Naptime in Full-Day Kindergarten

by

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Abstract

The Ontario Ministry of Education’s guidelines for full-day kindergarten do not specifically mention naptime (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010). This study sought to address the issue of naptime in full-day kindergarten. Focus groups and interviews were conducted to understand the perspectives of eighteen parent and teacher participants. Seven of the participants were kindergarten teachers, nine were parents. Two participants qualified to be both teacher and parent.

The main findings from this study demonstrated that parents and teachers considered the following to be advantages of naptime: (1) a nap allows a break that enables students to focus on afternoon learning, (2) a nap allows the behaviour of children to improve (3) some children are young and require a nap, (4) teachers use naptime to complete preparation for the next lesson, and (5) since school is a long day for children, a nap is required to ensure students will remain awake in the afternoon. The disadvantages of kindergarten naptime were identified as: (1) an afternoon nap is not useful for all students, (2) it takes away from time devoted to academics, (3) it negatively affects bedtimes and, (4) managing naptime is problematic. Additionally, more appealing alternatives to a naptime session were suggested: (1) Down Time which refers to activities that are quiet without any expectation that children will sleep, (2) Rest Time which includes an option to sleep or participate in quiet, individual activities, and (3) Quiet Time which is a period of time dedicated to quiet, individual activities without any intention of sleeping. It was suggested that only Junior Kindergarten students need a chance to nap, since it will help them focus in the afternoon. A synthesis of my findings suggests that a 30-minute rest time could be incorporated in the full-day Junior Kindergarten, but not Senior Kindergarten, program at the midday point.
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Chapter 1:

Introduction

As part of Ontario’s new full-day kindergarten program, introduced in September 2010, two classroom instructors are responsible for the overall growth of their young students, the early childhood educator (E.C.E.) and the teacher. According to the Ontario Ministry of Education, the E.C.E.’s role is to focus on the student’s physical, cognitive, language, emotional, social and creative development and overall wellbeing. The teacher’s role is to focus on curriculum, assessment and evaluation, student learning, instruction, and the overall academic growth of the child. The E.C.E. assesses the child’s progress and then reports their assessment to the teacher, whose responsibility it is to communicate the student’s development to the parents or guardians. The teacher and E.C.E. work together to maintain a healthy learning environment, as established by the Ontario Ministry of Education’s document outlining the foundations for a healthy school (Healthy Schools, 2009). For instance, the Ministry of Education recognizes that physical health affects both the mental and emotional capabilities of all human beings and has placed importance on the physical lifestyle of students.

The promotion of full-day kindergarten in Ontario has allowed for more attention to be placed on the new kindergarten classroom ideals, curriculum, and set-up. Yet, the Full-Day Early Learning Kindergarten Program document for 2010-2011 overlooks the value of naptime even though sleep contributes to student physical health and academic performance (Curcio, Ferrara, & DeGennaro, 2006). While the Learning Kindergarten Program document acknowledges the importance of healthy eating and physical activity, and it does provide a link to the Foundations for a Healthy School webpage, there is still no mention of the importance of sleep as part of a routine for a healthy child. Since the information found on the Foundations for a Healthy
Schools webpage is directed to students in all grades, sleep is not mentioned since a nap or rest time does not occur during the school day for students in Grades 1 to 8. However, in kindergarten, there is often an opportunity for a nap or rest time. There is little direction from the Ministry of Education in Ontario concerning naptime.

**Purpose**

The guidelines within the full-day kindergarten documents (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010) include the recommendation for a designated ‘rest space’ where students can rest quietly and read (p. 36). However, these guidelines do not specifically mention naptime. This study sought to understand the perceptions of teachers and parents regarding naptime in full-day kindergarten.

**Rationale**

This study addressed the issue of naptime within full-day kindergarten. More specifically, my aim was to understand the perceptions of teachers and parents regarding naptime in full-day kindergarten. The following section draws from the current literature to demonstrate the importance of obtaining data that represents the views of teachers and parents.

Sleep loss is one of the most striking problems in modern society (Curcio et al., 2006). People willingly sacrifice sleep for other activities either because they do not recognize the importance of sleep and how it can affect behaviour, or because they do not care. A child’s sleep can be affected by daily routines, activities, and their peers (Ward et al., 2008). However Curcio et al. (2006) further explained that there is not a lot of data regarding the specific effects of inadequate sleep and daytime functioning in children. Thus, there is little information for parents to consult.
A significant issue for parents with respect to napping is that it may disrupt the evening bedtime routine (Ward, Gay, Anders, Alkon, & Lee, 2008). Parents are concerned that if their children sleep during the day, they will not sleep later in the evening at the set bedtime. In this study, I have collected data from parents and teachers to further explore the relationship between daytime and night time sleeping.

Teachers may find naptime challenging. Potential issues include the need to supervise both the children who nap and those who do not nap, along with setting up and packing up the naptime environment. There are many demands placed upon the teacher in order to have an effective naptime (Ward, 2006). In this study I have collected additional data from teachers about environments conducive to naptime as well as naptime alternatives.

Ravid and colleagues (2009) had parents in their study fill out questionnaires about sleep patterns. Parents reported that their children were fatigued, had low energy, and had a tendency to fall asleep during the daytime. However, parents were not asked if they thought an afternoon nap in school would be beneficial or what they did at home to remedy this problem. This study aimed to provide more information of this nature to assist teachers in deciding if naptime might be helpful in this scenario.

Teachers may perceive students who are tired to be “late, lazy, and disobedient” (Ravid et al., 2009). If children who lack sleep are viewed as having issues of poor character or as being in need of a change of attitude, perhaps it is the teacher’s responsibility to inquire about the students’ sleep schedule and to find ways to address any sleep deficit. This study sought teachers’ perspectives on this issue.

A number of studies indicate that children aged 2-5 years who nap for more than an hour during the day will go to bed later that evening (Komada, Asaoka, Abe, Matsuura, Kagimura,
Therefore, the question arises: is the daytime nap beneficial, or should children simply go to bed earlier in the evening? The views of teachers and parents regarding benefits and challenges associated with daytime napping need to be examined; do parents and teachers feel that a nap is necessary?

Research Questions

This study sought to understand kindergarten teachers’ and parents’ perceptions of naptime in full-day kindergarten. Three questions guided the research: What are the advantages and disadvantages of naptime? How do students respond to naptime? How should naptime be structured to meet students’ needs?

Thesis Overview

In this thesis the following chapters are organized as follows. In chapter two, the literature review provides an overview of studies regarding young children’s sleep. Chapter three outlines the methodology of this study, namely the data collection and analysis procedures. Chapter four presents the findings of my research. Chapter five identifies connections between the literature and findings, and discusses the implications and limitations of the study.
Chapter 2:
Literature Review

Sleep for Young Children

During the first five years of life, there are significant changes to sleep consolidation, maturation, and sleep habits. Siren-Tiusanen and Robinson (2001) explain that Rapid Eye Movement (REM) and Non-Rapid Eye Movement (NREM) are sleep cycles that are important in the daily rhythms of young children. REM sleep, referred to as active sleep, is a highly aroused state of brain activity. NREM sleep, referred to as quiet sleep, is a highly synchronized, inhibited, and recuperative sleep. Both cycles are important in order to achieve all the restorative functions of sleep. Specifically, Siren-Tiusanen and Robinson (2001) focused on the circadian rhythm, which is the daily changes between physiological and behavioural functions, including sleep-wake patterns. By six months old, the longest continuous sleep period for a child is approximately six hours, which, coincidentally, is the recommended amount of sleep necessary to help improve children’s academic achievement (Curcio et al., 2006; Golan, Shahar, Ravid, & Pillar, 2004; Ravid et al., 2009). Once a child is able to establish a sleep schedule that is more than six consecutive hours, it is important to establish a recurring sleep routine for healthy sleep patterns.

The National Sleep Foundation (2009) found that children aged 3-5 years have negative sleep patterns when they have a late bedtime, a parent present when the child falls asleep, sleep latency, short amounts of sleep, a television in the bedroom, and regular caffeine consumption. The Foundation recommends that children of all ages fall asleep with a regular bedtime routine, independently, before 9:00pm.
Napping vs. Non-Napping

The relationship between daytime napping and night time sleep in young children is not clear. Mindell, Meltzer, Carskadon, and Chervin (2009) found that naptime can positively or negatively affect night time sleep, depending on the child’s age. One of the comparisons in the study examined toddlers who napped and those who did not. The authors found that in toddlers, approximately 2-3 years old, not napping during the day was associated with poor sleep habits. Conversely, for kindergarten students, ages 4-5 years old, continuing to nap during the day was associated with disrupted night time.

Komada et al. (2012) also examined sleep patterns, including napping, in children aged 2-5 years old that napped for a minimum of one hour per day. The authors found that for a majority of children, the longer the daytime naps the children had, the later they went to bed that evening. Similarly, the study by Ward et al. (2008) examined sleep patterns for young children who napped for a 150-minute period at school. They found that the children who napped slept less at night than those who did not nap. Lam et al. (2011) found that for most children in their study, aged 3-5 years old, those that slept more at night, slept less during a daytime nap. Children who utilized the nap period during the day slept less at night.

It is important to note that less sleep at night might not necessarily adversely affect a child, as long as children are sleeping for an adequate amount of time over a 24-hour period. It may well be that the quality of a child’s sleep is better when sleep is divided between a nap during the day and night time sleep (Lam et al., 2011).

According to Siren-Tiusanen and Robinson (2001) the effectiveness of naps are dependent upon consistency, length, physical conditions, and the number of awakenings. Curcio et al. (2006) suggested that night time sleep at home might not be enough, since children are
frequently waking up during their sleep, waking up early, and going to bed late. These children may benefit from an extra chance to rest during the day.

Lam et al. (2011) identified some of the negative ramifications of napping when they examined the relationship between napping and cognitive functioning in 59 preschool-age children. Participants wore an actigraph for seven days and completed neuropsychological tests. Parents helped to track children’s moods and sleep patterns in a sleep diary. Additional tests included a number recall exam, a statue test to demonstrate inhibition and motor persistence, an auditory exam, and a behaviour assessment. The results of this study demonstrated that weekday napping was significantly and negatively correlated with vocabulary and auditory attention span while weekday night time sleep was positively correlated with vocabulary. Overall, the longer the length of a daytime nap, the poorer the cognitive performance.

Lam et al. (2011) also found that older children napped for shorter periods of time. For example, four year olds napped for approximately 68 minutes per day whereas five year olds napped for 21 minutes per day. The children who slept the most at night and the least during the day were the ones who performed better cognitively, had better vocabulary, and improved attention.

**Napping in Schools**

Ward et al. (2008) observed classroom naptime for three days. There was a block of 150 minutes reserved for sleeping and rest. Of the 52 children in the study, aged three to five years, 10% did not nap, 11.5% napped for one of the three days, 23% napped on two of the three days and 56% napped each day. The younger the children, the more likely they were to nap. Most children did nap when given the opportunity in an environment conducive to napping (Ward, 2008).
Poor Sleep

Several studies demonstrate that young children have frequent night time awakenings and breathing disorders that may impact sleep quality. Ravid et al. (2009) explained that sleep-disordered breathing is the most common sleep disturbance in childhood. It affects 1%-3% of children. The disorder is defined as snoring or obstructive sleep apnea. Curcio et al. (2006) explained further that sleep disturbances include wake patterns, sleep latencies, and night awakenings. Tikotzky and Sadeh (2001) found that during the first three years of life, 20% - 30% of children suffer from sleep disruptions, mainly difficulties falling asleep, and maintaining uninterrupted sleep throughout the night.

Sleep and Academic Achievement

As mentioned, Curcio et al. (2006) indicated that children require more than six hours a night of uninterrupted excellent quality sleep to help them achieve academic success. Sleep loss and poor sleeping habits are often associated with poor learning in students. The studies in which sleep was actively restricted showed a decrease in academic achievement, while studies that optimized sleep showed an improvement. Twenty-one percent of poor sleepers failed one or more years at school while only 11% of normal sleepers failed one or more years at school (Curcio et al., 2006).

Children with poor sleep hygiene have increased risk for behavioural and cognitive abnormalities (Ravid et al., 2009). A study conducted by Golan et al. (2004) found that 50% of the children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in their study had signs of sleep-disordered breathing and 15% had periodic limb movements. Golan et al. (2004) explained that sleepy children, unlike sleepy adults, tend to demonstrate hyperactivity and attention-deficit behaviour rather than excessive daytime somnolence. ADHD-like behaviour is also shown in this
study to be linked with poor cognition and poor school achievement. Therefore, if a student is exhibiting ADHD like behaviour, there is a chance they also have poor sleep habits.

Ravid et al. (2009) explained that every year in Israel, 7% - 15% of kindergarten-aged children fail to qualify for first grade. In the study authors reported that many of the children who were unable to qualify for first grade had a higher incidence of snoring, nocturnal arousals, and sleep apnea compared to their controls. Many of the children in the study suffered from long sleep latency, multiple arousals during sleep, poor sleep hygiene, insomnia, sleep-walking, nightmares, attention and hyperactivity problems, frequent mood swings, impulsivity, and difficulty following instructions (Ravid et al., 2009). An actigraph showed these children also had multiple awakenings during sleep and low sleep efficiency.

While poor sleep habits can affect academic performance, Ravid et al. (2009) demonstrated that if poor sleep is treated, academic achievement can soar. For example, Ravid et al., (2009) found that 40% of students with poor academic performance also had sleep-disordered breathing. When the breathing disorder was treated, academic performance improved.

Curcio et al. (2006) also found a connection between sleep and academic achievement. Students who woke up with little difficulty displayed high achievement motivation. The researchers noted that children who have difficulty waking up in the morning and require afternoon naps are fatigued during the day and often have low school achievement. Additionally, it was mentioned that children who wake up approximately 24 minutes earlier than other children in their class are another group of children who are fatigued during the day, display daytime sleepiness and difficulties in concentrating.
Brief Summary

At this point, it is helpful to summarize the above reviewed literature in terms of pros and cons of having naptime in full-day kindergarten.

**Pros.** Evidence suggests that daytime napping may have some advantages for young children. The three main benefits associated with napping are discussed here. First, children that are fatigued have a tendency to fall asleep during the daytime (Ravid et al., 2009), a nap could help these children cope with the school day more effectively. Second, children who utilize a nap period tend to require less night time sleep (Komada et al., 2012), there may be situations where children are not able to get adequate sleep at night (for example if children do not get home until late in the evening), in which case a daytime nap could make up for this deficit. Third, children may benefit from a nap or an extra chance to sleep if they have negative sleep patterns such as sleep disordered breathing, disrupted night time sleep, late bedtimes and early wake times (Curcio et al., 2006; Ravid et al., 2009; Tikotzky & Sadeh, 2001).

**Cons.** The literature dealing with children’s sleep patterns has provided many reasons that daytime napping is not beneficial and can be problematic for kindergarten-aged children. First, teachers find naptime challenging to set up (Ward et al., 2008). Second, if children sleep during the day, they may go to bed later at night, which disrupts bedtime routines. Often, the longer a nap lasts, the later the bedtime becomes (Komada et al., 2012; Lam et al., 2011; Shirakawa, & Inoue, 2012; Ward et al., 2008). Third, disrupted night time sleep due to daytime napping is found to be common in four to five-year-old children, which is the age of most kindergarten children (Mindell et al., 2009). Fourth, long daytime naps have been associated with poor cognitive performance (Lam et al., 2011). Finally, children who slept most of the night
and the least during the day had better vocabulary and a better attention span then the children who slept less at night and more during the day (Lam et al., 2011).

**Overall.** When considering napping in full-day kindergarten, it is important to remember the following points, which do not fit into a “pro” or “con” category. (1) It has been found that children need a minimum of six hours of consecutive sleep in order to maintain healthy daily rhythms. This minimum is necessary to improve academic achievement (Curcio et al., 2006; Golan, et al., 2004; Ravid et al., 2009). (2) Looking at children aged two to five years, the older the children became the less they slept during daytime naps (Ward, et al., 2008; Lam et al., 2011). (3) Some children have poor sleep habits which can effect academic achievement (Ravid et al., 2009). (4) Finally, kindergarten age children typically sleep 11-13 hours per night and most do not nap after five years of age (National Sleep Foundation, 2011).

**Theoretical Framework**

The following section is a list of eight propositions about the sleep habits of kindergarten-aged children.

1. A language-based bedtime routine is important and beneficial (Hale, Berger, LeBourgeois, & Brooks-Gunn, 2011).

2. If a child in kindergarten continues to nap during the day, it is associated with disrupted night time sleep, particularly a later bedtime (Komada et al., 2012).

3. For children aged three to five years, a late bedtime, a parent present when the child falls asleep, sleep latency, short amounts of sleep, a television in the bedroom, and regular caffeine consumption are associated with negative sleep patterns (Mindell et al., 2009).
4. Good sleep hygiene practices are associated with better sleep. Thus children of all ages should fall asleep with a regular bedtime routine, independently, before 9:00pm (Mindell et al., 2009).

5. Some young children have poor sleep habits (e.g., snoring, sleep apnea and night awakenings) as well as dysfunctional sleep patterns, which can affect their ability to function in school, and stay on the same academic level as the rest of the class (Curcio et al., 2006; Golan et al., 2004; Ravid et al., 2009; Tikotzky & Sadeh, 2001). If sleep quality is improved, academic success can be achieved.

