

Dr. Lewis S. Libby School

At these ages, with social, school, and family activities bedtime gradually becomes later with most 12-year-olds going to be around 9:00.

12-18 Years Old: 8 ¼-9 ½ hours per day.

For more information see

www.webmd.com/parenting/guide/how-much-sleep-do-children-need?

October 2, 2009

<http://www.lewislibbyschool.org>

Milford, ME

Principal's Message

One of the most important things we can do to help develop an appropriate instructional plan for every student is to gather data about what each child knows and is able to do. We get that information from a variety of sources. Most of the choices about assessments are local ones, but some are mandated by the state. It can be very confusing trying to wade through the assessment information. This newsletter explains a little about the assessments we use at the Dr. Lewis S. Libby School. During parent-teacher conferences, feel free to ask your child's teacher about his/her results. I have added some websites near each assessment description so that you can gather more information.

As a parent, there are several things you can do to help your child. I have included some tips for parents in this newsletter.

If you have any questions that are not answered here, please contact your child's teacher or me.



Important Events

- October 6** Soccer at Bangor Christian
- October 6** PTO, 6:30
- October 7** Dr. Davis Presentation to the Community, 6:30
- October 8** Cross Country at Central MS
- October 8** School Committee Meeting
- October 13** Parent Teacher Conferences (No School)
- October 15** Cross Country at Airline School



How Much Sleep Do Children Need?

Sleep among other factors influences your child's temperament. Poor sleep (too little and/or poor quality) is associated with behavior problems like aggression, defiance, non-compliance, oppositional behavior, acting out, and hyperactivity. The inability to put oneself back to sleep unassisted and irregular bedtimes are also associated with behavior problems. It is clear that the proper amount and quality of sleep are very important for your child's development.

3-6 Years Old: 10 ¾-12 hours per day.

Children at this age typically go to bed around 7-9 p.m. and wake up about 6-8 a.m.

7-12 Years Old: 10-11 hours per day.



DIBELS (Grades K-2)

The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills is a literacy assessment that we use in grades K-2. The DIBELS assess the 5 Big Ideas in early literacy identified by the National Reading Panel: phonemic awareness, alphabetic principal, accuracy and fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.

Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear and manipulate the sounds in spoken words and the

understanding that spoken words and syllables are made up of sequences of speech sounds. It is essential to learning to read in an alphabetic writing system, because letters represent sounds or phonemes. Without phonemic awareness, phonics makes little sense. Phonemic awareness is a strong **predictor of children who experience early reading success.**

The alphabetic principle is composed of two parts. The first is alphabetic understanding which means comprehending that words are composed of letters that represent sounds. The second is phonological recording or using systematic relationships between letters and phonemes (letter-sound correspondence) to retrieve the pronunciation of unknown printed string or to spell words.

Fluency (automaticity) is reading words with no noticeable cognitive or mental effort. It is having mastered word recognition skills to the point of over learning. Fundamental skills are so "automatic" that they do not require conscious attention. Some other examples of automaticity are shifting gears on a car, playing a musical instrument or playing a sport (serving a tennis ball).

Expressive and Receptive vocabulary are two types of vocabulary. Expressive vocabulary requires a speaker or writer to produce a specific label for a particular meaning. Receptive vocabulary requires a reader to associate a specific meaning with a given label as in reading or listening.

Comprehension is the essence of reading. It is the complex cognitive process involving the intentional interaction between reader and text to extract meaning.

All of the above information and much more can be found on the DIBELS homepage at

<http://dibels.uoregon.edu>

Observation Survey (Grade 1 only)

The measurement of early literacy behaviors is complex and requires a commitment to careful and systematic observation. *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* provides a systematic way of capturing early reading and writing behaviors and is the primary assessment tool used in Reading Recovery. All of the tasks were developed in research studies to assess emergent literacy in young children.

