

What can you do to try and sleep well?

THE BEDROOM

Some of this may seem pretty obvious but the idea is to send your body (and your brain) a very clear message that your bedroom is for going to sleep in!

- **Keep your bedroom dark and cool.**

Your body temperature fluctuates throughout the night so make sure you have the option to stay warm and to cool off when required.

- **Use subdued lighting**

Your brain recognizes when the sun starts to go down and this changes production of certain hormones to promote sleep. If you stay in brighter light your body can be fooled into staying awake longer.

- **Remove or pack away electronic gadgets.**

The light from most screens is very similar to daylight and has even more chance of keeping you awake! The less there is to keep you occupied—the more chance of falling asleep.

IN THE EVENING

- **Have a good meal, but not too close to bedtime.**
- **Clear homework away as soon as possible.**
- **Do anything stimulating like watching TV, exercise, play computer games etc. as early as possible.**

THE LAST HOUR IS THE MOST IMPORTANT

This is where your body should be winding down in preparation for a good nights sleep.

- **Switch off all the gadgets**
- **Try and relax, listen to music or read.**

It's all about building a healthy routine - speak to a Sleep Mentor if you want advice.

The Sound Sleep teaching pack

Sound Sleep is a teaching pack specifically designed for secondary schools to raise awareness of the importance of sleep for emotional and physical wellbeing. The pack includes:-

- User guide
- Background reading for teachers
- Curriculum guidelines
- Detailed lesson plans for all secondary school age groups
- Resources for planning lessons including presentations and handouts
- Resources to address staff and parental awareness of sleep and it's importance for general wellbeing

How much sleep does a teenager need?
9 to 9 1/4 hrs!



Registered as a Charity No SC 027560



Wake up to the importance of adequate sleep for our teenagers



Do YOU know how much sleep a teenager needs?

ADULT = 7 to 8 hours

CHILD = 9 to 11 hours

TEENAGER = ???



Registered as a Charity No SC 027560

Why is sleep so important?

We tend to think of sleep as a time when our bodies shut down and there isn't much happening; how wrong we are! There is a great deal of vital activity taking place while we sleep, which is so important if you happen to be a teenager!

PHYSICAL

A whole cocktail of hormones are released during sleep, including growth hormone which helps with the following:-

- Increases height in children and adolescents
- Increases muscle mass
- Strengthens bones
- Boosts immune system
- Contributes to cell repair
- Breaks down fat

MENTAL

Different learning processes occur during different stages of sleep:-

- Memory consolidation
- Vocabulary
- Pronunciation
- Auditory memories (ability to remember words and sounds)

EMOTIONAL

As teenagers, life can sometimes be a bit of an emotional rollercoaster and sleep is important to help us deal with:-

- Crisis
- Stress
- Anxiety

What is the impact of poor sleep?

So, what are the implications of not getting enough quality sleep?

PHYSICAL

Lack of sleep can interfere with the production of a balanced level of certain hormones which can lead to the following:-

• OBESITY

Believe it or not, lack of sleep can affect your appetite. Sleep deprivation leads to a reduction in the hormone that suppresses your appetite AND an increase in the hormone that increases your appetite. It can even make you crave energy-dense (sugary) foods!

MENTAL

Your ability to learn is altered by sleep deprivation. This is of course of great importance to our teenagers in secondary education.

• IMPAIRED LEARNING

Lack of sleep = lower marks. It has been shown in some research studies that getting an extra 15 minutes sleep a night on average can mean the difference between an 'B' grade and a 'A' grade!

EMOTIONAL

The part of your brain that controls emotion, decision making and the ability to work with other people is one of the most sensitive to sleep deprivation.

• DEPRESSION

The part of the brain that stores POSITIVE memories is more likely to be affected than the part that stores NEGATIVE memories! It's been shown in some research that a teenager getting less than 5hrs sleep per night is 71% more likely to become depressed.

How to spot a sleep deprived teenager

You may look at this list and think it describes any teenager! Could it be there are so many teenagers not getting enough sleep that these behaviours are common place?

- Difficulty waking in the morning, may sleep through alarm.
- Irritability late in the day.
- Falling asleep spontaneously during quiet times of the day.
- Sleeping for extra long periods at the weekends.
- A low mood, depressed, excessively anxious or stressed.
- Predisposed to greater emotional outbursts.
- Inability to concentrate or focus at school.
- Excessive use of computer games or mobile phones after going to bed.
- Complaining of fatigue or loss of energy.
- Poor motor co-ordination.
- Accident prone.
- Impulsive or erratic behavior.

In this digital age, many of our teenagers' bedrooms have turned into the equivalent of multi media 'studio flats'. With numerous interactive devices such as mobile phones, laptops, tablets and TVs all sending out a form of light that fools our brain into thinking it's still daytime — we need to consciously work on our behaviours to ensure we have a healthy sleep regime.