6. Long, uninterrupted sleeps that are more than six and a half hours will be beneficial to children’s academic achievement (Curcio et al., 2006; Golan et al., 2004; Ravid et al., 2009).

7. If a daytime nap is longer than two hours for children aged two to five years, their corresponding bedtime is significantly later than a bedtime for children who do not nap, or who nap for over an hour but less than two hours (Komada et al., 2012).

8. Preschoolers typically sleep 11-13 hours per night and most do not nap after five years of age (National Sleep Foundation, 2011).

These propositions provided a framework that both informed my data collection and assisted with data analysis.
Chapter 3:
Methodology

Rationale for Qualitative Methodology

A qualitative approach was used to gain an understanding of parents’ and teachers’ perceptions of daytime napping within a full-day kindergarten program. Qualitative methods were deemed most appropriate based on the study’s interpretive, experiential, and situational characteristics (Stake 2010). This study was interpretive because it sought to represent and understand multiple perspectives and meanings. It was experiential because personal experience of the phenomenon was a pre-requisite for participation in this study, only parents and teachers directly involved with kindergarten children were approached to discuss their experiences of the kindergarten-napping phenomenon. The study was situational because the participants were influenced by surroundings contexts. Each family is unique, each kindergarten class is unique, and every student is different. There were varying sleep schedules that incorporated different bedtime, wake time, and naptime routines.

To learn about teacher and parent perceptions of naptime in full-day kindergarten, I asked open-ended questions to elicit detailed descriptions and explanations about views of positive and negative consequences of afternoon naps. This open-ended interview approach allowed me to obtain an “inside” view while also providing an opportunity to clarify information during a relaxed discussion. Since there was a need to alter questions based on family backgrounds, I needed a tool that allowed for flexibility in asking questions. Given these factors, it was appropriate for me to employ a standard qualitative research approach to guide my data collection and analysis and address my research questions.
Participants

Ethical clearance was received from the Queen’s General Research Ethics Board in May 2013. The search to find participants through personal connections began shortly thereafter. Teachers were asked to confirm that they were certified with a Bachelor of Education degree, Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) certification, and that they had taught full- or half day kindergarten for a minimum of two years. Educational assistants and other classroom workers such as early childhood educators (E.C.Es) were not asked to participate. While they may oversee naptime, the teacher is ultimately the person who decides how the classroom will be set up to incorporate various programs.

Teachers were recruited from various schools located in different communities in order to represent a range of teaching experiences. Of the participating teachers, the method for facilitating naptime within the classroom varied. For example, some classes had a designated rest corner, or a block of time dedicated to sleeping or relaxing, while others did not have a rest block at all. Interview questions were adjusted accordingly, based on how naptime was constructed within each unique classroom. A list of questions is provided in Appendices A, B, and C.

Every parent had a child in junior or senior kindergarten as of September 2012. All parents interviewed were from similar socioeconomic backgrounds, namely upper – middleclass, and all were part of two-parent families. However, there was a variety of schools, communities, and naptime experiences represented. Some of the parents had other children, and questions were adjusted accordingly to gather information about their experiences with those children and to compare various napping methods at home.

All of the participants were recruited using personal connections and/or snowball sampling (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Contact was through email and face-to-face
interaction. Letters of Information and Consent Forms (Appendices D and E) were provided and signed before the participants were included in the study.

Following participant consent, interviews and focus groups were organized according to availability. This study included eighteen participants total. Nine of the participants were female kindergarten teachers (Lucy, Brenda, Kacey, Mags, Aviva, Tzera, Lo-Lo, Summer and Adrianna). Seven were parents (Monica, Charlie, Justine, Tori, Kaptin American [which is a name for a parenting team of two participants], and Markette). All parent participants, with the exception of one father, were female. Two participants qualified to be both teacher and parent (Ashley Deer and Jenny) and questions were adjusted accordingly. The only parent focus group was the parenting team Kaptin America, with both the mother and father present, and a teacher focus group including Mags, Aviva, and Kacey who worked in the same school. It was easier to co-ordinate participant schedules on an individual basis, which resulted in more individual interviews than focus groups.

**Teacher Participant Backgrounds**

This section will review the educational background of the teaching participants. There is a focus on previous grades taught and how long they have been teaching kindergarten.

Summer is a Canadian educator who began teaching in private schools in a full-day kindergarten class. The following year at a different school she was asked to shadow a student in a JK classroom. She did not elaborate on the reasons the student needed a shadow. The next year she worked at a private Jewish school with two branches, and divided her year between the two. She found work in the York Region school board the following September and worked as a supply teacher for two years. In the third year of work with the same board, she was hired from April – June as a long-term occasional kindergarten teacher in Woodbridge. The following year
she worked at the same school teaching Grade 2 and then had a baby and was on maternity leave. When she was ready to return to work she was hired as a Grade 1 teacher. Summer also spent three years teaching a full-day summer kindergarten program at a daycare.

Adrianna is a Canadian teacher who has always worked in a full-day kindergarten classroom. After receiving her degree in education she received a position as a long-term occasional JK teacher at a Toronto private school in January until the following January. She had been hired early and was able to volunteer in the school during the first semester, before officially beginning her time as a teacher. For the remainder of the school year she worked as a shadow in a different Toronto private school. The next school year she began to work at a third private school in Toronto as a kindergarten teacher for the next two years. Adrianna is currently on maternity leave.

Tzera is a Canadian teacher. She graduated from York University in Toronto, Ontario as a teacher in 1992. She taught Grade 3 for nine years in a private school. In the tenth year, she had a baby and when she returned from maternity leave she taught SK for two and a half months, beginning her kindergarten teaching career. However, shortly after those brief months she took a leave of absence for a few years and eventually terminated her agreement with the school. She did not return to teaching for eight years and had three more children during that time. To have an income, she tutored privately for several years. When her youngest child was five years old, she began teaching afternoon kindergarten at a different private school in Toronto.

Kacey is a Canadian teacher who worked as a teaching assistant (TA) in a private school in Toronto, Ontario. Her job as a TA lasted for a year and a half and then she was hired to be a co-teacher for two years in a JK classroom. Currently she is working as a second-year lead teacher in a JK classroom with her own TA.
Mags is a Canadian teacher who graduated nine years ago from teachers college in April and volunteered at a public school until the end of June. The following September she worked at a daycare until she could find a position in the public schools. That January she was hired by a private school in Toronto, Ontario to teach SK. She has remained in this same school teaching the same grade ever since.

Aviva is a Canadian teacher who has worked in the same private school in Toronto, Ontario for eleven years. For the first five years she taught SK by herself and then for the next six years she worked with a TA. Her entire career has been teaching SK in the same school.

Brenda is a Canadian teacher who has worked in the same public school in Toronto, Ontario for nineteen years. She has taught dance, drama, physical education, Grade 1, Grade 7/8 and kindergarten. The majority of this time she worked as a half day afternoon kindergarten teacher, but there was a period of time when she worked full-time in a kindergarten classroom. During this time she had different students in the morning and afternoon. Currently, in the year 2013-2014, she is working in a full-day kindergarten classroom, meaning the same children are in her class five days a week from 8:45am – 3:15pm.

Lucy is a Canadian teacher who graduated from York University in Toronto, Ontario. She has been teaching for seventeen years and worked as a kindergarten teacher for eleven of those years. She has worked in three different schools since graduating York. One was a private school and two were public schools in York Region. She has never taught kindergarten with a scheduled nap time.

Lo-Lo is a Canadian teacher who graduated in 1994. Upon graduation she went to Mexico and taught Grade 3 for two years. When she came back to Canada she supply taught for two years in Ontario until she was hired to teach kindergarten in a half day class. The next year
she was hired to teach SK full time, but different children were enrolled in the afternoon and morning classes. The following year she taught an SK/Grade 1 split class and then SK classes for the next four years. Afterwards she taught alternate-day JK classes and then full time SK classes for another two years. Lo-Lo explained the local context of the school she worked in.

... [A]n inner city school where the majority of the families are from low-socioeconomic background [and live in] Low income housing units and so I would say half or ¾ of students come from homes within those units and there’s another bank of units just on the other side of the school. Behind the school there’s a beautiful sub-division with lots of blue-collar workers... there’s another word for it. Working-poor basically. We have a lot of military families and working-poor families and a lot of middle class working families so it’s quite a mixture for sure in the school. As far as sleep habits – a lot of the lower socio-economic income families have really limited resources and little financial resources and also limited understanding and resources in raising children so they definitely don’t have the same standard as a middle class family as far as routine and bedtime and those kinds of things.

The above description explains that Lo-Lo taught in a different area than some of the other teachers in this study. She was based in a low-socioeconomic area in Ontario. The majority of the other participants taught in a middle/upper class area in the Greater Toronto Area. Lo-Lo’s experiences and opinions added to the range of perspectives to the data collected.

Ashley Deer, who participated as a teacher and parent in this study, is a Canadian teacher. She received her undergraduate degree from Guelph University in child studies and her teaching degree shortly after. She has been teaching in public schools in the Toronto District School
Board for eleven years. For ten years, she taught kindergarten with slightly different afternoon or morning roles. The first year she taught an afternoon SK class. After that, any kindergarten class was a JK/SK split, combining students of both ages. One year she taught only half day kindergarten, and for another few years she taught kindergarten with prep-time for Grades 1 and 2 in the remainder of the day. One year Ashley Deer worked solely as a Grade 1 teacher. In 2012/2013 she taught her first year of full-day kindergarten. She is currently married with a five year old daughter.

Jenny is a Canadian teacher and a mother of two boys, aged three and five. She is originally from Montreal and is currently living with her husband and children in Toronto, Ontario. During her fifteen-year career, Jenny worked in both Toronto and Montreal, where she has primarily taught SK and Grade 1. Jenny noted that she has had a lot of different experiences. She began teaching kindergarten in Quebec. During her second year of teaching, Quebec implemented the full-day kindergarten program. As a result, there was a naptime in place. Jenny also taught Grade 1, Grade 2, and a kindergarten morning class with Grade 3 in the afternoons for three years. She has worked in private and public schools, in wealthy and inner-city schools, and in Jewish and Catholic schools. She is currently teaching full-day kindergarten at a private school in Toronto.

**Parent Participant Backgrounds**

This section will review the families of the parent participants, focusing on the ages and amount of children in each family.

Monica is a mother of two girls. Her oldest child was born on September 19, 2007 and her youngest daughter was born on April 7, 2006. She is married to her husband and their family is currently residing in Vaughan, Ontario.
Charlie and her husband have three children. Their oldest child is a five year-old girl, their middle child is a three-and-a-half year-old boy and their youngest child is a male eight-month old baby. They are currently residing in Toronto, Ontario.

Justine and her husband have four children. Her oldest child is a nine-year old boy, followed by a twin boy and girl who are both five years old. Their youngest child is two-and-a-half years old. The family is currently residing in Toronto, Ontario.

Tori and her husband have two sons. The older child is five years old and the youngest is three years old. Her oldest son has done the JK year twice, since he turned of age mid-year. Tori explained that even though he was academically ready for SK, she did not want her son to be the youngest in the class. Tori and her family are currently residing in Richmond Hill, Ontario.

Kaptin America refers to a husband and wife. They have two daughters, aged one-and-a-half and four-and-a-half, a nanny, and a cat living in their home in Richmond Hill, Ontario.

Markette and her husband have been married for ten years. They have three children, a daughter who is seven years old and twin boys who are five. They are currently residing in Vaughan, Ontario.

Data Collection

Interviews and Focus Groups

Data collection was conducted through the use of interviews and two focus groups. Participants were given the option to be part of a one-on-one interview or participate in a focus group. The focus groups consisted of one teacher-only group with three participants and one parent-only group consisting of a married couple. Parents were asked to describe bedtime and wake time routines for their child in kindergarten and if they saw value in daytime napping in
school. Teachers were asked about the construction of nap or rest within their classroom and about the necessity of naptime. For a full view of the questions see Appendices A, B, and C.

Crandall (1998) explains the advantages and purposes of interviews and focus groups. According to Crandall, in order to gain thorough insight into perspectives, it is necessary to acquire deep descriptive explanations. A good interviewer receives the story the informant is telling, and translates it into meaningful data. Since most interviews and focus groups are conducted face-to-face, an interviewer has the ability to seek additional information immediately. Through interviews, the interviewer is able to understand an “inside” view, and expand or clarify what is being said. Crandall (1998) explained that the purpose for holding interviews face-to-face is to receive new information and solve problems. Interviewers are able to receive crucial information without interrogating and are able to capture specifics about events and personal feelings or beliefs. Morgan (1996) suggests that combining focus groups and interviews in the same study can be advantageous. Often, one method is used to follow-up and check the conclusions of the data previously collected, since people may answer questions differently when they are alone and in a group. Thus, for the purposes of this study, the deeper understanding gained through interview and focus group data was more useful than pre-determined options chosen from questionnaires or surveys. It was decided that conducting interviews and focus groups with open-ended questions was the most effective way to find out the perspectives of teachers and parents on naptime in full-day kindergarten.

**Interviews.** This study used a semi-structured interview format with questions that were intentional and purposeful, yet open to detailed answers. Although the interviewer was equipped with a list of potential questions (Appendices A, B, and C), the interview process could be modified to allow for clarification and elaboration depending on the participant’s knowledge and
eagerness to share information. Follow-up questions were used as needed. Yin (2009) argued that one of the most important sources of any qualitative research is the interview. As listed above, Stake (2010) wrote that qualitative research is interpretive, experiential, and situational. Therefore, the interviews were slightly altered for the different participants. Thus, a semi-structured interview, which allows for this kind of flexibility, was the best fit to ask parents and teachers about their views on naptime in full-day kindergarten.

**Focus Groups.** MacMillan and Schumacher (2010) explained that focus groups are used to obtain a better understanding of a problem, concern, new program, or new idea. The new program being examined was the full-day kindergarten program and the concern was that the lack of scheduled naptime may be adversely affecting young children’s sleep patterns. Focus group members can inspire thoughts in each other through the articulation of various perceptions and ideas. Thus, focus groups were beneficial as a means to increase the quality and richness of data. The focus groups were small groups of two to three participants with people who have similar education, income and responsibility for their children. This is due to the fact that the group of two parents were married and the group of three teachers worked in the same school and had been working there for a minimum of five years. Thus, each group allowed maximum comfort for participants when discussing personal routines and opinions. With common traits, members of focus groups are able to think deeply about the topic and are in a better position to question each other and to arrive at a group result (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Each focus group session lasted for approximately 45 minutes. The interviewer facilitated the discussion by posing initial and periodic questions. There was no assistant present, since the interviewer was capable of reading expressions and handling recording devices alone.
Krueger and Casey (2000) explained that focus groups are important when the purpose of a study is one of the following: to find out a range of ideas and feelings about a topic; to understand differences in perspectives between groups or categories of people that are often related; to uncover factors that influence opinions, behaviour, or motivation; to provide a space for ideas to emerge from a group; and to suggest new ideas and build on the participant’s feedback (Krueger & Casey, 2000). This process applied to this study since it was necessary to gain an understanding of parent and teacher feelings and ideas about naptime in full-day kindergarten. As well, teachers and parents are groups that are related and seeking a common goal – success for their child/student. Yet, the interviewer opened up the possibility that there may have been different views on how to achieve this goal. I hoped to use the data from focus groups to find common themes within their views. I had hoped that this would provide a conducive environment where new ideas and suggestions would emerge when participants heard what others had to say. Thus, using focus groups to obtain data was fitting for this study. For the two small focus groups that were held, this was more evident in the teacher-only group. Their answers seemed to build on one another’s responses and yet, they were not afraid to politely point out a flaw in someone else’s argument.

**Sites of Data Collection**

Most interviews were conducted in privately booked rooms located in libraries or classrooms. Some interviews were held in community centre coffee shops in the participant’s residential area. One interview occurred in the participant’s home, one in my home, and one via Skype. All locations allowed for the privacy and safety of both myself and the participants. Privacy was secured at coffee shops since the shops were spacious and interview was conducted away from other customers. All interviews occurred on weeknights between 3:00pm and
9:00pm, or Sundays between 9:00am and 8:00pm. Interviews and focus groups were recorded and lasted for approximately 20-60 minutes. There was no need for any follow-up interviews for clarification.

**Data Management and Analysis**

During the collection process I began to note potential patterns. When the interview process was completed, I allowed for some distance between myself and the data which led to insights about the best way to organize the data (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010). I created a coding process drawing on Saldana’s (2008) methods. I then sorted the information into different sections (Yin, 2009) based on the role of the participant – namely, parent or teacher. The transcripts were separated into three sections: parents, teachers and parent/teacher. Then the teacher section was divided into three sections: teachers with nap, teachers without nap, and teachers who worked with both options.

The entire coding process was broken down into ten steps. (1) The interviews and focus groups were transcribed into separate Microsoft Word documents, all known as “MW1”. I transcribed the interviews verbatim, with the exception of words such as “like”, “um”, and “ah”. (2) I created a list of potential categories based on the different sets of questions and typed them into a separate Microsoft Word Document, known as “MW2”. (3) For each MW1, I copied and pasted the corresponding categories from MW2 into a third document, “MW3”. This document always had the participant’s pseudonym typed into the header, so it was repeated on every page. (4) I went through each transcript (MW1) and copied and pasted the appropriate sections under the categories in MW3. Each participant had their own MW1 and MW3 documents. (5) Each category was spaced to be the only category on that page. All of these documents were printed. (6) I cross-referenced the hardcopy documents by category and section into a large binder. (7)
Each category was separated into primary, moderate, and minor. (8) I began to analyze the primary and important categories and break down each category into several smaller codes. There were approximately fifteen codes for each category. Often, these codes were broken into smaller sub-codes. These became many of the sub-headings used in the finding sections. (9) I created charts with the corresponding code and name of participant. (10) I transformed the charts into descriptive paragraphs.

