

The holidays are here, and they often come with a major schedule switch for most kids. No school can mean later nights, and lack of sleep can become a major issue. Dr. Kaninika Verma, Director of Sleep Medicine for OSF HealthCare says parents should be aware of the recommended amount of sleep for their child, and try to stay on schedule as much as possible, even when school is out.

“Kids actually have longer sleep requirements,” explained Dr. Verma. “Babies are going to sleep from 18 to 20 hours. Toddlers are going to sleep up to 12 hours, and school aged kids are going to need anywhere from nine and a half to ten and a half hours of sleep – up to eleven.”

The National Sleep Foundation’s 2014 [Sleep in America](#) Poll found that 30% of elementary school children and well over 50% of both middle and high schoolers don’t get the recommended nightly allowance of sleep. According to Dr. Verma, this is a big problem.

“We are seeing that kids who don’t get enough sleep, their learning becomes an issue, they start having behavioral issues, they’re tired, they can’t focus, they’re hyperactive, because kids respond differently to sleep deprivation than adults, where kids actually become very, very hyperactive,” she said.

One of the major sleep stealers that Dr. Verma comes across is screen time. She says more screen time is associated with delayed bed time, and recommends shutting down electronics two hours before it’s time to turn in.

“I do see pediatric patients for sleep, and that’s one of the things we do discuss, is how much sleep is your child getting? What time is your child going to bed by? How much screen time are they getting? What time are they shutting it down? How long before their mind kind of calms down to go to bed? That is an issue,” said Dr. Verma.

OSF HealthCare Sleep Medicine provides comprehensive care for sleep disorders of all types in patients, including pediatric patients. For more information, [click here](#), or call (309) 672-5682.