

# Sleep problems in young children tied to special ed need

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A history of either sleep-disordered breathing or behavioral sleep problems through the age of 5 years is associated with an increased likelihood of special educational need at 8 years of age, according to a study published online Sept. 3 in *Pediatrics*.

(HealthDay)—A history of either sleep-disordered breathing (SDB) or behavioral sleep problems (BSPs) through the age of 5 years is associated with an increased likelihood of special educational need (SEN) at 8 years of age, according to a study published online Sept. 3 in *Pediatrics*.

To examine the association between SDB, BSP, and SEN, Karen Bonuck, Ph.D., from the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in Bronx, N.Y., and colleagues analyzed more than 11,000 parental responses in the Avon [Longitudinal Study](#) of Parents and Children on children's

snoring, witnessed apnea, and mouth-breathing at 6, 18, 30, 42, and 57 months. For 11,049 children, parent report of SEN at age 8 was available.

The researchers found that previous history of SDB and BSPs correlated significantly with SEN, after controlling for 16 putative confounders. For roughly each one-year interval at which a BSP was reported there was a 7 percent increased odds of SEN. SDB was associated with a near 40 percent increased odds of SEN. SEN was 60 percent more likely in children in the worst symptom cluster.

"Findings presented here strongly support an association between [early childhood sleep problems](#) and later SEN, on a population basis," the authors write. "This highlights the need for early screening, because early treatment is often effective for SDB and BSPs."

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
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