Validity and Trustworthiness

Many considerations were made throughout the data collection and analysis process to increase the trustworthiness of this study. According to Yin (2009), ensuring validity requires the researcher to obtain data from multiple sources and have the data reviewed by key informants. This study involved multiple data sources, totaling eighteen participants. The fact that many participants expressed similar views speaks to the validity of the data and emergent themes.

During the data collection process, both the parent and teacher participants were asked to clarify their responses if there was confusion. Some of the interview questions also allowed for overlap so that the participants would have the opportunity to add to or modify their original responses. Since the interviews were semi-structured, additional questions were added on a case-by-case basis to allow for any clarification. The process of keeping a separate Microsoft Word document during the data analysis process was based on the work of O’Shea (2012). This separate document was where comments were made regarding the transcripts and coding process. The comments included questions to consider, points of interest, and next steps. This reflexive process encouraged me to be transparent in my thinking and to articulate connections that I noticed within the data. This also allowed me to construct and reconstruct the process to ensure each participant’s data was adequately analyzed.
Chapter 4:
Findings

This study seeks to understand teachers’ and parents’ perceptions of naptime in full-day kindergarten. Three questions guided the research: What are the advantages and disadvantages of naptime? How do students respond to naptime? How should naptime be structured to meet students’ needs? The answers to these questions are explored in this chapter.

Advantages to Naptime

Parents and teachers were asked to identify the advantages to napping in full-day kindergarten. The main advantages mentioned by both groups was: (1) nap allowed a break to enable students to focus on afternoon learning, (2) a nap aided with behaviour, (3) some children were young and required a nap, (4) teachers used the naptime period to their advantage and, (5) school is a long day for children and a nap was helpful to ensure they could make it through the day. Each of these reasons is explained in detail in the paragraphs below. Please note that the parenting team, Kaptin America, chose not to list any advantages. They felt there were none and they would not recommend having a naptime in full-day kindergarten.

Classroom focus. Teachers/parents Jenny and Ashley Deer, and parents Tori, Charlie and Markette, each commented that children need time to rest and calm down. Charlie explained that a nap would “give kids a time to rest and decompress,” and allowed for a period of time without stimulation. Monica stated that naptime would allow children to wake up and be more focused in class. Ten participants mentioned that an advantage to naptime would be letting the children have a rest or break to be refreshed. Teachers Summer, Kacey, Mags, Lucy, and Tzera explained that this time would allow the children to focus better in the afternoon and become better learners. Teacher Aviva further commented that “children are over-programmed” and
“downtime is beneficial, because it teaches kids to relax.” Below are some additional responses from Kacey, Aviva and Mags during the focus group about the advantages of naptime.

Mags: Advantages are children wake up more refreshed, probably ready to focus and do work more...But what I’ve seen for a child who has a harder time, it’s a good way, once they are like done, not focusing, not getting what they need done anymore. Even often what I see in my nieces and nephews when they get very cranky and cry over any little thing, they get ruder, they don’t listen as well they nap and all of the sudden they wake up refreshed, beautiful listening child.

Aviva: I agree a child who naps is refreshed, especially if they didn’t have a good night’s sleep.

Kacey: I think in JK there’s more advantages then in SK, because they have had that year to grow and mature. I think the advantage is that they get time to separate themselves from sort of what’s gone on that morning to then re-energize and refresh themselves to get ready for the afternoon.

Teacher Summer stated that a nap was important because:

Afterwards they were calmer, easier to deal with, and we were able to do different activities and we were able to bring them outside or let them, you know, get back involved in things.

Summer appreciated that the children were able to continue being engaged in the programs. She felt their enthusiasm towards the activities was partially due to the children being refreshed after a rest time.

**Behaviour.** Both parents Ashley Deer and Charlie also felt having a naptime could positively impact children’s behaviour for the remainder of the day. Parent Charlie explained:
Sleep in general is crucial to everything about their lives. If they are not sleeping well and eating well then life is terrible. Everything is bad. My best advice that my mom gave me is that if kids are misbehaving they are either tired or hungry. There might be something else, but everything is worse if a child is tired or hungry. Sleep is always a very important thing in this house.

Five of the teachers also discussed the behaviour ramifications of having a naptime. Teachers Summer, Mags, Brenda, Adrianna, and Ashley each stated that the afternoon would have less behaviour issues. Mags explained that children would not be “cranky” and therefore would be “easier to deal with.” Summer noticed that after a nap, children were calmer and easier to manage. There were more activities she could do with the children when they were well rested. Brenda explained that students are often over stimulated within their own classroom. There are so many children in the one room that a nap helped break up the stimulation. Adrianna, who has a nap in her full-day JK classroom, explained the main advantage to naptime by saying:

I think it’s [rest time] a really good time for kids to just kind of take a break and for the volume to go down because a kindergarten classroom is a loud place and they kind of regroup and they do come back fresh. Especially for the kids who are sleeping. When you see what happens when they don’t sleep you see how necessary it is.

Adrianna felt strongly that a rest time helped her students stay calm throughout the day. She spoke about the day the children had no rest and emphasized that on that day she was reminded how crucial a rest time was.

**Age.** Parent Tori stated that an advantage to having a nap in school is for the few children who required time to sleep. Having a designated time for sleep is beneficial. She explained that some children needed a nap and were still able to sleep through the night with the
afternoon rest, like her almost-three-year-old son. For him, it was possible to be “too tired without a nap.” Tori would rather her children have a scheduled naptime than fall asleep on a different surface at random. Parent Markette mentioned that the children beginning JK at that age still needed to sleep and would need a nap. As well, four of the teachers brought up age as a factor for requiring a nap. Teacher Summer explained that when she taught JK, it was a half day and most students went home to nap to ensure they were well-rested. Teacher Lucy taught alternate JK classes, and had no naptime in her classroom. However, she is aware that some of her students nap on the days they are not in school. Therefore, she ensures there is an area set up with pillows and a carpet for those students who are tired during the day. Kacey, a JK teacher, participated in a focus group with two SK teachers. Kacey concluded that in JK there are more advantages than in SK:

SK students have had a year to grow, I think the advantage is that they get time to separate themselves from sort of what’s gone on that morning to then re-energize and refresh themselves to get ready for the afternoon.

Brenda recognized that for JK aged students, full-day kindergarten is a long day. For them, the nap would be advantageous. Based on previous experiences, Brenda predicted that some of her students would become very tired and would fall asleep midday without a nap:

...if they are really young and are just tired then they are going to fall asleep in the middle of the day, which definitely I’ve had in classes. Or they just get crazy and over stimulated and then they can’t learn either. I think it’s also a very long day for 3.5/4 year olds to be at school all day with so many kids crammed into one classroom, since there is no limit as to the number of kids so it’s just over stimulating and I think... we’ll see I’m not so sure it’s [full-day kindergarten] such a good idea. We’ll see.
At this point, Brenda had not yet taught in a full-day kindergarten program. The upcoming September 2013 would have marked her first school year as a full-day kindergarten teacher. Evidently, she had doubts about the program.

**Teacher prep time.** Jenny, who qualified to be both a teacher and parent for this study, explained that teachers need the naptime to provide a rest time for the teachers as well as the students. It is “a breather for everyone”. She explained that teachers need time when they are not required to focus on every child. Teachers are extremely busy and while they may have a half hour lunch break, they often use it for other purposes. Jenny used to photocopy or prepare her weekly lessons during that time and would end up eating in the classroom later. As she said:

I think it’s a breather for everyone. Teachers absolutely can use some down time, not focused on every single kid where you have a chance to breathe too, considering how intense a kindergarten experience is...when you are a kindergarten teacher, you are on the whole day... But I think most of the time I had a half an hour lunch and I would spend it photocopying or something, so typically I would eat my lunch in the classroom, hardly sitting down to eat a lunch. So I think it is great for the teacher, I think an absolute necessity for the kids so they can just turn down and can rest.

Parent Markette mentioned that naptime is an advantage for teachers since they have the time to plan “or whatever [they] need”. Teachers Summer and Lo-Lo reinforced this idea too. Teacher Summer explains that teachers and children needed that break from one another for “sanity and patience”. Teacher Lo-Lo explained that when her classroom had a naptime she used it for administrative tasks:
...[naptime would give] me time to do mail bags and check communication books and things like that when I was the only adult in the classroom. So I got to do the administrative stuff that I may not have had time for otherwise.

At the time, Lo-Lo was the only teacher in the room so naptime was the only time she had to complete these responsibilities.

**Long day/short evenings.** Both teacher/parents Jenny and Ashley Deer mentioned that full-day kindergarten is a long day. Jenny and teacher Kacey noted that some children arrive at school early and stay late in aftercare. These children needed a nap. Ashley Deer explained that if children participating in such a long day had a chance to sleep, it would make it easier for them to participate in early evening extra-curricular activities since they would be well-rested. Ashley Deer adds that evenings for parents would be “better” since their child would be well-rested and have a later bedtime:

> The children get rest, so it’s a better evening for the parents. It may cut down on behaviour in some of the children in the afternoon. Those are the main things.

Teacher Aviva feels that due to the long day, if a child didn’t have a good night’s sleep the night before, it would be beneficial for them to nap at school. Teacher Summer commented on the length of the day in terms of a parent-child relationship. She explained that having a midday nap would be advantageous for the parents, since there would be more time in the evening to develop a relationship with their child.

**Disadvantages to Napping**

When parents and teachers were asked to list some of the disadvantages of having naptime in full-day kindergarten they explained that: (1) an afternoon nap is not useful for all students, (2) time devoted to academics is minimized, (3) it negatively affects bedtimes and, (4)
managing naptime is problematic. These reasons are explained in more detail in the paragraphs below.

It is important to note that parent/teacher Jenny did not willingly state any disadvantages. She explained that nap is mostly advantageous because “...[the] program is only as good as the kids who are in it. So if they are tired, then what’s the point in doing more?” However, parents Markette, Charlie, and Justine each mentioned that while an afternoon nap is a disadvantage, none would be opposed to a “down time” or “quiet time” in the classroom. In fact, Markette says this “down time” does not need to be scheduled, just implicit in some of the daily activities like computers or story time.

**Not useful for all students.** Teachers Mags, Lo-Lo, Ashley Deer, Lucy, Tzera, and parents Monica and Tori each explained that one of the biggest faults with naptime is that not all the students required a nap. Mags said that beyond November, SK students had enough energy to complete their day. Parenting team Kaptin America confirmed this when they explained that their daughter needed time to adjust to her no-nap schedule. Once she passed those few adjustment weeks, she had enough energy to get through the day. Teacher Mags adds that she does not want her students to nap because:

- if a child is already in a good head space and able to focus and do his work and listen nicely, forcing them to nap could kind of a break the cycle. It will take them from a place where they are focusing to scattering their brain again, removing them from a focused state into more of a relaxed la de da one which is not ideal for a kid who can focus for long periods of time.

Mags is explaining that it is possible that if a child can focus without a nap, giving those students a chance to sleep will make them more tired and unable to focus in the afternoon.
Teacher Lo-Lo called napping a “waste of time,” since most of her students did not use it for rest. Teachers Tzera and Adrianna added that if there is going to be a naptime, there needs to be a plan to balance different needs of students. Adrianna elaborated on the disadvantages to naptime:

...when you’re forcing all of the kids to do the same thing. You can’t do that. I think the biggest disadvantage is for those kids who, even during the day when the volume is loud, even then they have a hard time containing their energy. Rest time is so difficult for them, so I’ve found the best is after you get to know your students and know what each one needs is to have a plan for each student and you really need a good plan. It might mean trying a lot of different things. It takes awhile to get to that plan. But he was still disruptive to a lot of other kids. Finally we found something.

Adrianna explained that for children who have a lot of energy, napping is difficult but having a plan of how to manage the energy has helped her naptime be successful. The plan will need to be altered, but is still crucial to naptime.

Parent Markette said that if her children were napping in kindergarten she would be concerned about the location of the nap. She would need to know if there are beds, if the students are sleeping on a carpet, or if there are shared items for naptime. She is concerned that sharing of pillows would spread lice faster.

Parenting team Kaptin America and parent Markette mention age as a factor when examining naptime. All acknowledge that the children beginning JK in September at 3 years of age are at a disadvantage since they are younger and most likely require a nap. Kaptin America explained that these children are in the same class as students who are 4.5 years old and would
have different needs. As well, Markette was concerned about the transition from SK to Grade 1. She said:

Just like how we look at kids who are 5 with a pacifier, there’s a time where kids need to drop their nap and move on. It’s a problem when an SK child is going into Grade 1 with a scheduled nap time.

Markette felt that a child should not be napping in Grade 1, and if there was a nap in SK it would make the transition to Grade 1 difficult.

Parent Charlie mentioned that some of her child’s friends have a naptime in their kindergarten class, but still need to sleep at home since the school naptime does not meet their needs.

**Loss of teaching time.** Teachers Summer, Brenda, Ashley Deer, Lucy, Tzera, and parents Markette, Monica and Charlie mentioned that naptime is disadvantageous due to the amount of time it uses. Students could miss out on academic opportunities since the nap could take up a large part of the afternoon. Teacher Ashley Deer was specifically told that nap is not part of the kindergarten curriculum, and therefore should not be in her classroom. Teacher Summer added that while she has heard people mention that naptime takes away from learning, she feels strongly that a nap only uses 30 - 45 minutes of the day, and that there is still time for instructional teaching. Parent Monica sends her children to a private school and stated that if the school had naptime, she would not pay to send her children to a school where a large portion of the afternoon is dedicated to sleeping instead of learning. Parent Markette is sure that teachers used the naptime to do planning, and wondered how naptime could have been better spent for the students.
Negatively affects bedtimes. Teachers Brenda, Ashley Deer, and Lucy each said that having a daytime nap in school can negatively alter the student’s bedtime routine. Teacher Brenda mentioned that parents often complain to her that their children should not sleep during the day, so they could ensure they would sleep at night. Teacher and parent Ashley Deer suggested some children are up as late as 11:00pm, due to many parents not enforcing a strict bedtime routine since their child is not tired at an appropriate bedtime. In fact, as Ashley Deer explained, this issue was often raised during parent-teacher interviews. She elaborated:

You would be surprised how many parents we are parenting at parent/teacher interviews, in November/December telling them 10, 11, 12:00 is not an appropriate bed time for 3/4/5 year olds. It’s amazed me as a teacher how many parents don’t understand how important sleep is for children. Some will say “he doesn’t want to stop watching TV” so I mean “unplug the television”. It is hard because you are kind of like, not there to parent or to you know, tell the parents what to do but sometimes they need encouragement to understand that this is hurting their child. Their child is falling asleep or not able to cope because they are not putting them to bed on time. They are not getting to school on time because they aren’t setting those routines. So they aren’t able to get up and go to school on time.

Ashley later explains that if her own daughter napped, a strong disadvantage would be for her child to become nap-dependent, making night time sleep more complicated if she misses an afternoon nap.

Teacher Lucy explained that while some children are awake until 1:00am with a nap, others can have a two hour midday nap and still have a full night time sleep. Parents Markette, Kaptin America, Justine, and Tori expressed their concern that an afternoon nap would be
disadvantageous since it would, as Markette said, “throw off [the children’s] nightly routine.”

Markette explained that children who napped during the day will not be as tired when they go home and would have a later bedtime. Tori’s son would be awake all night if he napped in the afternoon. Parenting team Kaptin America said that with a nap their daughter would be awake until 10:00pm at night. Justine said that is not an ideal situation for many reasons, and that the evening time after 8:30pm is designated for her and her husband. They need that time together after their four children are asleep.

**Problems managing naptime.** Teacher Mags began by explaining that in her SK class they have a half hour “chill time” which is difficult enough to keep the children quiet, let alone have them resting and potentially sleeping. She states that “they wouldn’t nap. It’s hard enough already. We have chill time now and it’s hard enough to keep them chill for half an hour let alone resting and potentially sleeping.”

Teacher Adrianna had a naptime in her JK class, but she was against forcing each child to sleep. She explained that each student had different expectations for that period. Some played quiet games, others read, some slept. Parent Tori would agree with this plan since her two sons each have different needs for an afternoon nap. However, teacher Lucy said that even providing puzzles and books would not hold the attention of her students for an hour-long nap period.

Parent Markette is worried that children will notice the sleeping habits of others, like thumb sucking, and would tease them. Parent/teacher Ashley Deer suggested that children need different environments to sleep in, and the classroom set up may not be beneficial for each student. Furthermore, Ashley Deer explained there is potential for conflict between administration, teachers and parents.
...Not all will nap. Based on environment or because they don’t need it or because they don’t want to. Some kids just decided they don’t need it whether they do or not. There can be a lot of pressure in kindergarten with the academics and that. [Sometimes] We are being told that naptime is part of the program. We can be sensitive to that and accommodate them. But [sometimes] we have been instructed not to have a naptime [by others]. They miss out on academic opportunities and the kids can be up later at night, sometimes up till 10 or 11.