The Observation Survey is also widely used by classroom teachers and researchers. The Observation Survey is a teacher-administered standardized assessment that adheres to characteristics of sound measurement instruments: standard tasks, standard administration, real-world tasks to establish validity, and ways of knowing about reliability of observations. The Observation Survey incorporates six literacy tasks, all of which are necessary for describing a young child's emerging reading and writing behaviors:

- **Letter Identification** to determine which letters the child knows and the preferred mode of identification
- **Word Test** to determine if the child is building a personal resource of reading vocabulary
- **Concepts About Print** to determine what the child knows about the way spoken language is represented in print
- **Writing Vocabulary** to determine if the child is building a personal resource of known words that can be written in every detail
- **Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words** to assess phonemic awareness by determining how the child represents sounds in graphic form
- **Text Reading** to determine an appropriate level of text difficulty and to record what the child does when reading continuous text (using a running record)

For more information, see
www.readingrecovery.org

DRA (Grades 2-8)

The DRA measures reading accuracy, fluency and comprehension. The DRA serves many purposes. It helps to ensure that students become independent, successful readers. Teachers use the DRA to identify students' reading achievement through systematic observation, recording, and evaluation of performance. Teachers can analyze data, document progress, and communicate assessment information to administrators, parents, and students. Finally the DRA helps to drive effective reading instruction tailored to critical intervention points derived from assessment results

The home page for the DRA is
www.pearsonschool.com

NWEA (Grades 3-8)

Students take the Northwest Evaluation Association tests (NWEA) on a computer. Each student takes a reading and a math test. The difficulty of each question is based on how well a student has answered previous questions. As the student answers correctly, questions become more difficult. If the student answers incorrectly, the questions become easier. In an optimal test, a student answers approximately half the items correctly and half incorrectly. The final score is an estimate of the student's achievement level. NWEA assessments are used to measure students' progress or growth in school. The scale used to measure a child's progress is called the RIT scale (Rasch unIT). The RIT scale is an equal-interval scale much like feet and inches on a yardstick. It is used to chart your student's academic growth from year to year. NWEA tests are important to teachers because they keep track of progress and growth in basic skills. They let teachers know where a student's strengths are and if help is needed in any specific areas.

Teachers use this information to help them guide instruction in the classroom.

For more information see
www.rsu21.net/ParentToolkit.pdf

NECAP (Grades 3-8)

The New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) is the result of collaboration among the states of **New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont**. The three states came together to create common grade level expectations (GLEs) upon which this innovative assessment is based. **Maine** is the fourth state joining the NECAP and will use the assessments for reading, writing, and mathematics in grades 3 through 8.

The NECAP consists of reading and mathematics assessments for grades 3 through 8, writing assessments for grades 5 and science assessments for grade 4 and 8. Tests include multiple-choice, short answer, constructed-response, and extended-response items. The science assessments in grades 4 and 8 also include inquiry tasks that require students to conduct experiments and/or record observations. Students will not take the science portion of the assessment until March.

For more information
www.maine.gov/education/necap/standards/html



Math Assessment (K-5)

Our math program, *Everyday Mathematics*, has an end-of-year test that assesses the skills taught throughout the year. In the beginning of each school year we give students the end-of-the-year test from the *previous* year. This gives



teachers valuable information about what skills need to be retaught to groups and individuals.

Test Taking Tips For Parents

- Encourage your child to do well but don't pressure him/her. You may stress him/her out. It is important for your child to be relaxed on test day.
- Keep a positive attitude about tests.
- Make sure your child gets enough sleep before a test.
- Ensure that your child eats a healthy breakfast and avoid heavy foods that may make him/her groggy. Avoid high sugar foods.
- Make sure your child gets up early enough so that he/she will be on time for school.
- If you are anxious about your child's test, that's OK, but try to keep cool around your child. You don't want him/her to get anxious about the test.
- Talking about the test with your child can relieve stress about test taking.
- If your child is anxious about the test, talk to him/her about it. Meet with your child's teacher to find out the best way to help your child.
- Praise/reward your child when he/she does well on a test.
- Successful test-takers tend to be students with good attendance.
- Reviewing tips such as these are a good idea, but monitoring overall academic progress and staying in good communication with your child's teacher will help your child do well in school. Good reading skills factor heavily in a timed test, so encourage reading (consider magazines, newspapers, or even comic books) as much as possible. Tests also measure critical thinking ability, so discuss ideas or encourage your child to voice his/her opinion often to stimulate these thought processes