in Quebec collected information on 422 grade-school students between the ages of 5 and 10. The scientists measured each of the children's height, weight and waist size. Information on the children's sleep patterns and lifestyle was obtained through phone interviews with their parents.

Based on body mass index measurements, 20 percent of the boys and 24 percent of the girls were considered overweight. Children who slept less than 10 hours a night were 3.5 times more likely to become overweight or obese than children who slept 12 or more hours. No other factor analyzed in the study had as much of an impact on obesity levels as the amount of time spent sleeping.

There are plenty of reasons for getting good night's sleep. Quality sleep improves a person's mood, increases their performance at work or school, and reduces their risk of getting injured or being in an accident. Now it appears that a good night's sleep can help people of all ages control their weight, too. For more information, visit www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/general.

Reference:

Chaput JP, Brunet M, Tremblay A. Relationship between short sleeping hours and childhood overweight/obesity: results from the Quebec en Forme project. *International Journal of Obesity* advance publication March 14, 2006; doi: 10.1038/sj.ijo.0803291.

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