The conflict Ashley Deer raises is that at times teachers are asked to let a child sleep while another person in the child’s life does not agree. For her, managing naptime can become difficult if there are mixed messages.

**Is Naptime Worthwhile?**

Participants described a variety of responses to naptime. Some participants perceived that naptime was not necessary. Others suggested quiet time was an alternative, while others perceived that naptime was necessary. Additionally, this section was originally intended to answer the question, ‘how do students respond to naptime?’ However, the data received was grouped according to necessity and begged the question, is naptime perceived to be worthwhile.

**Not necessary.** Teachers Lo-Lo and Lucy explained that in their view a nap period was not necessary since the majority of students did not utilize that time. Often in Lo-Lo’s classroom there were less than five students sleeping and it was usually because they were ill. Teachers Mags, Lucy, and Aviva agreed that in full-day SK, a nap may only be useful in September and October. For Mags and Aviva, even for a half-hour “chill time” in their SK classes provided difficulty. It was challenging to simultaneously keep the children engaged, quiet, and calm.
Parent Markette was one of the only parents who stated outright that she preferred if her twins did not nap in school. She wanted as much time as possible devoted to learning, and no nap ensured that her children would go to bed earlier at night. Parenting team Kaptin America had their daughter in alternate full-day kindergarten and a home daycare. She was the only child in her half day alternate daycare that napped in the afternoons, which meant she missed out on other programs the class parents organized. Even though their daughter napped often, they still would not like to have a naptime in full-day kindergarten. Parent Monica explained that for her daughter Joey, sleeping is a constant struggle. Even though there was no nap at school, Monica would often have to take Joey home from private school for a nap, since Joey was so tired her behaviour was aggressive towards other children. Yet, as was the case with Kaptin America, she still does not want a nap in school and would never pay for a program that had naptime.

Ashley Deer, who qualified to be both a parent and teacher for this study commented that when her daughter did not nap in school she shut down, was cranky, and had temper tantrums when arriving home after school. She would fall asleep by 7:00pm and always napped on Saturday afternoons for 2-3 hours, as if to catch up on missed sleep from the week. However, as a teacher, she was not sure if a naptime was necessary. She knew some students would benefit but not all. She did note that when she taught afternoon kindergarten, there were more behaviour issues amongst the students. Unfortunately, the children who napped had no place dedicated to sleep so Ashley Deer created a barricade surrounding the sleeping child. With the barricade, none of the other students were able to disturb the sleeping child. Currently, she has ordered six or seven mats for her full-day class “just in case.”
**Quiet time as an alternative.** When teachers were asked about student reactions to naptime, Teachers Kacey, Brenda, Jenny, and Summer, and parents Charlie and Tori, focused on the fact that while some students do utilize a nap period, not every child needs to sleep.

Teacher Kacey said that in JK there does not have to be a formal naptime, but would appreciate the time for a casual rest. Teacher Brenda did not think naptime was necessary, but preferred to provide her students with an area in the classroom they can choose to visit if they are in need of some quiet time. Parent and Teacher Jenny felt that a “down time” was necessary during the day but did not feel strongly that it had to be a formal time dedicated to only sleeping. Teacher Summer insisted that all her students benefitted from a quiet time after lunch. Some would sleep and some would read a book. If the sleeping children slept longer than the allotted quiet time, Summer would allow them to sleep as long as they needed to.

Teacher Kacey already had a combined nap/quiet time in her class and added that it was nice for her JK students to have their blanket during this time, even though most students were not asleep. Teachers Adrianna and Summer both adjusted their nap period to meet each child’s needs. In Adrianna’s classroom, if a child did not sleep she provided blocks, books, colouring, and Lego for them to have for quiet time. She also noticed that often the children with ADHD found naptime difficult, so those children assisted teachers with prep to keep busy. Jenny further explained that the naptime only had sleeping children until spring. By then it had naturally evolved into quiet time with reading books on blankets.

Both parents Charlie and Tori felt their children benefitted more from a quiet time. In Tori’s son’s classroom, there was a scheduled rest time for Lego and books, while Charlie’s daughter had a combined rest and naptime where the children could have quiet activities on their mat if they did not want to sleep.
**Necessary.** Teacher Adrianna stated outwardly that nap is necessary. She explained that naptime is only successful if it is facilitated properly with clear expectations. She added, however, that a naptime should “never be forced.” Each child needed something different to succeed and Adrianna felt strongly that she did meet the individual needs. For example, Adrianna believed in taking time each day to rest, but not necessarily to sleep. For some children who did not need time to sleep, she still strongly believed that they required time to take a break from the classroom activities and have a chance to decompress. Therefore, the actual sleeping part of nap is “never forced” but strongly encouraged. The two quotes below elaborate Adrianna’s feelings towards naptime necessity.

I think the best way to answer is to think of a time that we missed rest time... we actually went on a field trip in the morning. I’m not sure exactly what happened but we missed our rest time and had something right after so we couldn’t even make up for it. And I tell you – even the kids who didn’t rest [sleep] at rest time were exhausted. Just they were wild, I remember it was a really exhausting day for everybody. Just shutting the lights for a little bit - I think it affects the kids. Giving them that break.

Like I would never say 100% necessary or 100% not. And I think it really depends on the group of kids that year. It’s about giving each child what they need. So some kids absolutely 100% need it and some don’t and you can’t force it. I really don’t ever want to be like “stay on your mat, close your eyes, rest”.

Summer also strongly declared that naptime is essential to a full-day kindergarten program. In fact, she acknowledged that the administration at her school had not allotted time for a nap, so the teachers at her school enforced it themselves. She would like each kindergarten
classroom to have a 30-45 minute naptime, especially at the beginning of the year, since those months are often a rough adjustment. Below is a direct quote elaborating on her feelings about the necessity of naptime.

Basically we noticed, what I didn’t mention is in the summer times for like 3 summer times in row I worked at a daycare and I taught the Kindergarten program all three summers. So in all of the programs I taught I noticed usually after lunch time, all the kids need a little bit of a quiet time. We would call it quiet time, some kids would use that time just for quietly reading a book and others would literally fall asleep. And if they did fall asleep we would let them sleep for a period of time because their bodies needed it. I strongly believe that it should be put back into Kindergarten. I don’t think more than half hour/45 min is necessary, especially now that the government is pushing full-day kindergarten. But we definitely needed that time. Afterwards they were calmer, easier to deal with, and we were able to do different activities and we were able to bring them outside or let them do you know, get back involved in things. Especially at the beginning of the year you had certain JKs who were so little they would fall asleep in their lunch, some of them were so tired because they were used to getting a nap in daycare. It’s a rough adjustment at the beginning of the year.

I feel like it’s necessary and I think it’s a big mistake that it’s not being enforced because like I said, kids are literally falling asleep mid activity, in their food, you try to do a circle time after lunch and they are collapsing on the carpet. I mean a child under the age of six, their body naturally needs 14 hours of sleep a day. Some of these kids don’t go to bed until later at night and parents don’t enforce that so we in the morning see the tiredness and then throughout the day it gets worse and worse. When it was children who were half
day a lot of them would go home and have a nap. Now it’s full-day and they are there 8:00am – 3:00pm and sometimes later and they are exhausted. So yes, I think it is necessary for their bodies, development and for them just to be able to learn.

Jenny, who qualified to be both a parent and teacher in this study, stated:

as a teacher I always valued the idea that [they are] really little people and that they needed to have some sort of shut down during the day. Whether they slept or not, it really wasn’t a factor. It was just the idea that it was nothing planned, it was quiet. Given the opportunity to lie down, a child might fall asleep. Maybe they didn’t sleep well the night before. Maybe a cranky kid that morning might get revitalized by a nap. I always felt strongly about it [naptime] but I don’t know, it felt like a very natural thing to happen to kids.

When asked to comment on naptime as a parent, Jenny explained that for a while her son has been the only child in his class who sometimes napped, but only on weekends. Jenny let him decide if he was tired enough to actually sleep, but usually insisted on a “down time” where he sat quietly with a book, iPad or watched a movie. Jenny explained that in his classroom there was a time dedicated to napping or relaxing where students brought stuffed animals and lay down on top of a blanket. She felt the children were squished together on the carpet. While this may not have been conducive to sleeping, she was still grateful for the quiet time.

**Which Students Need to Nap and Why?**

Many teachers focused on the few students who utilized a nap period and explained that while it was a minimal amount of students, they were usually in JK and usually tired due to outside complications.
**JK students.** Teachers Lucy, Summer, Lo-Lo, Kacey, Jenny, Ashley Deer, and Tzera mentioned that JK students required time to rest and SK students did not. Lucy explained that in JK, students only made use of a nap period until October and napping was not an issue in SK. Lucy and Summer added that during the first few months of school, there were some JK students who were so tired they fell asleep in their lunch. The adjustment for JK students took more time since, as Kacey and Summer mentioned, many JK students were in programs the year before JK and had a nap. Therefore, the half hour transition “rest time” was beneficial. Summer focused on the full-day program lasting approximately seven hours. She taught children who were exhausted in a full-day program, especially the children who used to have an afternoon nap at home.

Parent Charlie stated that she did not know any children who are napping in SK, when they were 5 or 5.5 years old. She understood that in JK it is difficult to find a balance between the children who slept and who do not, especially if JK students needed a quiet environment. Charlie added that for her children she was “lucky that naps [were] gone by the time they [were] going into JK” since she knows JK students often required that time to sleep. Parent Monica would allow JK students a quiet time if they are riled up and need to calm down, but would limit how often and how long it occurs for. She strongly felt that in JK there should be no nap.

Parenting team Kaptin America focused on how age is a large factor when deciding on naptime. They drew attention to the fact that JK students can be as young as 3 years old and in a JK/SK split class, some students are as old as 6. That is a large gap between children, and while there are many benefits, in terms of sleep schedule, children within those years are rarely following the exact same sleep schedule. Parent Markette mentioned that when JK and SK students are in the same class, their age complicates the teacher’s decision:
Back to the 3 year old. They are starting kindergarten because they don’t turn 4 till December 31, youngest kid in your class. These kids need a nap. Sometimes they fall asleep on the carpet or wherever. They just can’t fight it. They give up and pass out...By 2:00 if you aren’t doing something active with the kids, they are done. I’ve seen a few of them fall asleep. As a teacher, do you wake them up? They shouldn’t be sleeping at school. But maybe they were up late or their little bodies need it. I guess it would be a personal decision of the teacher...because yes there’s a JK who is three, but there could be an SK turning six and that kid doesn’t need a nap and shouldn’t be having a nap.

Both Kacey and Lo-Lo mentioned that parents inquired about a nap or quiet time, and were usually appreciative to have some time devoted to relaxation. Although for Kacey, she found parents were relieved that children did not have to sleep whereas for Lucy, parents focused on how tired their JK children were when leaving school. Often parents mentioned that their children were falling asleep when leaving school, causing later bedtime, and complicating wake times.

**Afternoon focus.** Teachers Lo-Lo, Kacey, and Lucy described their perspective that students needed the nap to help them focus in the afternoon. To allow those students to be successful without sleep, Ashley Deer, Lucy, and Lo-Lo set up their days to have mornings mostly devoted to academics and the afternoons less structured and including outdoor time, drama, art or “free choice play” to allow the children to learn through play. In the quote below Lucy explained about the structure of her classroom and the necessity for a break.

...by the afternoon, it’s a lot of play time because they just can’t focus. A lot of them on the carpet are fidgeting and can’t sit still and you can see that they are exhausted. I don’t think they would actually fall asleep at a naptime, but certainly a quiet time would be
helpful. It would help to focus and get more learning done in the afternoon. Now our school functions with 60% of the day in the morning and only 40% in the afternoon. So we start off at 9:00 and lunch is at 12:30 so after lunch is already 1:30 and the kids pack up to leave at 3. So if we had a naptime for 45 minutes – hour in the afternoon, it would take away our afternoon. Then it would be 2:30 when they are done and there’s no afternoon. I think a half hour quiet time would be the most advantageous. There are a few kids who are really tired so for them just to have a carpeted area and pillows and stuff like that, then they should be obviously allowed to do that. Some of them are really tired.

Teacher Tzera taught an afternoon kindergarten program, and explained that when a child is tired she would let them put their heads down at a table for ten minutes since she was unable to have a loosely structured program. Teaching the entire kindergarten curriculum in a half day program is already complicated. Summer said that after a nap, her students are always calmer and more agreeable. She found she was able to run many different activities in the afternoon, due to her students having a nap. Furthermore, she taught an afternoon lesson where the children did not have a break, and some students would collapse from exhaustion on the carpet.

**Outside complications.** When teacher Lo-Lo had naptime in her classroom, she spoke of two girls who had a difficult home life and a lack of regular bedtime. These children required the nap period and often slept. Additionally, students who had a longer day than others since they participated in after-school programs often made use of the afternoon nap. In teacher Kacey’s JK classroom, children were given the option to sleep or to have quiet time. Often only two students would fall asleep and usually due to irregular circumstances, making it a long week for the children. Teacher Jenny could tell which JK students would use the nap period if they arrived at school and were cranky. Usually after they slept, they were refreshed. Teacher Summer pointed
out that “Some of these kids don’t go to bed until later at night and parents don’t enforce that [earlier bedtime] so we in the morning see the tiredness and then throughout the day it gets worse and worse.” This is something teachers do not have control over but are able to help rectify by providing the children with an additional chance to rest.

**Alternate day schedule.** The teachers who did not have naptime or rest time in their full-day kindergarten class commented on their experiences surrounding nap. Lucy and Brenda spoke of the trouble they had with parents handling the alternate day schedule. Often, children are sleeping in one school and not the other. The inconsistency disrupted bedtimes, allowing children to be awake until midnight and then waking up early for school the next morning. Brenda added that some of the children stay at school until 6:00pm without a nap. This is a long day for them, which they expressed not by looking tired, but by being hyperactive. Similarly, this statement can be confirmed by Golan et al. (2004) who explained that children, unlike sleepy adults, tended to demonstrate hyperactivity and attention-deficit behaviour rather than excessive daytime somnolence.

**How Should Naptime Be Structured to Meets Students’ Needs?**

Participants provided a variety of perspectives regarding the best way to structure napping at school.

**Down Time.** *Down Time* refers to activities that are quiet without any expectation that children will sleep. Teachers Mags and Aviva were the only participants interested in Down Time and call it “chill time”. For them, chill time is already challenging since asking their students to be quiet and amused for half an hour is not an easy task. They usually take out Lego, books, and blocks for the children.
Naptime. *Naptime* involves the majority of students sleeping. Overall, the idea of a period dedicated entirely to sleeping was not well-received. Teacher Jenny explained that it could not possibly meet every child’s needs. Parent Monica recognized that a full REM cycle would not be obtained and parenting team Kaptin America stated that to have a proper naptime, an hour and a half would have to be devoted to sleeping each day.

Rest Time. *Rest Time* includes an option to sleep or participate in quiet, individual activities. As a parent, Jenny preferred that her son has a rest time where he can lay on a blanket and decide if he would like to sleep. Parent Charlie recognized that originally in her daughter’s class, there was a naptime but none of the children slept so it became rest time. She describes the naptime in the quote below.

...full-day JK and they don’t have nap time. They have rest hour. Last year the teacher said it started out as naptime, but none of the kids were napping so they just turned it into rest hour when the lights are low and they have to be on their mats when they can read or do something quiet. I was fine with it because we took her nap away when she was probably 4. It was getting hard to put her to sleep, since they go to sleep at night early. So it was hard for us to put her to sleep because she was napping.

Although, none of the children needed to sleep, if a child had required a nap they still would have been able to since they had dimmed lights, a mat and quiet activities.

Teacher Kacey acknowledged that rest time in her classroom was necessary to help JK students get through the long day. Both teachers Adrianna and Summer explained that their rest time involves children sleeping or colouring and reading. Summer’s rest time period lasts for 15 minutes to half an hour with the lights off. Parenting team Kaptin America explained that the only way a rest time can be successful is with separate classrooms for nappers and non-nappers.
There is a large gap between ages in most JK/SK split classes, thus different rooms are necessary for a successful rest time.

**Quiet Time.** *Quiet Time* is a period of time dedicated to quiet, individual activities without any intention of sleeping. Parents Charlie, Monica, and Kaptin America and teachers Lucy and Tzera each speak favourably about having a time to relax. Tzera and Monica see this period lasting 10-15 minutes, and only happening sporadically when the children are riled up and need to calm down. Monica would use classical music for the quiet children to lie down and listen to. Tzera would let the children rest on a mat but provide books and colouring pages. Lucy would allow a quiet time period to last for half an hour after an hour combined lunch and recess period. This would ensure the children were refreshed for the afternoon. Parenting team Kaptin America would allow a quiet time to last for up to 45 minutes. Finally, Charlie said that a quiet time might be preferable to a rest time since perhaps the option of sleep is not helpful. Ideally, Charlie would like a quiet time where children decompress and take a break, especially if combined with lunch time.

When asked which type of relaxation period was most preferable, an equal amount of participants favoured quiet time and rest time. Most could see the advantages to having some form of quiet or rest time within a full-day kindergarten classroom, as opposed to a naptime. The solution from most was to separate the students based on needs, as discussed below.

