

Journal of Applied Research on Children: Informing Policy for Children at Risk

Volume 13
Issue 1 *The Importance of Sleep for Child Wellbeing*

Article 1

2022

Guest Editor's Introduction

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Recommended Citation

Kancherla, Binal (2022) "Guest Editor's Introduction," *Journal of Applied Research on Children: Informing Policy for Children at Risk*. Vol. 13: Iss. 1, Article 1.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.library.tmc.edu/childrenatrisk/vol13/iss1/1>

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Sleep Medicine remains one of the youngest subspecialties within modern medicine. It was not until the middle of the 19th century that scientists chose to explore the physiology of sleep. In the early 1900s, specific neurons were identified that target sleep and sleep medicine became a field of interest for many scientists. In 1967, the first sleep center and laboratory were opened in the United States at Stanford University.

By the end of the 1970s, clinical sleep disorders became an accepted area of medical practice. However, much of what was practiced and recommended for children and adolescents was based on adult experience. Identifying sleep disorders unique to children would not come to the forefront until the 1980s.

Two groundbreaking publications in the world of Pediatric Sleep Medicine: Dr. Richard Ferber's *Solve Your Child's Sleep Problems*, and Dr. Christian Guilleminault's *Sleep and Its Disorders in Children* were both published in 1985. Dr. Ferber's work reviewed aspects of sleep specific to children and provided practical information for parents in the management of many sleep-related difficulties. Dr. Guilleminault's book compiled ground-breaking scientific papers on normative data providing a basis for future direction in research for Pediatric Sleep Medicine.

Pediatric Sleep Medicine is now an integral part of pediatric practice across multiple disciplines. Up to 50% of all children report sleep complaints. Sleep is an important component of cognitive social development in children and can be linked to many comorbid conditions affecting many organ systems. Identifying sleep disorders and treating sleep complaints should be a priority for all pediatric specialties.

Untreated sleep disorders can often have multiple negative impact on children's development, health, and long-term wellbeing. Sleep is also an important component of the family dynamic and overall household health. Pediatric Sleep Medicine specialists rely heavily on adult sleep research data to help aid policy development in treating children. Children, however, have unique needs regarding their sleep and many sleep disorders are still overlooked in childhood.

This special issue of the *Journal for Applied Research on Children* will focus on articles that have implications for sleep health in children from birth to early adulthood. Both clinical, translational, and population-based research in Pediatric Sleep Medicine is needed to help primary care providers and pediatric specialists to understand the unique sleep needs and disorders found in children.