

KNOW! HOW TO SUPPORT HEALTHY SLEEP HABITS FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS

A good night's sleep is essential for young people's overall well-being. Teens, especially, face several challenges in getting consistent, restorative sleep, from staying up late and early school start times to time demands around school, work, and activities. In fact, the CDC reports that over 75% of high school students¹ don't get enough sleep on school nights. Sleep-deprived teens are also more likely to report mental stressors such as anxiety and depression.²

WHY YOUNG KIDS AND TEENS NEED GOOD SLEEP**SCHOOL, EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, AND WORK^{3,5}**

Sleep supports sharper thought processes, helping youth recognize the most important information for optimal learning. It also sparks creativity.

EMOTIONAL HEALTH^{3,5}

Many of us have experienced the negative impact of sleep loss on our mood (irritability and heightened emotions). For teens, lack of sleep has a greater negative impact as they adjust to increased responsibilities and new social connections.

DECISION-MAKING AND RISKY BEHAVIOR^{3,5}

Young brains are still developing, especially the frontal lobe, which influences decision-making and helps control impulsive behavior. A sleep-deprived child or teen is more likely to engage in risk-taking behaviors.

Small changes can make a big difference in sleep quality for young people. Read the following tips to help the youth in your life build healthy sleep habits.

6 TIPS TO SUPPORT HEALTHY SLEEP HABITS.**1****Keep Sleep Consistent**

Build eight uninterrupted hours of sleep into your child or teen's daily schedule—even on weekends.

A little flexibility is okay, but keeping weekend sleep schedules within two hours of weekday schedules can help young people maintain their natural sleep cycles and get the rest they need. ^{5,6}

2**Create a Pre-Bed Routine**

Work with your child or teen to develop a calming bedtime routine that helps them transition from the day to sleep.

Encourage them to shut down electronics at least 30 minutes before bed and choose activities that help them relax. ^{7,8,9}

3**Make Their Space Sleep-Friendly**

Create a cool, quiet, and dark sleep space that helps your child relax. Consider a fan, white noise machine, night light, earplugs, or room-darkening curtains, and keep the bed reserved for sleeping. ^{4,5,6,8}

4

Avoid an Overloaded Schedule

Being active is great, but a packed schedule can make it harder to wind down for sleep. Younger kids need time for homework and relaxing before bed, while teens with busier schedules may need more flexibility. Even on later nights, maintaining a bedtime routine and making time to relax can help.^{3,6}



5

Avoid Relying on Sleep Aids

Melatonin may seem like an easy sleep solution, but over-the-counter products can vary from what the label states.

While short-term use is generally safe, long-term effects on children's growth and development are not fully understood.^{10,11}

Small Changes Add Up

Healthy sleep habits may not create immediate results, but consistently practicing them can make a difference over time.

Work with your child or teen to identify routines that fit their needs, create opportunities to wind down, and make restorative sleep a regular part of their schedule.

6

Keep Tabs on Caffeine

Help your child avoid caffeinated products, including caffeinated sodas and energy drinks, especially during the afternoon and evening.

Caffeine promotes wakefulness and can reduce the amount and quality of sleep a young person gets, making it harder to feel refreshed the next day.¹²

RESOURCES

1. [Sleep Hygiene-Teen Handout | CHOC Children's](#)
2. [Sleep tips: How to help your teen get a good night's sleep](#)
3. [Sleep-Tips-for-Teens.pdf](#)
4. [Positive bedtime routines: babies, children and teenagers](#)

SOURCES

1. [FastStats: Sleep in High School Students](#)
2. [The prospective association between sleep deprivation and depression among adolescents](#)
3. [Teens and Sleep](#)
4. [Children and Sleep](#)
5. [Sleep Hygiene-Teen Handout | CHOC Children's](#)
6. [Teens and sleep: 7 tips to help your teen sleep better at night: Inside Children's Blog](#)
7. [Healthy Sleep Habits for Older Children and Teens](#)
8. [Sleep tips: How to help your teen get a good night's sleep](#)
9. [Bedtime routines: babies, children & teens | Raising Children Network](#)
10. [New advice on melatonin use in children - Harvard Healthy](#)
11. [Melatonin for Kids: What Parents Should Know About This Sleep Aid - HealthyChildren.org](#)
12. [Caffeine and Sleep](#)

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