Uniquely, Jenny saw her JK class use each of the three options. In each phase, classroom lights were turned off and classical music played. In the quotes below, Jenny used the terms “down time” and “rest time” and “quiet time” differently than the definitions I have used. However, the overall meaning is essentially the same.
J: The kids had lunch, story time and then they got their blanket and lay down. Some of these kids, at this point, had already been in full-day JK...and had a nap time in JK and most slept. I would say September until Christmas most fell asleep or were so quiet that it was a non-issue. Starting in January you had kids who didn’t need it and the kids who needed some down time needed down time and not necessarily sleep.

I: What did you do from January – June when the kids didn’t need to sleep?

J: We always had a rest time, the kids who didn’t rest had to pick 2 or 3 books and sit quietly and look at books. The kids who couldn’t just sit quietly had a colouring table where they could just sit and draw but it was certainly half an hour to 40 min of just silence in the room, classical music playing, light off. Us sitting in the dark kind of thing for us to rest.

...we always encouraged that quiet time and why you had it and want to give your body a rest and have an afternoon full of busy things to do and everybody needed to take time to be quiet to take those things again. I would say by the Spring, across the board, we didn’t really have it the same time or the same kind of atmosphere in the classroom. It was like, get a book, go to your blanket. Most kids didn’t even lie down anymore. They lay down or lay on their tummys and read a book but it was still half an hour of this quiet time.

From September to December the majority of her students were asleep for naptime. Come January, some students slept while others used the time to relax, colour and read books if they were awake. Naptime naturally progressed into rest time. By spring time, there were fewer sleepers and more readers and the half hour became quiet time. By this point, most students were
not even lying down but were sitting up with books or laying on their stomachs. This way, most of the children were naturally weaned off naps but still had time to relax during the day.

**Centre.** Parent Markette had an innovative idea to have a centre in the room the children can decide if they would like to visit. This notion is along the lines of play based learning, where students pick which area of the classroom they would like to visit. Markette said that the area for rest should be a tent with pillows and blankets, washed often, and connected to learning. For example, if there was a unit about hibernation, teachers could transform the tent into a bear cave. This would allow for learning and resting to take place simultaneously. If a child happens to fall asleep, they would be able to do so with few distractions.

**Ideal Naptime**

When parents and teachers were asked what their ideal naptime would be in a full-day kindergarten classroom, most participants were in favour of a rest time. This is the way most participants would structure naptime in order to meet students’ needs. The rest time was mentioned in regards to separating areas for sleepers and non-sleepers, and JK students requiring more rest time then SK students.

**Rest time guidelines.** Teachers Jenny, Brenda, and Adrianna acknowledged that parents need to be involved with the rest or naptime decision. Adrianna stated that it is important for a teacher, not the assistant, to be present during rest time, since parents asked many questions about the procedure. She said:

I think teachers should be there, because you learn a lot about your students in the rest times and if you make an individual plan teachers absolutely need to be there. Also I find since it’s a really popular topic with parents since they are always asking you, you need to know what they are like at rest time. So I think the teachers should be there.
Additionally, Adrianna believed this is a time when you really got to know your students.

Jenny agreed that teachers needed to be present, but added that they need to be respectful of the rest time and not talk or do noisy activities. Brenda explained that during rest time, parents should be asked if they want their child to sleep or not. That way, as Jenny explained, parents understood exactly what happened during a rest time and could send their children to school with appropriate items to be sleeping. Jenny added that all personal belongings, such as blankets and pillows, need to be sent home often to be cleaned and prevent the spread of lice.

Concerning the duration and time of day for rest time to take place, four participants (Tzera, Lisa, Ashley Deer, and Adrianna) would prefer the students first have lunch, then recess, and then rest time. Three participants (Kacey, Lo-Lo, and Summer) would ideally have naptime immediately after lunch. The duration was suggested at 15-20 minutes by Summer and Lo-Lo, 30 minutes from Lisa and Kacey, 45 minutes for Adrianna and Kaptin America for rest time, an hour for Brenda or an hour and a half for the sleeping children from Ashley Deer and Kaptin America.

**Separate areas.** Teachers Lisa, Ashley Deer, Brenda, Adrianna, Kacey, Aviva, Lo-Lo, and Summer and parents Charlie, Kaptin America, and Justine each discussed separating the sleepers and non-sleepers. Sleeping would be optional and in either separate classrooms or sectioned off areas in a large classroom. Summer added that the children sleeping would have a longer time to nap than the children who are participating in quiet activities. Non-sleepers would busy themselves with quiet activities, described by nearly every participant as story books, puzzles, and colouring. The entire classroom would have dimmed lights, quiet music, and in Lisa, Jenny, Lo-Lo, and Monica’s ideal classroom – beds/cots. For Adrianna, each child would
begin on their mat and then in the last ten minutes the children participating in quiet activities would be allowed to go to the classroom tables to use other educational toys.

Aviva and Kacey raised the issue that children might not be able to decide for themselves what they need to do, and would just copy their friends, making rest time not the best use of time. In their words:

Aviva: I don’t think the child who wants to rest would do it. I don’t think a lot of kids don’t have enough inner I guess self-regulation to be able to not copy their friends who aren’t resting, even though they are falling asleep and are tired.

Kacey: I would structure it similar to the way we would have it now. Ideally there would be a bigger space where we would have stations. One area is looking at a book, one area is listening to music or to a story and then maybe one area is doing a quiet activity or puzzle. In the same classroom. But ideally, if the classroom was a bit larger we could sort of have a sectioned off area. That being said, separate classrooms would be great but I think it’s hard to have kids regulate themselves and be able to separate themselves from what their friends are doing and that kind of thing. At the end of the day, after I tried a few things, it would probably look similar to what I have currently in my classroom.

While this is an important issue, there is a solution. Brenda suggested asking parents to decide if their child should sleep during the day. This would remove any peer pressure from other students to copy their actions. It would no longer be the child’s choice.

**Different approaches.** Teacher Tzera feels that nap or any sort of break is unnecessary for any kindergarten classroom. However, if there is a child who required some time to relax, she would set up a mini tent where the child could take a break. Parent Markette built on this idea and adds that the tent should have an educational component. In an ideal nap setting, parent
Charlie preferred if each sleeping student had their own mini tent, to keep any resting habits private. Specifically, one student in her daughter’s class was masturbating, which influenced the other children’s behaviour.

I mean in an ideal world, I’d like to have little pods like an egg, a self contained unit for each kid to go into. In an ideal world, if I had all the money. Kids were masturbating in the day care. So privacy wise – it would be a good thing. [My daughter] was starting to do it and the teacher brought it to our attention and said it’s not something we would discourage or encourage because sexuality is very touchy, no pun intended. But then I asked her how she came about doing this and she said she saw the boy sleeping next to her do it and so she started. I was blown away because at that time she was 3, 3.5 and she was little. I don’t know if it happens in the other classes but that’s where the pods come from.

Charlie is the only parent who mentioned the pods as a result of the need for privacy. However, Markette did mention that a disadvantage to naptime would be if a child had an unfortunate habit that other children teased him/her about. She focused on thumb-sucking:

What if you didn’t nap and your child was the one making noise or the one who sucked his thumb? Now they are making fun of him because during nap time he sucked his thumb the whole time he’s a baby.

Teacher Mags would have quiet time at the end of the day, when she feels the students are ready to leave and have absorbed the maximum amount of information they can. Parent Tori did not want any rest break on a daily basis, but would increase play time to balance out relaxation needs. Finally, parent Monica would prefer if her daughter’s class had quiet time as needed.
Does Nap Affect Nightly Sleep?

Not surprisingly, participants had differing responses to this question. The responses are organized into three categories: Yes, no, and sometimes. I have included a description of each child’s sleep routine to provide context for the responses.

Yes, napping affects nightly sleep.

Ashley Deer. Ashley Deer described her daughter’s current sleep routine as waking up anytime between 5:20 – 7am, most often between 6:30 – 7am. At that time she uses the washroom, dresses, eats breakfast and sometimes watches television. At night, she decides what clothes to wear for the next day, has a bath, brushes teeth, reads a story, and plays quiet music as she falls asleep at 7:00pm. Her nap was taken away in September/October of JK and Ashley Deer found that without afternoon sleep, her daughter was very cranky in the evenings and needed to go to bed early. As well, her ability to cope decreased in the afternoons. On the days where Ashley Deer requires her daughter to stay up later, usually on Fridays, she allows her to nap. Every Saturday her daughter naps in the afternoon for 2-3 hours. On these napping days, her 7:00pm bedtime is pushed to anywhere between 8:00pm and 9:00pm. Beautifully stated, Ashley Deer describes this phenomenon as a:

...vicious circle because then when they are up later and you still have to get them up early and they need that nap the next day and if they can’t have it, it makes things very difficult...

Charlie. Charlie’s children are awake between 6:20 – 7am and have time to play on an iPad or in their parents’ room. Around 7:15am they get dressed and have breakfast. They leave for school around 8:20am. Their evenings include dinner at 5:45pm, a bath at 6:10pm followed by books or iPad games. Usually they eat a snack and then have bedtime with back rubs and
lengthy discussions about their days. Prayers are said and children are asleep between 6:30pm and 7:00pm. This is an early bedtime since her children do not nap during the day and are tired in the evenings.

Charlie’s 3-year-old son napped for almost 3 hours each afternoon.

...[He] used to sleep so much, he would do 3 hours and he needed it. The only time I would shorten it is if it was like 4:30 or 5:30 because then it was at least 4 hours and it was just too long...we were like dealing with him for an hour going back and forth [out of bed] and then I realized if we took his nap away he would go to bed easier...

It was very difficult for the child to fall asleep each night, so Charlie took away his nap and he had an early bedtime (6:30/7:00pm) which she preferred.

**Monica.** When Monica’s daughter, Joey, would nap during the day it was often on a one hour, alternate day schedule. Her bedtime on the napping days was 9:00pm. Monica tried to shorten the hour naps to 45 minutes to allow for an earlier bedtime, but that was not successful. Joey was either up too late or awake all night.

...she would also maybe nap on the off days maybe for an hour. But what happens is they go to bed at 9:00pm. You can tell at that time that it’s not working because if I took away her nap she would go to bed so much earlier, like at 7:00 that night. So what I tried doing for both of them was to shorten the nap to 45 minutes. Some people say that it doesn’t matter then nap time, even if it’s 20 minutes. They still got some good sleep in them and will be up later anyways. So Joey towards the end, I’d wake her up after an hour, then 45 minutes but she wouldn’t go to sleep at night.

The following year, Joey was enrolled in a full-day kindergarten program five days a week. The program did not have a naptime and Monica hoped that Joey would be asleep each day by
7:00pm with no nap. However, Joey had trouble maintaining a consistent bedtime. As a result, she napped irregularly to make up for the lack of night time sleep. Joey was unable to stay in school for full days at a time. She was tired and would demonstrate this by acting out aggressively towards other children. Monica would often need to take Joey home from school to sleep in the afternoon, causing a later bedtime and many disrupted sleep routines.

She still wasn’t sleeping through the night in JK. Not normal – most kids sleep through the night in JK. She was not a napper, she would force herself to stay up. There were some days where her behaviour was out of control like she was out of sorts. She would be up the whole night, I’d drop her off and tell her teacher that was up for 3 hours from 1 – 4am and then be up for school. She started getting aggressive because she was on zero sleep. So I had a good rapport with the teachers. So no, her sleep did not get better and no she did not nap at school. Specifically at times I would contact the teacher and say I was really worried about her and that I don’t want her to be aggressive to other kids, it’s not fair. Some days I would actually pick her up [from school]. In order for her to nap at home, I would have to lie with her in her bed and she would nap. If I left her there, she would probably nap the entire afternoon. Again, she’s not the normal child. I would probably be up with her at 10:00 at night if I had let her nap the entire afternoon. So the teacher would never say “pick up your child” because they can’t say that. As a child, it wasn’t fair to Joey. I didn’t think she was absorbing anything anyways in the afternoon because she was exhausted. So there were times when I did actually say I’m picking her up because I can’t function on this little sleep, I don’t know how she can. So JK was quite a challenge for Joey, sleep wise. She is really the worst sleeper.
Nevertheless, Monica described her ideal sleep schedule for Joey that did occur, however infrequently.

*Joey’s ideal bedtime schedule.* Joey would wake up between 5:00-6:30am and sometimes watch TV. She would also have a snack, get dressed, decide which snacks to take to school, and have vitamins and brush teeth around 7:45am. She leaves the house for full-day kindergarten at 8:15am. She would ideally not sleep during the day and in the evenings would have a bath and dinner then at 7:00pm watch TV and have a snack. At 7:30pm she would read a book, then brush her teeth, use the washroom and read another book again before going to sleep as close to 8:00pm as possible.

*Tori.* When Tori’s oldest son was three years old and napped in the afternoon, he would not be able to fall asleep that night until 10:00pm. Ideally, Tori would like him to be asleep by 8:00pm. Without a nap directly affecting his sleep patterns, Tori’s eldest son usually is awake between 6:45/7:00am and plays until 7:45am. He then gets dressed, has breakfast and leaves for school. His ideal bedtime routine involves no afternoon nap. His mother ensures that he showers, has a snack, brushes teeth, reads books, and then she lies in bed with him and rubs his back until he falls asleep:

Since he was born I’d hold him too long, rub his back too long, so now when he goes to bed we still have to lie in bed with him and rub his back until he’s asleep. We started slowly weaning him off of the half hour of rubbing his back, now it can be 5 minutes. But if we don’t do it at all, he can’t sleep. He will cry his eyes out and not be able to sleep. Tori explained that for awhile she had to be in bed rubbing his back for him to fall asleep. It took a long time for her to reduce the amount of time she spends rubbing his back.
**Justine.** Justine is the mother of four children and mentioned that her youngest, aged 3 years, is not in a full-day program yet but her night time sleep was affected when she napped. Even if she only sleeps for 30 minutes, it is difficult for her to fall asleep before 10:00pm. On regular days, all of Justine’s children wake up between 7:00am and 8:00am, depending on their various schedules. When the twins stopped napping in the afternoon, they woke up 20 minutes later. They made their beds, brushed teeth and dressed before coming downstairs for breakfast. When the twins, aged 5, came home from school they had playtime, and time for other extracurricular activities. Afterwards, it was bath time, dinner, time for watching two television shows, brushing teeth, using the washroom, and dressing in pajamas. With their parents they could read books in bed or have a sing-along:

...it’s either let’s get a couple books and read together in bed or we have a singing session. They are in their beds and it’s mostly me singing to them. We say goodnight to everyone and everything we see during that day. I sing them a lot of show tunes. Songs with lots of words, I’m an English teacher, it’s important to me. I like music with lyrics. We do our songs, kiss goodnight and hopefully they stay in bed.

The songs and books are important to Justine and she always ensures the songs have lots of words in them. When the twins stopped napping, they went to bed 45 minutes earlier than they had previously.

**Jenny.** Jenny’s son wakes up each morning at 6:30am but stays quietly playing in his room until 7:15am. When his nap was taken away, he followed the same bedtime routine with a minor change. His original 8:00pm bedtime changed to 7:45pm.

When he gave up the nap he went from an 8:00 bedtime to a 7:45pm bedtime and I woke him every morning. Very rarely did I walk into his room where he was awake in the
morning so he was sleeping from a quarter to 8 (7:45pm) till a quarter past 7 (7:15am)... there’s a lot of mornings where both boys aren’t out of their bed at 7:15am but at 6:30am they are both awake. But again, I have a video monitor so I check on them and see when they are awake. They don’t make a sound or get off their beds until mommy comes to get them. So even if they are awake, they are resting.

In the evenings, Jenny makes sure her son has a bath, supper, and playtime to watch cartoons or a movie. He is upstairs at 7:35pm to go to the bathroom, brush teeth, read a story and sing a song. After that, it is bedtime.

**No, nap does not affect nightly sleep.**

Markette. Markette had a very rigid sleep schedule for her twin boys. They wake up at 7:30am and are allowed to come into their parents’ room to snuggle, watch television, or play. Around 7:45/8:00am they get dressed, pack lunches, finish any homework, pack their knapsacks and leave for school at 8:30am. That evening when they come home from school they have a bath, and are in pajamas by the time dinner is served at 6:15pm. From 7:15pm – 8:00pm the boys are allowed to watch television, read books, play on their iPads and/or combine all the options. They are asleep by 8:00pm. There are no exceptions to this rule:

I: Let’s talk about [son], who falls asleep on the bus [after camp] right?

Markette: Ya.

I: What happens? Does he go to bed later that night?

Markette: One would think but in our house we don’t have those rules. 8:00 is bed, unless they are at an event or somewhere where we as parents are prepared to keep them up later. Otherwise, it’s 8:00. It’s my time, I need my time. Not that I have them with me all day but I need it. Right now it’s light out at 8:00 and the boys are wondering why they
are going to bed, and I tell them, look at your clock and they see its 8:00 and they know its bed. I like that they have the routine and that maybe sometimes, maybe 10 minutes later but no change. I like the structure. So no change.

Even when Markette’s son fell asleep on the bus after camp, his bedtime was not affected and was kept firmly at 8:00pm.

