

Children from low income families more likely to have sleep problems

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Children from low income families have more sleep problems than children from middle class families, potentially impacting their health and performance at school, according to research that will be presented at the American Academy of Neurology's 59th Annual Meeting in Boston.

The study compared the sleeping habits of 64 healthy inner city children, who were African American and Hispanic, to the sleeping patterns of children from middle class, Caucasian families. The children were 4 to 10 years old. Parents were asked to fill out a survey, which examined amount of sleep, sleep anxiety, night awakenings, night terrors, bed wetting, sleep walking, sleep disordered breathing, daytime sleepiness, bedtime resistance, and the time it took their children to fall asleep.

The study found children from low income families had 25 percent more incidents of sleeping problems than children from middle class families.

"While these results aren't surprising, they need to be followed up with a study involving a larger number of children since sleeping problems can have a negative impact on a child's health and may hinder a child's performance at school," said study author Anuj Chawla, MS, with Tulane University's School of Medicine in New Orleans, LA.

Source: American Academy of Neurology

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