A Holistic Approach to Children’s Sleep Problems

Heather Elphick, Consultant in Paediatric Respiratory & Sleep Medicine

Sleep… A Public Health Crisis?....

“We have two main epidemics among children. One is obesity and the other is mental health, and underpinning both of these is sleep....As a society we downplay the importance of sleep ...

Michael Farquhar, Consultant in sleep medicine,
Evelina Children’s Hospital
#SleepMatters

- Parents relationship break down
- Not able to work
- Impact on household income
- Breakdown of relationship with neighbours, friends, wider family
  - Isolation
  - Parental depression
  - Increased risk or accidents at work or driving
  - Lack of engagement with school, exercise
  - Impact on diet
  - Impact on siblings

Sheffield Children’s Hospital NHS Trust: Sleep Service

Demand for service has been overwhelming

2008 (per week):
1 consultant clinic;
2 x polysomnography

2019 (per week):
3 consultant clinics;
7 nurse-led clinics;
12 x polysomnography

Case examples

7 years old with ADHD
+4 hours to fall asleep, up 4-5 times a night
Sometimes no sleep for 36 hours
- Damages property
- Steals food
- Impact on Dad’s ability to drive

15 year old in residential home
4-5 hours sleep, up during the night
Impacting on other children in home
Very challenging behaviour
At risk to himself and others
Waking night staff employed
The Sheffield Children and Young People’s Sleeping Well Project

Background to the Project

Sheffield City Council
- Consultation with parents of disabled children
- Parent-Carer Forum survey 53% of respondents - children with sleep problems, 48% siblings sleep affected
- Future in Mind / School Surveys – highlighting sleep

Sheffield Children’s (SCH) Sleep service
- Sleep clinics since April 2008
- Sleep Unit Oct 2008
- No provision for sleep behaviour work
- Melatonin prescribing

Sheffield City Council
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2015 Sleep Strategy Group
- CCG / GP rep
- Public Health
- Lifelong Learning / education
- Parent Carer Representatives
- LA Early Intervention / parenting
- Disabled children services

Gathering Evidence

The Intervention:
Sheffield City Council, Commissioning, Inclusion & Learning Service
- Candi Lawson, Assistant Service Manager
- Sue Siddall, Senior Learning Mentor
- Ann Ives, Senior Parenting Practitioner

The Pre & Post Research:
Sheffield Children’s NHS Foundation Trust
- Janine Reynolds, Sleep Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Ruth Kingshott, Sleep Physiologist

Guidance and Advice:
- The Children’s Sleep Charity
- Fostering and Adoption
- Research and Governance teams

Analysis and Learning:
Sheffield Children’s NHS FT and SCC
- Heather Elphick, Consultant and Professor
- Lorraine Hall, Commissioning Manager
**Intervention**

Sleep Practitioners received accredited training  
[www.thechildressleepcharity.org.uk](http://www.thechildressleepcharity.org.uk)  
3 hour small group workshop or 1 hour clinic style appointment  
  • Sleep Hygiene information  
  • 1-1 support to develop an individualised plan  
  • Follow up support from a Sleep Practitioner