**Tori.** Tori’s youngest child was able to nap in the afternoons and still go to bed at the regular time.

**Sometimes nap affects nightly sleep**

**Kaptin America.** For Kaptin America, when their daughter was napping for up to 2.5 hours on an alternate day schedule, she still kept her regular bedtime with no trouble. When her nap was first taken away she would fall asleep around 7:00pm, which took considerable effort for her parents to keep her awake until then:

She was tired and needed her nap. She would come home at 4:00pm/4:30pm and if we originally had intended to go out for the evening, we couldn’t she was just done and she would struggle to stay up till about 7:00pm and then we would let her go to sleep.

When Kaptin America took away their daughter’s nap she slept for 13 hours and was awake for 11 hours. Both parents spoke of the difficult transition time but are ecstatic that she can currently function without an afternoon nap and have a later bedtime, closer to 8:15pm.

Her current daily schedule begins at 7:30am. She gets dressed, has breakfast at 7:45am and brushes teeth at 8am. She has the next 35 minutes to play before leaving for school, where she currently does not nap. Her evening begins with dinner at 5:45pm and then between 6:00 and 7:15pm there is time for homework, reading, playing and a bath. At 7:30pm she has a small snack and watches TV until 8:15pm.
Emergent Theme: Camp Helps to Wean Children off Naptime

A common theme that unexpectedly arose during interviews was that camp is an excellent resource when trying to wean children off their nap and to better prepare them for the full-day kindergarten program. While teacher Brenda has an area in her classroom sectioned off for children who may randomly require a nap, her expectation is that most kindergarten students will have already been weaned off their nap during the summer. As teacher Lucy explains, many students attend camp during the summer and she acknowledges that it is a helpful transition. During teacher Lucy’s JK orientation Lucy tells parents that there is no naptime and “encourages them over the summer to wean them off their nap so they are used to it before coming to school.”

Eight of the parents who were interviewed mentioned this theme in different capacities. The parents’ comments suggest how camp serves to help children transition to a non-napping routine.

Camp does not have a rest hour. Jenny, Monica, Markette, and Charlie acknowledged this in relation to napping. All were trying to wean their children of their afternoon nap. For example, Charlie knew her daughter had a difficult time transitioning between school programs, so she made sure to have her in camp until 2:30pm, five days a week:

I: At what point in her life did you take away her nap?
Charlie: She was just at the end of the day care. She was at day care until May and then she was at camp all summer and she wasn’t napping. It was probably April or May. She was at camp 3/4 days so till 2:30.

Charlie: She has a hard time transitioning, that’s her personality. Hard time with change.
It was always difficult in the morning to separate. In terms of the morning part, she was
full-day and then camp practically full-day and then school full-day so she never needed to adjust to that. Just new surroundings. The rest hour isn’t helpful.

This helped her get rid of her nap before attending a nap-less, full-day JK program and ensured the transition from a half day to a full-day program ran smoothly.

Markette explained that she wanted her twin boys to rid themselves of their nap, since their upcoming full-day JK class did not have naptime. Therefore, they attended camp from 10:00am – 2:00pm five days a week.

When the boys were at camp they had the opportunity to go from 10:00am - 1:00pm and then they could stay till 2:00pm and I would literally pick them up at 2:00pm, take them home and throw them into bed. I let them stay for lunch. They would sleep till 3:30pm/4:00pm. They were young, they just turned 3. I phased out the nap period at the end of that summer because they were starting JK and there’s no naps and I wanted them out of that need for JK.

Their naptime was from 2:15pm – 4:00pm, and eventually just taken away altogether by the end of the summer.

Monica’s daughter, Joey, had many difficulties sleeping through the night. Therefore, by enrolling her in a full-day camp program she hoped Joey would fall asleep at a regular time. While it did not solve the problem, Monica said camp still helped Joey’s sleep more than the alternate full-day school programs she had been previously been enrolled in.

So she did camp and then JK. I think I tried to get her into the full-day at camp so by doing the odd alternate day afternoons [before camp] to try to get her to stay awake.

Again, she was up at night so it didn’t really work. So then camp was ok.
She really didn’t adjust well to first year JK. It wasn’t ok. The full-day at camp was a good transition to helping.

Due to the fact that these camps did not schedule or encourage napping, the camp experience served to help wean children off their afternoon nap.

**Campers are active.** Justine’s children were in camp for full-days the summer before attending a nap-less afternoon JK program. Her twin boy and girl were not at camp for the purpose of phasing out a nap, but during the interview Justine realized that it helped with the transition since the children were active and busy all day long. As she said:

They were at camp full-days in the summer. Phasing out the nap just had to happen by virtue of the fact that they wouldn’t be home for a nap. I never thought about camp helping, but maybe it did. They got used to being active all day long. It’s very possible. I actually ended up really liking an afternoon program. So much so that in the SK year I requested afternoon again.

When Jenny’s son was in the afternoon camp program, for the purpose of phasing out the afternoon nap, he would come home at 3:30 and relax. Camp was active enough that he was content to come home, watch TV, sit on the couch, or read books. He did not miss his afternoon nap. Tori’s son began JK when he was 3 years old, instead of 4 years old, the age of the majority of his peers. Tori needed the transition to camp to include taking a camp bus to a full-day, active program, since her son would be doing so for school in the fall. During the first week of camp, with the increase in activity levels, Tori’s son fell asleep on the bus, ruining his night time sleep.

...he was exhausted but he loved it...he would fall asleep on the bus home and I told them not to let him because then he would be up all night and have a terrible sleep. But when they stopped letting him nap like they would shake him and wake him.
Once she put a stop to it and her son adjusted to the activity level, she was able to regulate his sleep patterns.

**Camp has flexible programs and hours.** Jenny, Markette, Charlie, and Ashley Deer each signed up their child for camp the summer before JK. Charlie’s daughter stayed at camp until 2:30pm five days a week. Ashley Deer’s daughter spent two weeks in July and August attending two different camps for full-days. Markette’s twins were signed up to stay at a camp until 1, but were then extended to stay on in a lunch program that ran until 2:00pm. Jenny’s son attended a half day camp program up until the last two weeks of summer when he switched to an afternoon camp. As she mentioned:

So leading up to full-day kindergarten when he never went a full day without napping, we put him in afternoon camp for the last 2 weeks of the summer. So the city camp offers a morning program for half day or an afternoon program for a half day. So in the morning we hung out, went to the park or splash pad and came home and had lunch. Then he went to camp from about 1 – 3:30 so he was at camp during his nap time. It worked. He transitioned way better than I thought. He didn’t come home exhausted. He looked ok.

Each of these families was registered at different camps for different amounts of time. Yet, because of the flexible programs and hours, many parent participants ended up using camp to help create an easy transition from napping to no napping. As long as the child was signed up for camp during all or part of their individual originally scheduled naptime, camp assisted with the transition and parents’ readiness to rid their children of the need for an afternoon nap.

**Children’s responses to non-napping at camp.** When examining the transition into full-day programs, many parents commented on the levels of exhaustion, and how a nap affected bedtime and wake time routines.
When Jenny’s son was signed up for afternoon camp in order to rid her son of his nap, the only change was that he went to sleep 20 minutes earlier than he did with a nap. He transitioned well, and did not come home from camp exhausted. His wake time was not affected. Therefore, taking away a nap for Jenny’s son made only a small difference in his night time sleep schedule.

Parenting team Kaptin America signed their daughter up for a full-day camp program with no nap. This was a bit of a shock for their daughter who had been consistently napping daily for an hour and a half. However, signing her up for full-day camp was not done intentionally to wean their daughter off her daily afternoon nap. Each night their daughter would return home from camp between 4:00 and 4:30pm and immediately dress in her pyjamas. She was exhausted. At times, her parents would push her to stay awake until 7:00pm and then let her sleep until 7:30am the next morning.

Charlie’s daughter was tired at the end of the day during her camp session. It mostly affected her from about 5:00pm – 7:00pm. However, her behaviour was fine, she was just sleepy. Therefore, the nap to no-nap transition was handled well, except for a few difficult evenings.

One of Markette’s twins adjusted very well without a nap, while his twin brother required a slightly earlier bedtime than the original 8:00pm. Taking away their nap ultimately did not affect either of them.

Tori’s son was enrolled in full-day camp programs. As mentioned earlier, the first few days he would fall asleep on the bus on the way home since he was exhausted. As a result of that nap late in the day he was awake all night and had terrible sleeps. When Tori asked the camp to ensure he stayed awake on the bus home, he would go to sleep earlier than usual, by 7:00pm. The entire transition to a full-day program took about a week. Tori stated that it was not a big
change. As long as Tori ensured her son did not fall asleep in the late afternoon/evening, the transition into a full-day program ultimately did not affect him.

Ashley Deer intended that camp be a transition into school by taking away her daughter’s naptime. When September arrived, Ashley Deer knew her daughter would not have the option to nap during the day. Her daughter still had trouble without her nap in the summer time, and then adjusting to school in September. She mentioned that “we found the evenings really challenging, she was really cranky and had awful temper tantrums and a lot of yelling and screaming and what not”. It is important to note that Ashley Deer’s daughter did not attend camps as long as the other children did. She spent two weeks in July and August at two different camps, while the other children were signed up at a camp in some form for at least a full month that summer prior to JK.

Monica had hoped that camp would help her daughter Joey sleep through the night, and influence her complicated sleeping patterns in the upcoming school year. Monica explained that there was only a slight change from nursery school to camp to kindergarten. Joey was still awake at night; however, camp was more beneficial than the alternate full-day nursery program, when she would often go home to nap for at least an hour. Joey’s sleep was still irregular.

From these interviews, it is possible to conclude that using camp as a transition before entering kindergarten is helpful because it facilitates the child’s shift from napping to non-napping. Most of the children were able to adjust to a new sleep pattern without any negative consequences. It is possible that because camps are active all day long and have no rest hour that they help children transition into a full-day nap-less program.

Summary of Findings

This chapter begins with examining the advantages to naptime: (1) nap allowed a break to enable students to focus on afternoon learning, (2) a nap aided with behaviour, (3) some children
were young and required a nap, (4) teachers used the naptime period to their advantage and, (5) school is a long day for children and a nap was helpful to ensure they could make it through the day. There were also disadvantages to napping: (1) an afternoon nap is not useful for all students, (2) time devoted to academics is minimized, (3) it negatively affects bedtimes and, (4) managing naptime is problematic. The next section discussed if naptime was worthwhile to have in a full-day kindergarten classroom. Those who felt it was necessary explained that it was because: (1) children were calm and refreshed in the afternoon, (2) children are tired during the day, possibly due to a late bedtime and, (3) JK students and children with family complications may benefit from a nap. Participants who claimed nap was not necessary felt that: (1) students did not utilize naptime, making it redundant, (2) if students did not have a nap an earlier bedtime was ensured, (3) the program cost is not worthwhile with a scheduled naptime, (4) napping can allow students to miss out on academic or social opportunities and, (5) there are alternatives to nap time, such as a quiet time. The alternatives will still allow a necessary break for the children without sleep. Many of the alternatives were suggested when asked how an ideal naptime could be structured. Aside from naptime, where the majority of the students are sleeping, other options include: (1) Down Time referring to quiet, group activities without any expectation that children will sleep, (2) Rest Time which included an option to sleep or participate in quiet, individual activities, and (3) Quiet Time which is a period of time dedicated to quiet, individual activities without any intention of sleeping.

When examining which students find a nap useful, many teachers explained that while it was a minimal amount of students, usually in JK and usually tired due to outside complications such as late bedtimes, difficult home lives, or long days involving after school programs.
When examining if a nap affected nightly sleep, the results indicated napping did affect nightly sleep for the children of Ashley Deer, Charlie, Monica, Tori, Justine and Jenny. Napping did not affect nightly sleep for the children of Markette and Tori. Kaptin America’s daughter was sometimes affected by the nap.

Finally, a theme emerged suggesting that camp helped to wean children off of naptime to better prepare them for the full-day kindergarten program. Due to the fact that camp does not have a rest hour, keeps children active and occupied, and has flexible programs and hours, eight of the parents who were interviewed mentioned camp as means of transitioning children from napping to non-napping routines.
Chapter 5:

Discussion

Theoretical Framework Revisited

The following paragraphs will examine the propositions presented in the theoretical framework in relation to my findings. This section will focus on the parent participant responses.

**Bedtime routine.** A language-based bedtime routine is important and beneficial (Hale et al., 2011). Each parent participant ensured that there was a book being read before their children fall asleep in the evenings. Most book reading occurred directly before bed, although Kaptin America combined reading books with homework between 6:00pm – 7:15pm, with bedtime at 8:15pm. Jenny and Justine also include songs in their language-based bedtime routine. Some songs are made up about the events of the day, some are well-known popular ones, and for Justine, some are show tunes. Charlie adds a lengthy discussion about the children’s day to their bedtime routine. Therefore, this proposition is supported by the data I collected; the parents in my study do believe that a language-based bedtime routine is important.

**Negative sleep patterns.** Children aged 3-5 years have negative sleep patterns if they have a late bedtime, a parent present when the child falls asleep, sleep latency, short amounts of sleep, a television in the bedroom, and regular caffeine consumption (Mindell et al., 2009). Tori and Monica reported they were both present when their child falls asleep. Additionally, Monica explained that her daughter, Joey, often had short amounts of sleep. Therefore, Joey experienced two of the factors associated with negative sleep patterns, and of all the participants has had the most difficulty having a stable sleep schedule. Accordingly, the data from my study supports the proposition.
**Timing.** Good sleep hygiene practices are associated with better sleep. Thus children of all ages should fall asleep with a regular bedtime routine, independently, before 9:00pm (Mindell et al. 2009). Jenny, Markette, Justine, Charlie, Ashley Deer, and Kaptin America’s children all fall asleep independently before 9:00pm. As mentioned above, Tori and Monica’s children do not fall asleep independently, although Tori’s son is asleep before 9:00pm. Monica’s daughter had trouble maintaining a regular bedtime, although she would sometimes fall asleep at 9:00pm depending on her previous bedtime and potential nap. While it is clear who fell asleep before 9:00pm, this study did not directly inquire about potential sleep hygiene. Namely, I do not have information about sleep hygiene that relates to frequent night awakenings, breathing disorders, sleep latencies, and night awakenings (Curcio et al., 2006; Tikotzky & Sadeh, 2001; Ravid et al., 2009). Accordingly, the data from my study does not support or contradict this proposition.

**Overall Functioning.** Some young children have poor sleep habits (e.g., snoring, sleep apnea and night awakenings) as well as dysfunctional sleep patterns, which can affect their ability to function in school, and stay on the same academic level as the rest of the class (Curcio et al., 2006; Golan et al., 2004; Ravid et al., 2009; Tikotzky & Sadeh, 2001). None of the parents mentioned if their child snored, had sleep apnea, or frequent night awakenings. However, parents Monica and Ashley Deer mentioned that dysfunctional sleep patterns can affect a child’s ability to function in school. When Ashley Deer tried to wean her daughter off a nap, it was difficult and Ashley Deer noticed that her daughter was able to function better with that extra sleep. Monica’s daughter has dysfunctional sleep patterns and as a result was aggressive towards other children and unable to function in school. Monica believes she was also not absorbing any academic information when she was so tired. Accordingly, although there was only a small amount of relevant data collected, that evidence does support the proposition.
**Length of night time sleep.** Long, uninterrupted sleeps that are more than six and a half hours will be beneficial to children’s academic achievement (Curcio et al., 2006; Golan et al., 2004; Ravid et al., 2009). Preschoolers typically sleep 11-13 hours per night and most do not nap after five years of age (National Sleep Foundation, 2011). Except for Monica’s daughter, every child slept consistently for more than six and a half hours at night. The children of Jenny, Tori, Charlie, Markette, and Justine slept for a minimum of 11 hours per night. Kaptin America’s daughter slept for 13 hours per night. Ashley Deer’s daughter slept for anywhere between 8-12 hours per night, and Monica’s daughter’s sleep was very inconsistent. Coinciding with the first proposition above, Ashley Deer and Monica were the only parents who mentioned that their children experienced any sort of difficulty in school. Coinciding with the second proposition above, none of the children in the study napped after 5 years of age.

**Daytime naps and bedtimes.** If a child in kindergarten continues to nap during the day, it is associated with disrupted night time sleep, particularly a later bedtime (Komada et al., 2012). Ward et al., (2008) explained that parents’ main issue with napping is that it may disrupt the evening bedtime routine. Parents worry that if their children fall asleep past a certain time, they will not sleep later in the evening at the set bedtime. This concern was shared by participants in my study. When parents and teachers were asked to discuss disadvantages to naptime, seven participants mentioned that a nap would negatively affect bedtime. While teacher Lucy explained that some children can nap and still have a full night sleep, others cannot. The majority of participants reported that nap does affect nightly sleep. Markette and Kaptin America’s children were able to nap without any affect on their bedtime. However, Justine, Tori, Monica, and Ashley Deer’s children went to bed later if they napped in the afternoon, delaying the time they fell asleep by two or three hours.
Screen Time at Bedtime and Wake Time

Two points of the theoretical framework examine bedtime routines. The first explained the importance of a language-based bedtime routine (Hale et al., 2011), which all parents practiced to an extent. The second explained that having a television in a bedroom for children aged 3-5 relates to negative sleeping patterns. The majority of the parent participants in this study mentioned screen time on a computer, iPad or television as part of their bedtime or wake time routines. This section outlines some of the consequences related to screen time before bed.

