

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

HEALTHY SLEEP FOR TEENS



Sleep is an important part of our overall health. As a teenager, it's recommended that you get 8-10 hours of sleep a night. Is this easy? No. Do you have a lot on your mind? Probably. Does our world make it hard to create an environment that lets us get good quality sleep? Sure does. But following a few simple tips can help improve your sleep quality and quantity.

RESOURCES

Please visit essexpediatrics.com/resources/ for links and additional resources.

Child Mind Institute -

<https://childmind.org/article/help-teenagers-get-sleep/>

The Sleep Foundation -

<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/teens-and-sleep>

Meditation apps - Calm,

Headspace for Teens, Insight Timer are just a few examples. Find what works best for you

Sleep Diplomat-

<https://www.sleepdiplomat.com/>

WHY IS SLEEP SUCH A BIG DEAL

Sleeping is when your body takes time to repair itself. Sleep helps us fight off sickness and rebuild our muscles but it also is a critical piece of keeping our brains healthy. Did you know that symptoms of sleep deprivation can mimic anxiety and depression?

Lack of sleep causes a decrease in our ability to emotionally regulate, to take in information and to process things. Ever feel grumpy after a night of bad sleep? Well, that's probably because your emotional reactivity is heightened.

When we sleep, our stress hormones decrease and our sympathetic nervous system gets a break. Between school, extracurriculars, relationships, and other responsibilities, giving your brain and body time to truly rest is so important.

THE DO'S AND DONT'S OF GOOD SLEEP

- **DO** have a sleep schedule. Budget for **8-10 hours of sleep**. Maintaining this schedule with consistent sleep and wake times can help our bodies learn the drill..
- **DO** have a **bedtime routine**. This could include a snack, self-care, journaling, listening to calming music, reading a book or meditating (there are some great apps with sleep meditations!)
- **DO** make your bedroom a cool temperature. According to sleep experts, somewhere around **65 degrees** is ideal
- **DO** have fun with this! Experiment with what works for you. Maybe you like to journal and have a lavender scented candle. Maybe you want to take a bath and listen to a sleep meditation. **Creating your bedtime ritual can be a fun way to take care of yourself.**
- **DON'T** drink **caffeine** in the afternoon or evening (or at all if you can swing it).
- **DON'T** look at a screen in your bed. Research shows that devices reduce our production of melatonin, which is the brain chemical that makes us sleepy. **Put screens away** 30 minutes to an hour before bed. Consider using do not disturb mode if you need to have your phone in your room for an alarm.
- **DON'T beat yourself up** if you have a hard time sleeping. Talk to your parent, your doctor or a mental health clinician if you need more support.