



Sleep... everyone needs it!

Without enough sleep we are moody, can't concentrate, think, reason well, and our body can't turn the food we're eating into needed nutrition.

Why do we need sleep?

- While sleeping, your brain conducts important chemical processes. The brain produces melatonin, and its dopamine receptors are active. This is vital to your mood, memory, thinking skills, and bodily functions. Melatonin levels influence waking and sleeping.
- Memories are solidified while we sleep. Studying more than one evening before a test is the best approach to truly learning the information.
- Problems are solved while we sleep. There is research showing that the old adage is true... if you "sleep on it", you are more likely to come up with a resolution to a problem.
- Under 7 hours of sleep in teenagers is proven to create a drop in school performance, because you're not thinking well **OR** remembering well.
- Lack of sleep can cause depression and anxiety. Sorting out sleep problems can improve mental health.

Brain Rules: 12 Principles for Surviving and Thriving at Work, Home and School tells us: "...studies show that sleep loss cripples thinking in just about every way you can measure thinking. Sleep loss hurts attention, executive function, working memory, mood, quantitative skills, logical reasoning ability, and general math knowledge."

Get **GOOD** Sleep!

- Get your family into a regular sleep routine. Teens tend to have irregular sleep patterns across the week — they typically stay up late and sleep in late on the weekends, which can affect their biological clocks and hurt the quality of their sleep.
- Say no to devices!
 - Screen time before sleeping disrupts the brain's ability to produce melatonin.
 - Waking up during the night from a cell phone alert is very bad. Interrupted sleep is about the same as getting no sleep, because melatonin is not produced.
- Have a relaxing bedtime routine.
 - Routine activity right before bedtime, away from bright lights helps separate sleep time from activities that can cause excitement, stress or anxiety
 - Always fall asleep in bed, and not in front of the television.
 - At bedtime, the room should be cool, dark and quiet.
- On weekends, no matter how late your child goes to bed, try to get them up within 2 hours to 4 hours of their usual wake time. This is especially important if they have trouble falling asleep on Sunday nights.
- Try to be in bed with the lights out at least 8 hours per day. Many teens need 9 or 10 hours of sleep to not feel sleepy during the day.
- Get exercise every day, but avoid very hard exercise in the evening.
- Avoid all products with caffeine after mid-afternoon.
- Use your bed for sleeping only. Do not do homework, watch television or spend time talking on the phone while in your bed.
- Make sure your child is not overscheduled.
 - Have they taken on more than they can do?
 - Do they still have some time for fun and getting enough sleep?

Resources/References:

- Brain Rules: 12 Principles for Surviving and Thriving at Work, Home and School by John Medina: Second Edition; 2014
- Scientific American Mind Why is Blue Light Before Bedtime Bad for Sleep? By Jessica Schmerler, September 1, 2015
- <https://sleepfoundation.org/sleep-topics/teens-and-sleep>

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