



Teen  
Sleep  
Hub

# TEEN SLEEP MATTERS

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS  
ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S SLEEP

POWERED BY





# PARENT INFORMATION ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S SLEEP

## WELCOME

**The Sleep Charity provides evidence-based sleep information and support to help the nation to get a good night's sleep. Sleep issues are very common, particularly during the teenage years.**

This short information leaflet will provide you with important information to help you to understand more about your child's sleep patterns and ways to support them to get a better night's sleep.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

Sleep is vital for our wellbeing. A sleep deprived young person cannot meet their full potential and it impacts on mental, physical and emotional health.

Young people who get adequate sleep are more likely to:

- Be mentally alert
- Meet their full potential
- Concentrate in school
- Feel calmer
- Have a stronger immune system
- Release hormones appropriately at night to support their growth and weight
- And much more!







## THE SCIENCE OF SLEEP

Teenagers go through biological changes meaning they are more likely to release the sleep hormone melatonin later at night-time. It is this hormone that makes us feel drowsy. During adolescence this is not released until later which means young people can find it hard to nod off. It also means that they can find it hard to wake up the next morning for school or college!

Our body clocks help to regulate appetite and body temperature. We rely on environmental cues to keep it on track such as alarm clocks and eating at roughly the same time each day. We need routine in order to keep our body clocks on schedule and this is why we stress the importance of regular sleep and wake times – even at the weekend!

Light and dark play an important role in our body clocks. Darkness helps us to produce melatonin and light suppresses it. This is why we should avoid light sources in the run up to sleep time – screen activities are best avoided.

We also build up a sleep drive during the day. We wake up (hopefully) feeling refreshed and as the day progresses get more and more tired until bedtime comes and we are ready for sleep. If we have a nap earlier in the day this may reduce this need for sleep. Many young people have a nap in the afternoon, reducing their sleep drive at night or they have lengthy weekend lie ins which again reduces the sleep drive!



# PARENT INFORMATION ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S SLEEP TOP TIPS

1

If your child has a sleep issue listen to them without judgment. You can't force sleep so no matter how many times you tell them to 'just go to sleep', they can't!

2

Educate yourself about sleep. We have information on our website ([www.thesleepcharity.org.uk](http://www.thesleepcharity.org.uk)) and have a website that is designed for young people too ([www.teensleephub.org.uk](http://www.teensleephub.org.uk)).

3

Encourage them to have regular sleep and wake up times – even at the weekend!

4

Open the curtains and let natural daylight flood the room first thing in the morning to re-set their body clock.

5

Consider their diet, sugary snacks are best avoided. Provide healthier options such as low sugar cereal or crackers and cheese for those evening munchies.





For more information on sleep and to download your **free copy** of the teen sleep eBook, visit [teensleephub.org.uk](https://teensleephub.org.uk)

6

Make the bedroom a relaxing place to be, discourage doing school work in bed.

7

Work with your child to establish an appropriate time to switch off devices before bed. Ideally they would avoid screen activity an hour before bed.

8

Encourage them to dim the lights or use a lamp in the evening to help produce melatonin.

9

Talk to your Sleep Champion in school for further information.







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