Nuutinen, Ray, and Roos (2013), conducted a study for children aged 5-19 that found that if a television, computer or any form of media was in a child’s bedroom, it is related to shorter sleep duration, irregular sleep patterns, and later bedtimes on school days. Jakobsson, Garmy, Nyberg, Högskolan, and Sektionen (2012) also found that for children in Grades 1 and higher, screen time, including the use of cell phones after lights out, increases tiredness at school, and difficulty waking up. Nuutinen et al. (2013) stated that spending more than 2 hours a day using any form of screen time will result in less sleep. Although it was found that using a computer can stimulate the brain more than a television, any form of regular screen time during the week can lead to daytime tiredness, attention and behavioural problems, and over time, increased health risks.

Furthermore, Pileggi, Lotito, Bianco, Nobile, and Pavia (2013), found several links among sleep, obesity, and screen time. Many of the children in their study, who did not routinely play sports, and who spent more than an hour per day on their computer, television, or playing video games, were obese. These children also had short sleeps, of approximately six hours and went to bed between 9:30 and 10:00pm on weeknights. De Jong et al. (2013) also found a link among obesity, screen time, and sleep. They suggest eliminating screen time and increasing sleep.
instead of physical activity. The conclusion of their study asks for parents to take a more active role in determining the amount of screen time watched before young children’s bedtime. They suggest that screen time has a particular impact on the overall health of children from the ages of 4-8 years, rather than those aged 9-12 years. Jakobsson et al. (2012) supports parents who allow their children’s sleep schedule to consist of: a regular bedtime routine, a dark and cool bedroom, and quiet to maintain healthy sleep patterns. They strongly suggest not using a television or computer in the child’s bedroom as it can affect the child’s overall sleep.

In this current study, six of the parent participants included screen time as part of their children’s night time routine and four of the parent participants mentioned it as part of the wake time schedule. Charlie, Monica, and Markette have time for iPad games, and television both at night and in the morning. Kaptin America, Justine, and Jenny each have time designated for television immediately before bed. Ashley Deer mentions that television is “sometimes” part of the morning routine. Whether screen time is counted overall or before bed, it is still linked to irregular sleep patterns and obesity. Perhaps parents and teachers should exercise caution when allowing screen time, especially as school activities often include smart board videos, computers and iPads in the classroom. If, as Nuutinen et al. (2013) claim, spending more than 2 hours a day using any form of screen time will result in less sleep, parents should be very cautious about including screen time in daily bedtime and wake time routines.

**Implications for Naptime**

When parents and teachers were asked what their ideal naptime would be in a full-day kindergarten classroom, most participants were in favour of a rest time. A synthesis of my findings suggests that full-day JK students, not SK students, could have a 30-minute rest time at
midday. In the following paragraphs I break this proposal down into four parts, and discuss each one.

**Why rest time?** The appropriateness of a rest time is evident for several reasons. First, the majority of participants acknowledged that children need a break during the day. While perspectives on how to do this differed, most participants were in agreement that a break should occur. Second, as demonstrated in the findings section, students have different needs and a naptime is very restrictive. Teacher Adrianna, for example, who generally supports a naptime, needed to have alternative activities for the JK children in her class who found naptime difficult. Third, a rest time for the entire class ensures that children who need to sleep do not miss out on anything immediately educationally significant. Fourth, rest time can accommodate JK/SK split classes where students often have very different needs, by enabling some students to nap while those who do not need to sleep can have a version of a quiet time or down time. It is possible that a rest time is a suitable option for these four reasons.

**Why JK?** As discussed in the Findings section, teachers Lucy, Summer, Lo-Lo, Kacey, Jenny, Ashley Deer, and Tzera mentioned that JK students required time to rest and SK students did not. Lucy explained that in JK, students only made use of a nap period until October and napping was not an issue in SK. A rest time would allow children a chance to sleep as needed. Once it is no longer necessary, the children will still have an opportunity to take a break. The adjustment for JK students takes time since, as Kacey and Summer mentioned, many JK students were in programs the year before that had a nap, so a half hour transition “rest time” is beneficial.

Many participants explained that they were concerned that three year olds would be in a JK class. It is more prevalent among three year olds to nap during the day. Therefore, some
concluded that a nap would be advantageous for these children. Additionally, many JK children have not yet been weaned off their naps. As well, I noticed a trend that most of the teachers who were supportive of a naptime were JK teachers (Adrianna, Summer) as opposed to SK teachers (Lo-Lo, Mags, Aviva). Lucy, who has taught a JK/SK split said “Some of the JKS when they come in, especially those born in November and December, start falling asleep in the middle of the afternoon. I’ve seen kids fall asleep in their lunch in JK. Never in SK. SK kids I have never seen fall asleep.” Furthermore, parent Markette brought up the issue of the transition from SK to the first grade. In Grade 1, there is no sleeping and no form of nap, rest, down or quiet time. Potentially, having a naptime in SK would make the transition to non-napping grade one that much more difficult.

**Why 30 minutes?** As mentioned in the literature review, often children who are fatigued during the day, display daytime sleepiness, and have difficulty concentrating, are the children who woke up approximately 24 minutes earlier then other children in their class (Curcio et al., 2006). My suggestion is that if an ideal nap or rest time in a full-day kindergarten class was approximately a half hour, it would help by balancing the missing 24 minutes of the sleep lost in the children who wake up earlier.

Eight participants stated that any type of break takes away from teaching time. Students miss out on academic opportunities since the nap can take a large part of the afternoon. The way to avoid this is to ensure there is enough time for some children to have a chance to sleep and for some to take the time to recuperate for the afternoon. Thirty minutes of rest time will still allow plenty of the afternoon time for meaningful lessons, and adequate learning that will be enhanced because the children are refreshed.
While naptime and bedtimes are discussed at length in the next section it is important to note that it is not a good idea to provide children with too much time to sleep, since it will affect their night time sleep. However, 30 minutes is a good balance for giving young children a chance to sleep during the day without impacting their sleep at night. Additionally, for the students who are not sleeping and taking some time to do quiet activities, thirty minutes is ample time. Teacher Lucy said that even providing puzzles and books would not hold her students’ attention for an hour-long nap period. It needs to be shorter. Although for Mags and Aviva, even a half-hour “chill time” in their SK classes was difficult since they had trouble engaging the children while keeping them calm and quiet, anything less than a 30-minute rest time would not provide sufficient time to rest for those who needed it.

When participants were asked how long an ideal naptime should be, Summer and Lo-Lo suggested 15-20 minutes, Lisa and Kacey asked for 30 minutes, and Adrianna and Kaptin America reported they would like 45 minutes for a rest time. Brenda suggested an hour and Ashley Deer and Kaptin America thought an hour and a half for the sleeping children would suffice. Kaptin America provided two answers depending on the type of nap period. Since they thought 45 minutes was sufficient for a combined sleep and play time, and an actual nap period with time dedicated to ensuring a proper sleep period for all students would require 1.5 hours. Perhaps rest time does not need to provide children with a long nap, since the purpose of a rest time is to help wean the children off their nap, eventually resulting in no nap. Therefore, 45 minutes or longer is too long for afternoon sleeping. By suggesting thirty minutes, this will be a good balance between the remaining suggestions, and will provide teachers some time to prepare for their class and to set up a conducive environment for rest time.
**Why midday?** I asked participants what their ideal naptime would look like. Specifically, I was trying to find out how long an ideal naptime should be, and when it should be. Tzera, Lisa, Ashley Deer, and Adrianna, preferred the students first have lunch, then recess, then rest time. Kacey, Lo-Lo, and Summer would ideally have naptime immediately after lunch. Either way, it was suggested to have a break midday. This seems to be because many participants feel that taking a break at the daily half way point improved children’s behaviour in the afternoon. Children seem to need a break after lunch before coming back to class and engaging in more learning. As well, teacher Lucy spoke about teaching JK as a half day and reminded me that most children can participate and succeed in the half day program. Currently, with the addition of the afternoon portion, it makes sense to take an extended break at this point. Brenda noticed that based on her previous experiences, some of her students became very tired and would fall asleep midday. This further emphasizes that the rest time should occur midday since that is when children are tired.

**Rationale Revisited**

I designed this study to contribute to the research regarding better understandings of sleep for young children. This study sought to understand teachers’ and parents’ perceptions of naptime in full-day kindergarten. Three questions guided the research: What are the advantages and disadvantages of naptime? How do students respond to naptime? How should naptime be structured to meet students’ needs? In making a case for the need for this research, I identified four areas of particular interest: (1) impact of napping on bedtimes, (2) benefits of naptime, (3) naptime structure and, (4) teachers’ responsibilities concerning students’ sleep. In the following section I will revisit these areas of interest and discuss the related findings.
Impact of naps on bedtimes. My review of the literature indicated that a daytime nap that lasts longer than one hour will disrupt the evening bedtime routine, since the nap causes children to fall asleep later that evening (Komada et al., 2012; Ward et al., 2008). Therefore three questions arose. (1) Do daytime naps disrupt evening bedtime routines? (2) Is it only significant if a nap is longer than one hour? (3) How long should a nap be?

Naps and Bedtimes. As mentioned in the Findings section, teachers Brenda, Ashley Deer, and Lucy along with parents Markette, Kaptin America, Justine, Charlie, and Tori each confirmed that daytime naps disrupt bedtime routines. Parents Tori and Kaptin America were the only participants who mentioned their children could sometimes nap and still sleep at their regularly scheduled bedtime. It is important to remember that Tori mentioned this about her younger son, age 2 years. Her elder son, of kindergarten age, stayed awake until 10:00pm when he had a daytime nap. Kaptin American’s daughter was 3-4 years old when she was able to sleep during the day and at night. Now that she is 5 years old, her parents explained that she would be awake until 10:00pm if she napped.

Naptime Length. The responses from participants in this study do not support the notion that a nap is only significant if it is longer than one hour. Nobody explained it better then Monica and Justine. Monica stated that “Some people say that it doesn’t matter the naptime [duration], but even if it’s 20 minutes, they still got some good sleep in them and will be up later anyways.” Justine provided a similar perspective in regards to her youngest daughter when she said that, “Even if it’s 30 minutes she will be awake until 10:00pm.”

Parents. When I was trying to determine how long a potential nap in full-day kindergarten should be, I asked parents about the duration of their children’s naps. Sometimes this was before JK and sometimes it was during, depending on which JK school program the
children were signed up for. Interestingly enough, many parents were unsure exactly how long the nap was. Therefore, I only have information from three parents.

Pre-JK, Charlie’s daughter napped for 2 hours, from 12:30 – 2:30. Markette’s twins napped for approximately 1.5 hours, from 2:15 – 3:45, also pre-JK. Kaptin America’s daughter was on an alternate JK schedule and on the ‘off’ days napped for approximately 2-2.5 hours. Monica’s children could sleep for up to two hours, pre-JK. To avoid the night time sleep disturbance, she kept allowing them less and less time as each month passed. Eventually, her daughter Joey was napping for 45 minutes, sometimes in JK, but it still affected her night time sleep.

These responses suggest that there is a large discrepancy between how long a nap is when parents mention a nap and how long when teachers envision a nap. No teacher has suggested over 1.5 hours for any version of nap or rest time. Yet, parents are thinking of a nap being a minimum of 1.5 hours and up to 2.5 hours. The discrepancy suggests that the phrase naptime is not appropriate. Teachers generally do not want to dedicate a large portion of the afternoon for sleeping, but may find a break necessary. Therefore when asking how long should a nap be, it appears that the phrase naptime should not be used, since it implies to parents that children will be sleeping for a long period of time. However, it is acknowledged that a break is necessary in full-day kindergarten. The break can be a form of rest time, quiet time or down time that ideally would last approximately 30 minutes.

Is naptime beneficial? In the rationale for this study I explained that Ravid et al. (2009) had parents fill out questionnaires about their children’s sleep patterns. Parents reported that their children were fatigued, had low energy, and had a tendency to fall asleep during the daytime. However, parents were not asked if they thought an afternoon nap in school would be beneficial
or what they did at home to remedy this problem. Therefore this section will examine if parents in this study consider naptime in school beneficial. Specifically, do parents and teachers feel that a nap is necessary to allow kindergarten students to achieve their maximum potential?

Overall, it would appear that most parents and teachers in this study do not think a naptime is necessary. This could be because not many students actually sleep during naptime at school. Teacher Lo-Lo reported that if students did sleep it was usually because they were ill. It surprised me that neither parent Monica or Kaptin America found a nap necessary. It seemed to me that both their children could have made use of an extra time to sleep. Monica’s daughter was constantly being taken out of school since she would be aggressive towards other children when she was overtired. Kaptin America’s daughter slept often and for long periods of time during her JK year. Yet, none of the parents wanted a nap in their child’s classroom. I would have suspected they would like a nap, since their children were often utilizing a nap period at home. In fact, Kaptin America believed so strongly in a no-nap policy that they did not state any advantages when asked, since they felt there were none and would not recommend a nap in full-day kindergarten.

Teachers Kacey, Brenda, Jenny, and Summer, and parents Charlie and Tori focused on the fact that while some students do utilize a nap period, not every child needs to sleep. Therefore many suggested a nap alternative. Specifically, rest time, quiet time, and down time. Based on the findings of this study, the best option seems to be the rest time option for JK only (not for SK students).

Teacher Adrianna felt strongly that each child is unique and has different needs to be met. A rest time would allow this. Parent/teacher Jenny is in favour of having a break and taking time to relax, not necessarily a time for sleep. In fact, she explained that her nap period naturally
progressed into rest time and then quiet time over the course of the year. Adrianna’s naptime had some children who needed quiet activities. A rest time would enable that. Jenny’s naptime naturally progressed into rest time and quiet time, which a rest time would encourage by offering both options. Therefore, the participants who felt naptime was necessary would still be satisfied with a rest time, calling into question the necessity of naptime. Thus, having a naptime – a portion of time only for sleeping – is not necessary in a full-day kindergarten class.

**Naptime structure.** In the rationale section of Chapter 1, I explained that there are many demands placed upon teachers during naptime, and some teachers may find the demands challenging. Potential demands include the need to supervise both the children who nap and those who do not. A conducive environment for naptime needs to be set up, and then cleaned and packed up when it is over (Ward et al., 2008). Therefore, this section will examine: (1) what is a conducive environment for naptime? Is it possible to create a conducive environment for napping in school? (2) What are the demands on teachers?

**Conducive environment.** When parents and teachers were asked what an ideal naptime would look like, I asked them to imagine they had all the money and resources necessary to create their vision. With that in mind, many responded that they would like cots and beds in the classroom. As mentioned in the findings section, a conducive environment would be one where not all children have to nap. This supports a rest time, where some children sleep and some play quietly. Furthermore, many participants mentioned a need for stuffed animals, blankets, lights off or dimmed, and soft quiet music playing. Therefore, a sleeping centre, as some participants suggested, would not meet all the requirements for a conducive environment since it would be highly unlikely to have lights dimmed and soft music playing in only one area of the classroom. It would therefore be difficult for each child to achieve the Rapid Eye Movement (REM) or Non-
Rapid Eye Movement (NREM) sleep cycles that Siren-Tiusanen and Robinson (2001) explained are important in the daily rhythms of young children.

Demands on teachers. As discussed in the Findings chapter, teachers have trouble ensuring the children are quiet, potentially sleeping, or occupied. Additionally, children each have different needs to be met and some children require more privacy than others. Ashley Deer suggested that children need different environments to sleep in, and the classroom set-up may not be beneficial for each student. Yet, nobody mentioned that the set up and take down of naptime was particularly difficult. Teacher Adrianna did mention that it takes an extra ten minutes to do this, but did not mention this as a negative trait, just as a statement that should be factored in when deciding on a naptime length.

Teachers’ responsibilities. In the rationale, I quoted a study stating that teachers may perceive students who are tired to be “late, lazy, and disobedient” (Ravid et al., 2009). I questioned that if children who lack sleep are viewed as having issues of poor character or are in need of a change of attitude, perhaps it is the teacher’s responsibility to inquire about the students’ sleep schedules. As well, teachers monitor children’s behaviour and their levels of exhaustion. They, sometimes in consultation with parents, provide naptime options. Therefore in this section I will examine what a teacher’s responsibility is, relating to the sleep of their kindergarten aged students.

Teachers Jenny, Brenda, and Adrianna acknowledged that teachers need to consult parents about the rest or naptime decision. Brenda provided an excellent suggestion that at the beginning of the school year, parents should be asked if they want their child to sleep or not. This would help bring parents into the classroom, and allow them to have a voice in the classroom. Additionally, this would also help solve the issue that Aviva and Kacey raised. They were
concerned that students would copy their friends, rather than make the choice based on what they really needed, making rest time not the best use of time. However, by teachers and parents previously discussing the child’s rest time activity, the child’s parents would have already made the decision, preventing the issue. Changes would need to be allowed as the year progresses, so that a child may naturally move from using the rest time for sleeping to using it for quiet activities. Therefore, it is appropriate that teachers ask parents their preference concerning how their children spend rest time, and check in with parents at various points throughout the year.

