

## School Support

Narcolepsy is poorly recognized and seriously under-diagnosed. It is not uncommon for a child to be diagnosed with ADHD, Depression, behavioral disorders, sleep apnea, or even Schizophrenia before receiving the true Narcolepsy diagnosis.

*With the help of the school, a student with narcolepsy can be successful.*



- Teachers who know how to respond to EDS and Cataplexy can influence how fellow students and school staff respond to a student with Narcolepsy.
- Teachers should understand the child is not just being lazy.
- Teachers must ensure all accommodations are provided in the classroom and for state, district, and college entrance exams.
- Teachers can support the family through observations, related to medication, sleep, and behavior.

## 504 vs. IEP: What Does Your Child Need

**Most children with Narcolepsy can be successful in the general education classroom with supports and accommodations through a 504 plan.**

### Section 504: Rehabilitation Act

- Federal *Civil Rights Law* that protects against discrimination-Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Provides a plan for how the child will access the learning environment.
- Provides services/changes to the learning environment to level the playing ground for the child with a disability.
- Can continue to receive 504 accommodations in post-secondary education.

**Eligibility:** 1) Child “has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities,” (2) has a record of such an impairment, or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment. (34 C.F.R. §104.3(j)(1)).

### Individualized Education Plan

- Federal *Special Education Law*-Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- Provides a plan for the child’s special education program at school.
- Provides individualized special education and related services to the child with a disability to meet the child’s educational needs.
- IEP will discontinue when the student graduates (or ages out) of the K-12 education system.

**Eligibility:** 1) Child has been identified as having one or more of the 13 specific disabilities listed under IDEA, and 2) the disability must affect the child’s educational performance and/or ability to learn and benefit from the general education curriculum.



## Accommodations

- Do not penalize for being tardy.
- Allow for short/scheduled naps (20-30 mins.) either in the classroom or a designated area. Do not wake up if the student falls asleep in class.
- Allow student to stand during class, move around, and have access to water. This can help the student to stay awake.
- Checks for comprehension of tasks, as student may experience microsleeps during instruction.
- Do not keep student in at break times to catch up on work. The student needs this time to move around and wake up.
- Allow for peer notetaking, teacher provided copy of notes, and/or recorded lectures, as student may experience microsleeps during lecture.
- Allow for preferential seating.
- Reduced assignments/tasks once the student demonstrates mastery.

### Test Accommodations

- Schedule tests during times student is most awake.
- Allow for breaks during testing to move around and get water.
- Allow for extra time to accommodate naps

## Impact on Childhood

Research shows that chronic excessive daytime sleepiness (EDS) among school-aged children is associated with poorer academic functioning, school failure, school absenteeism/tardiness, and conduct problems. Additionally, EDS is associated with increased risk-taking behavior and impulsivity. Additional areas of impact include:

- Relationships (Personal/Educational)
- Making Friends
- Keeping Friends
- Family Relationships
- Emotional Wellbeing/Control
- School Activity Engagement
- Education/Sport Participation
- Career Choice/Job Retention
- Physical Wellbeing
- Public Safety- Driving



*They have loved the stars too fondly  
to be fearful of the night!*



Connect with WUN:

[www.wakeupnarcolepsy.org](http://www.wakeupnarcolepsy.org)



PO Box 60293

Worcester, MA 01606

## Childhood Narcolepsy and the K-12 Education System



Taking Narcolepsy  
from the Shadows  
into the Light

## What is Narcolepsy

Narcolepsy is an incurable, neurological sleep disorder where the brain is unable to regulate typical sleep-wake cycles. Typical onset occurs between ages 10-20.

- **Excessive Daytime Sleepiness (EDS)**  
The inability to stay awake and alert during the day.
- **Cataplexy**  
A sudden, brief loss of muscle tone caused by experiencing strong emotions.
- **Sleep Disruption**  
The breaking up of sleep by many awakenings. Poor-quality sleep at night: falling asleep easily, but having trouble staying asleep
- **Sleep Paralysis**  
A brief inability to move or speak while falling asleep or waking up.
- **Hypnagogic Hallucinations**  
Vivid dream-like events that occur while falling asleep or waking up. They can be experienced as multisensory hallucinations.

