March 2016

Dear Sangster Families,

How many hours of sleep do children need each night? If you answered “seven or eight” your kids may be among millions of sleep-deprived American youngsters. The ideal amount of sleep for children in elementary school is nine to ten hours per night. Like adults, they suffer when they don’t get enough sleep. When children are tired, they have trouble concentrating, become irritable or fidgety, have trouble remembering things and are vulnerable to colds and flu. There are a few tips you can do to help them get the amount of sleep they need:

- **Make time** – Don’t allow their lives to get so full of sports and activities that they cannot get everything done they need to before bedtime.

- **Calm down** – Relaxing before bedtime by reading a book, taking a bath, or doing something soothing helps children get ready for sleep.

- **Set a schedule** – It’s a good idea to have the same bedtime and wake-up time every day, including weekends, because the human body functions best on a regular schedule.

- **Be firm** – Make sure children understand that complaining about bedtime isn’t going to change their bedtime.

- **Be aware of caffeine** – Many popular drinks, including sodas are loaded with caffeine. If they want a drink before bedtime, try milk, fruit juice, or water.

- **Promote bedtime reading** – Reading is a great way to drift into sleep.

It is hard enough for a child to get by with too little sleep and it is even harder when sleep deprivation becomes a nightly habit. Hope some of these tips help. The earlier your children go to bed, the more time you and the adults in your family have to relax and enjoy the evening. Maybe you can even catch up on your own sleep! Pleasant dreams.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Reddel
Principal