**Conclusions and Implications for Napping in Full-Day Kindergarten**

As I interviewed teachers and parents they kept mentioning how difficult it is to meet the needs of every child in the class. Parents explained that they tended not to be aware what other students required and were only aware of their own child’s needs, or the needs of their child’s close friends. Teachers expressed the desire to ensure each child is given what they need to succeed. Specifically, to meet each child’s needs, Teacher Kacey had a combined nap/quiet time in her class. She added that it was nice for her JK students to have their blanket during this time, even though most students were not asleep. In teacher Adrianna’s classroom, if a child did not sleep she provided blocks, books, colouring, and Lego for them to have for quiet time. She and teacher Summer also noticed that often the children with ADHD found naptime difficult, so those children assisted teachers with prep to keep busy. Parent/teacher Jenny further explained that her naptime only had sleeping children until spring. By then it had naturally evolved into quiet time with reading books on blankets. Nel Noddings (2005) explains that teachers have to meet every child’s needs. This work has informed my own conclusion about naptime and its necessity in a full-day kindergarten program.
Noddings (2005) stated that schools are more than just a place for academia. Schools have morphed to become places that tackle social, emotional, physical, and moral aims. Noddings refers to this as teaching the “whole child.” Positive sleep habits are a significant part of the physical health of any person (Curcio et al., 2006) and therefore fall under the realm of “teaching the whole child.” But Noddings, as well as many of my participants, raises another issue – children have many overwhelming needs. She mentions that, often, teachers are put into the position to act as parents when deciding what is best for their students. Therefore two kinds of needs surface (1) An expressed need, where the child tells the teacher in words or in behaviour what they need and, (2) an inferred need, where the teacher knows what the child needs because someone else has already told the teacher. It is my understanding that many students have conflicting needs. Teachers struggle to meet these needs during a naptime/rest time/quiet time/down time period.

My research suggests that the only way to meet the needs of children is by combining information from both expressed and inferred needs. To do so, a great solution is to only have rest time, not naptime, and it should be available in JK (not SK) only. For example, in Adrianna’s classroom parents told her if their child should sleep or not, creating an inferred need. Yet, some students found this time to be difficult because they could not sleep or stay quiet. They asked Adrianna for some Lego to play with, creating an expressed need. The child let Adrianna know that he was not enthused by this time and needed something to occupy him. The rest time would accommodate both the expressed and inferred needs in this situation.

The published research I have read, and the data I have gathered from participants, has led me to conclude that naps are only helpful if: (1) a child is sleeping less than 11-13 hours per night, (2) has poor sleep, (3) is under the age of four, or (4) has longer days than his/her
classmates (for example, attends extended-day programming). My suggestion is that in full-day JK there is an option after lunch and recess to have rest time. In a combined JK/SK class, the SK students will be the ones quietly playing and the JK students will have an option to sleep or play with the SK children. Perhaps there could be two classrooms, one managed by the teacher and one by the early childhood educator. One room would be set up as a conducive environment for sleeping, with small cots or mats, blankets, and lights off. The other classroom would be available for the students who do not need to sleep and they could have free-play time, with play being geared towards learning, of course. It may not be appropriate for children to decide on their own which option they choose. Children may not know how to decide what is best for them and might simply follow their friends. They may not be able to express their need. Therefore, discussing with parents what is best for the child (asking parents to communicate the inferred need), is the preferred course of action. However, Noddings explains that not all children’s emotional and physical needs are being met by their parents. Therefore, it is also the teacher’s role to act as a parent and gage the child’s need, and guide the child to the best choice. Since children have so many different needs during the day, it is impossible for a teacher to make this decision without a parent providing background information and expressing their desires for their child. For example, even though Kaptin America’s daughter was tired, her parents needed to rid her of a nap and did not want her to sleep.

Limitations

There are limitations in this study. The following section will explore these limitations in detail.

One limitation concerns the number of parent-participants with similar living situations. Ideally, this study would examine participants from a wide variety of backgrounds. I found most
of my participants through personal connections and snowball sampling, therefore, the participants ended up being of similar class and background, namely, they were mostly well-educated, middle-class women in two-parent families with dual income. Perhaps participants with more diverse socioeconomic status or different gender would have added to the richness of this study.

Another limitation concerned the amount of background information about teachers that I collected. More information about the participants who were teachers may have been helpful. Perhaps with more data regarding the participating teachers’ experiences with their own children and napping, the study would have provided readers with data useful in contextualizing teachers’ viewpoints.

Other limitations relate to the fact that the full-day kindergarten program is brand new in Ontario. This had a number of ramifications for the study. First of all, there was little literature that addressed naptime in full-day kindergarten in Ontario, which gave this study little to build on. In addition, teachers and parents had minimal familiarity with the program, so they did not have a long history of experiences to draw from and share. There is potential for participants to change their perceptions as the program continues.

Finally, the study was limited in the data collection regarding the students. Perhaps adding an observational component to my research would have allowed for more richer information about the children’s naptime experiences, as well as their behaviour in the classroom. These observations might have informed pointed questions for teachers and parents enabling me to illuminate the relationship between sleep, classroom behaviour, and academic achievement.
Final Remarks

Despite the limitations listed above, this study makes meaningful contributions to understanding naptime in full-day kindergarten. While this study only examined data from a small number of teachers and parents, the issues they raise can suggest to other teachers and parents, and administrators and policy makers, what is significant and what needs to be considered in terms of naptime and full-day kindergarten. In addition, this thesis makes clear recommendations regarding naptime: it suggests a possible way forward for teachers and parents based on a synthesis of published literature and the data I collected and analyzed. In addition to the implications for napping, this study also suggests to teachers that they should exercise caution when allowing screen time in the classroom. This thesis also warns parents about including screen time in daily bedtime and wake time routines. Finally, this study emphasizes the need for communication between parents and teachers in order to meet the needs of every student.

This study demonstrates a need for further investigation into the relationships between academia and sleep, screen time and sleep, and camp and sleep patterns. Within each study there could be a focus on kindergarten age children in order to contribute to the research in this area.
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Appendices

Appendix A:

Interview Questions for Teachers with naptime in their classroom:

1. Can you tell me about your teaching career thus far?
   a. How long have you been teaching? Public or Private school?
   b. How long have you been teaching Kindergarten?
2. Can you describe how naptime unfolds in your classroom?
   a. What is the naptime routine?
   b. How long do the children nap? How long do they actually sleep? *Do any of the children sleep?
   c. Explain the environment your student naps in. (noisy, disruptive, calm, soothing)
3. Describe your feelings about the necessity of naptime in full-day JK and SK classrooms.
4. Can you describe children’s reaction to naptime in the classroom?
5. How do you think a daytime nap affects children for the duration of the school day?
6. How does the extended-day program affect a child’s sleep schedule?
7. Overall, can you list some advantages to having a daytime nap in FDK?
8. Overall, can you list some disadvantages to having a daytime nap in FDK?
9. How would you structure an ideal naptime in a FDK class?
10. Can you describe the local context and how it might affect sleep patterns in your students?
Appendix B:

Interview Questions for Teachers without naptime in their classroom:

1. Can you tell me about your teaching career thus far?
   a. How long have you been teaching? Public or Private school?
   b. How long have you been teaching kindergarten?
2. Have you ever taught kindergarten when there was a naptime?
   i. If yes - Can you describe the naptime routine?
3. Describe your feelings about the necessity of naptime in full-day JK and SK classrooms.
4. What are some of the reactions of your students about not having a daytime in FDKP?
5. How does the extended-day program affect a child’s sleep schedule?
6. Overall, can you list some advantages to having a daytime nap in FDK?
7. Overall, can you list some disadvantages to having a daytime nap in FDK?
8. How would you structure an ideal naptime in a FDK class?
9. Can you describe the local context and how it might affect sleep patterns in your students?
Appendix C:

Interview Questions for Parents:

1. Can you tell me about your family and children?
2. Can you tell me about your child’s/children’s experience with day care and kindergarten?
   i. Have they had naptime?
   ii. Half day? Full day?
3. Does your child have naptime in their FDK class?
   a. How do you feel about that? Like/Dislike? Why?
4. *If you have had other children in kindergarten, can you please describe their experiences with napping?
5. If your child naps during the day, how does that affect their nightly sleep?
6. If your child does not sleep during the day, how does that affect their nightly sleep?
7. Can you describe how a typical nightly bedtime routine unfolds for your child?
   a. Explain the environment your child sleeps in. (noisy, disruptive, calm, soothing)
8. Can you describe how a typical wake-time routine unfolds for your child?
9. Can you describe your child’s history with napping?
   a. Length of daytime nap?
   b. When/Have they stopped napping during the day?
10. Can you describe your child’s adjustment to FDK?
11. How does the extended-day program affect a child’s sleep schedule?
12. Overall, can you list some advantages to having a daytime nap in FDK?
13. Overall, can you list some disadvantages to having a daytime nap in FDK?
14. What has your child’s response been to having/not having a daytime naptime in school?
15. How would you structure an ideal naptime in a FDK class?
16. Can you describe the local context and how it might affect sleep patterns for your children?
Appendix D

Letter of Information – Parents/Guardians

Naptime in Full-Day Kindergarten

This study is being conducted by Melody Gilboord under the supervision of Dr. Benjamin Bolden in the Faculty of Education at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario. This study has been granted clearance according to the recommended principles of Canadian ethics guidelines, and Queen's policies.

What is this study about? The purpose of this research is to understand the perceptions of teachers and parents regarding naptime in full-day Kindergarten.

Who can participate? Participant parents or guardians are required to have had a child in Kindergarten within the past two years. Children may have attended public or private school.

What does this study involve? There are two ways you may participate: by taking part in a focus group discussion or by being interviewed. Participants are able to decide which method they would like to partake in, but may not participate in both.

- **Focus Group for parents/guardians:** 6 parents/guardians will engage in a facilitated discussion. It will last approximately 60 - 90 minutes and will take place at a time and location convenient to those involved. Questions will gather contextual details pertaining to perceptions of naptime and seek to find out what parents/guardians experienced and learned when their child entered Kindergarten with or without a naptime in the classroom. The focus group will be digitally audio-recorded. After the focus group the researcher will summarize the highlights of the discussion and invite participants to make clarifications and changes.

- **Interviews for parent/guardians:** Interviews will last approximately 30 - 45 minutes and will take place at a time and location convenient to you. Questions will gather contextual details pertaining to your experiences and your perceptions of naptime in full or half day Kindergarten. The interview will be digitally audio-recorded. You will be emailed the transcript of your interview and invited to make any changes you wish in order to ensure your views are accurately represented. This verification procedure will likely take another 15-30 minutes of your time.

Are there any risks involved in this study? There are no known physical, psychological, economic, or social risks associated with this study. You do not need to answer questions that you do not want to answer or that make you feel uncomfortable.
**Is my participation voluntary?** Your participation is entirely voluntary. If you decide to be part of the study, you may withdraw at any time and for any reason (even after signing the consent form), with no effect on your relationship with the investigators. You may also, without consequence, request the removal of all or part of your data from the research. To withdraw please contact Melody Gilboord at 9mag2@queensu.ca

**Confidentiality (Who will know what I said or did in the study?)**
Every effort will be made to protect your confidentiality and privacy to the extent possible. We will replace all names with pseudonyms before we begin to analyze the data. Results of the study may be disseminated through scholarly publications and presentations. We will not use your name or any information that would allow you to be identified in reporting our findings. For the focus group we will try to safeguard the confidentiality of the discussion. We will ask all members of the group to keep what is discussed confidential, but we cannot guarantee that they will do so. The data you provide will be kept locked and on a password-protected computer where only the researcher and supervisors will have access to it. In accordance with Faculty of Education policies, data will be retained for five years then destroyed.

**What if I have concerns?** Any questions about study participation may be directed to the researcher, Melody Gilboord (9mag2@queensu.ca), or her supervisor Dr. Ben Bolden (ben.bolden@queensu.ca). Any ethical concerns about the study may be directed to the Chair of the General Research Ethics Board at chair.GREB@queensu.ca or 613-533-6081.

**What do I do if I am interested in participating in this study?** If you wish to participate please sign the consent form (below) and either scan/email the form to Melody Gilboord at 9mag2@queensu.ca or by fax at 416-398-1867. Please indicate by email if you will be faxing the form. Please indicate if you would like to participate in a focus group discussion, an interview, or either.
CONSENT FORM – Parents/Guardians

Please sign one copy of this Letter of Information and Consent Form and return it to me.
Retain the second copy for your records.

I have read and understood the information presented in this letter of information and consent form about the study entitled Naptime in Full-Day Kindergarten being conducted by Melody Gilboord under the supervision of Dr. Benjamin Bolden in the Faculty of Education at Queen’s University. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my involvement. I have retained a copy of this letter of information and consent form. I understand that if I agree to participate in this study, I may withdraw at any time.

Please check the box on the left if the following statement applies to you:

| My child has been in Kindergarten within the past two years |

(If you are interested, please indicate how you would like to be involved. You may agree to participate in either an interview or a focus group.)

I agree to participate in an interview. Signature: ______________________

I agree to participate in a focus group. Signature: ______________________

Name (please print): ____________________________________________

Email: _________________________________ Phone: ______________________

If you would like a brief summary of the results, please provide an email address:

________________________________

Any questions about study participation may be directed to the researcher, Melody Gilboord (9mag2@queensu.ca), or her supervisor Dr. Ben Bolden (ben.bolden@queensu.ca). Any ethical concerns about the study may be directed to the Chair of the General Research Ethics Board at chair.GREB@queensu.ca or 613-533-6081.
Appendix E

Letter of Information - Teachers

Naptime in Full-Day Kindergarten

This study is being conducted by Melody Gilboord under the supervision of Dr. Benjamin Bolden in the Faculty of Education at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario. This study has been granted clearance according to the recommended principles of Canadian ethics guidelines, and Queen's policies.

What is this study about? The purpose of this research is to understand the perceptions of teachers and parents regarding naptime in full-day Kindergarten.

Who can participate? Participating teachers must be Ontario certified with a Bachelor in Education degree. It is required that teachers participating have worked in a Kindergarten classroom for a minimum of two years.

What does this study involve? There are two ways you may participate: by taking part in a focus group discussion or by being interviewed. Participants are able to decide which method they would like to partake in, but may not participate in both.

- **Focus Group for teachers:** 6 teachers will engage in a facilitated discussion. It will last approximately 60 - 90 minutes and will take place at a time and location convenient to those involved. Questions will gather contextual details pertaining to perceptions of naptime and seek to find out what teachers experienced and learned working within a Kindergarten classroom. The focus group will be digitally audio-recorded. After the focus group the researcher will summarize highlights of the discussion, and invite participants to make clarifications and changes.

- **Interviews for teachers:** Interviews will last approximately 30 - 45 minutes and will take place at a time and location convenient to you. Questions will gather contextual details pertaining to your experiences and your perceptions of naptime in full or half day Kindergarten. The interview will be digitally audio-recorded. You will be emailed the transcript of your interview and invited to make any changes you wish in order to ensure your views are accurately represented. This verification procedure will likely take another 15-30 minutes of your time.

Are there any risks involved in this study? There are no known physical, psychological, economic, or social risks associated with this study. You do not need to answer questions that you do not want to answer or that make you feel uncomfortable.

Is my participation voluntary? Your participation is entirely voluntary. If you decide to be part
of the study, you may withdraw at any time and for any reason (even after signing the consent form), with no effect on your relationship with the investigators. You may also, without consequence, request the removal of all or part of your data from the research. To withdraw please contact Melody Gilboord at 9mag2@queensu.ca

Confidentiality (Who will know what I said or did in the study?)
Every effort will be made to protect your confidentiality and privacy to the extent possible. We will replace all names with pseudonyms before we begin to analyze the data. Results of the study may be disseminated through scholarly publications and presentations. We will not use your name or any information that would allow you to be identified in reporting our findings. For the focus group we will try to safeguard the confidentiality of the discussion. We will ask all members of the group to keep what is discussed confidential, but we cannot guarantee that they will do so. The data you provide will be kept locked and on a password-protected computer where only the researcher and supervisors will have access to it. In accordance with Faculty of Education policies, data will be retained for five years then destroyed.

What if I have concerns? Any questions about study participation may be directed to the researcher, Melody Gilboord (9mag2@queensu.ca), or her supervisor Dr. Ben Bolden (ben.bolden@queensu.ca). Any ethical concerns about the study may be directed to the Chair of the General Research Ethics Board at chair.GREB@queensu.ca or 613-533-6081.

What do I do if I am interested in participating in this study? If you wish to participate please sign the consent form (below) and either scan/email the form to Melody Gilboord at 9mag2@queensu.ca or fax to 416-398-1867. Please indicate by email if you will be faxing the form. Please indicate if you would like to participate in a focus group discussion, an interview, or either.
CONSENT FORM - Teachers

*Please sign one copy of this Letter of Information and Consent Form and return it to me. Retain the second copy for your records.*

I have read and understood the information presented in this letter of information and consent form about the study entitled *Naptime in Full-Day Kindergarten* being conducted by Melody Gilboord under the supervision of Dr. Benjamin Bolden in the Faculty of Education at Queen’s University. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my involvement. I have retained a copy of this letter of information and consent form. I understand that if I agree to participate in this study, I may withdraw at any time.

Please check the box on the left if the following statements apply to you:

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<th>I am O.C.T Certified</th>
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<td>I have a Bachelor of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have taught Kindergarten for a minimum of two years</td>
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*(If you are interested, please indicate how you would like to be involved. You may agree to participate in either an interview or focus group.)*

I agree to participate in an **interview**.  
*Signature: __________________________*

I agree to participate in a **focus group**. *Signature: __________________________*

Name (please print):  _________________________________________

Email: _________________________________ Phone: _______________________

*If you would like a brief summary of the results, please provide an email address:*

________________________________________

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