Today’s piece was prepared by Colleen Kays, MD, and stems from a CNN article, “Regular bedtimes better for young minds.”

<http://thechart.blogs.cnn.com/2013/07/08/regular-bedtimes-better-for-young-minds/>

This article discusses a recent sub-analysis of data from the UK Millennium Cohort Study, in which researchers followed 11,000 children using serial parent surveys and home visits when the children were 3, 5, and 7 years old. The CNN journalist remarks that the researchers evaluated relationships between bedtime and standardized academic and cognitive test scores at 7 years of age. The article primarily focuses on the finding that inconsistent/irregular bedtime, rather than late bedtime, was correlated with lower test scores.

The article promotes the importance of “sleep hygiene” which includes a consistent bedtime routine, and addresses some limitations (e.g., absences of data regarding duration children slept or a definition of what “inconsistent bedtime” means) and implications of the presumed study’s findings, but the journalist may underplay consequences of routine late bedtime resulting in chronic inadequate sleep and its impact on neurodevelopment and behavior. The journalist is casual in remarking that the researchers controlled for variables such discipline strategies. As the research method is described as self-reported, the divide between how parents view their own discipline philosophy/approach (e.g., “parenting style” and consistency) and how in reality parents actually deliver their discipline is vast. This and other likely confounders must be underscored and appreciated by readers.

Parents may incorrectly conclude absence of potential adverse effects if their children stay up late as long as bedtime is consistent. The following resources for parents are helpful:

**Resources about bedtime for patients and parents:**

1) National Sleep Foundation – Children and Sleep

<http://www.sleepfoundation.org/article/sleep-topics/children-and-sleep>

2) AAP – Parenting Tips for Better Sleep

 <http://www2.aap.org/sections/dbpeds/pdf/sleeptips.pdf>

And that’s today’s Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics: IN THE NEWS!