What was the Sleep Well – Be Well Study?
The Sleep Well – Be Well study started in 2008. The study had two parts that aimed to find out:
1. If sleep problems are common in children starting school.
2. If a short education program could improve child sleep and have any flow-on benefits for the child and their parents.

In part one, more than 1500 families with Grade Prep children, from 22 primary schools around Melbourne, completed our survey. Parents answered questions about their child’s sleep and health, and their own health.

In part two, we invited 136 families identified from the survey to take part. 80% of families agreed which is a fantastic participation rate for our study!
Families were randomly divided into 2 groups. The ‘treatment’ group families attended 1-2 education sessions and were given information about normal sleep habits for children. With the research team member, they worked out a ‘sleep plan’ to help them improve their child’s sleep. The ‘usual care’ group were not offered the program but were able to seek help from other sources.

Did the Sleep Well – Be Well study work?
After 3 months, compared with ‘usual care’ families, the ‘treatment’ group families reported:
- Fewer child sleep problems
- Better child sleep patterns
- Better child social functioning
- Better child emotional functioning
- Less parent depression symptoms

After 6 months, compared with ‘usual care’ families, the ‘treatment’ group families reported:
- Fewer child sleep problems
- Better child sleep patterns
- Children were sleeping longer
- Better child emotional functioning
- Less parent anxiety symptoms

The children reported that they had better social functioning.

After 12 months, compared with ‘usual care’ families, the ‘treatment’ group families reported:
- Fewer child sleep problems
- Better child sleep patterns
- More positive child social behaviour

The Sleep Well – Be Well study has added important information about childhood sleep and how it can be treated using a simple program. This study is the first of its kind to be conducted in primary schools anywhere in the world. We believe our results are relevant for many children starting school not only in Australia, but internationally. This research would not have been a success without you. Thank you for your time and help!

We are working to publish these results. If you would like more information about published papers, or if you have any comments or questions, please contact Jon Quach
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