

Student Essay on Lack of Sleep and Behavioral Problems

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Essay

As contradictory as it sounds, a new research now shows that children who have breathing problems while they sleep, such as snoring, are prone to hyperactivity, inattentiveness, and sleepiness during the day.

A survey of 3,000 parents with 5 to 7-year-olds about their children's sleeping habits and behaviors was taken and results show that children who snored or had other breathing problems while sleeping were twice as likely to be hyperactive, aggressive, or have trouble paying attention during the day. The breathing problems cause a lack of oxygen passage to the brain at night and the children do not get a sound sleep. If identified at an early age, the occurrence of hyperactivity or lack of attention may be reduced. Tests of children with asthma, respiratory allergies, or respiratory infections were taken. It has been shown that enlarged tonsils may be a factor in sleep-disordered breathing and that the removal of the tonsils and adenoids does indeed correct breathing problems in a number of children. As a result, tonsillectomies are now being done not only to treat tonsillitis, but sleep apnea as well. Also a problem linked with nighttime breathing problems is Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Not necessarily saying that a sleep-related breathing problem is the cause of ADHD, there is indeed a link between the two. A study two years ago noticed with 900 children noted that breathing problems during sleep doubled the risk for ADHD. In some sleep laboratories, a number of kids are mistakenly named with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) when the actual problem was sleep deprivation. Sleep researcher Ronald D. Chervin, MD, says that these behavioral problems may be children's ways of dealing with sleepiness.

In adults, a lack of sleep result in a lethargy, grumpiness, and moodiness, while in children, it causes a lack of attention and hyper activeness. If parents are uncertain of what is the cause of why their son or daughter has trouble waiting, sitting still, or paying attention, perhaps the problem is in the sleeping habits. If loud breathing or snoring in apparent, then treatment should be sought.