

nighttime fears, inconsistent bedtime routines, and lack of limit setting ([Babcock, 2011](#)).

Media use can also contribute to sleep disturbances. Research has revealed a direct correlation between sleep problems in preschool children and evening media use, as well as daytime exposure to violent media content ([Garrison, Liekweg, and Christakis, 2011](#)). Specific sleep problems associated with media use include delayed sleep onset, nightmares, night wakings, daytime tiredness, and difficulty waking in the morning ([Garrison, Liekweg, and Christakis, 2011](#)). In addition to limiting the duration of television viewing and other media exposure, parents should ensure that all types of media are age appropriate and are not too frightening or overstimulating.

Consequences of inadequate sleep include daytime tiredness, behavior changes, hyperactivity, difficulty concentrating, impaired learning ability, poor control of emotions and impulses, and strain on family relationships ([Bhargava, 2011](#)). Nurses should incorporate assessment of sleep patterns and education about the development of healthy sleep behaviors into every well-child visit. Recommendations for handling a sleep disturbance are offered only after a thorough assessment. Cultural traditions may dictate sleep practices contrary to certain well-accepted professional recommendations. Thus parents may not perceive particular sleep habits as problematic (see [Cultural Considerations](#) box).

## Cultural Considerations

### Co-Sleeping

Many experts recommend that infants and children be trained to always sleep in their own crib or bed. However, co-sleeping, or the “family bed” (in which parents allow the children to sleep with them), is an accepted cultural practice among many African-American, and Asian families ([Ward and Doering, 2014](#); [Mindell, Sadeh, Kohyama, et al, 2010](#)). Others who have adopted co-sleeping include parents who believe that co-sleeping promotes parent-child bonding, parents who think that co-sleeping diminishes their child's nighttime fears or other sleep disturbances, and mothers who are breastfeeding. Co-sleeping may be a practical