

GETTING A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

TIPS FOR PARENTS FROM PARENTS

1. **D**on't give your teenagers computers for the bedroom
2. **E**ncourage exercise and a good diet
3. **I**f TVs are in the bedroom agree a time when TVs have to be switched off
4. **A**gree choices around bed times and getting up times rather than imposing rules
5. **H**ave a regular calm bedtime and avoid arguments late at night
6. **D**iscuss problems the following day
7. **Y**our teenager needs an alarm clock to get up for school independently

In order to help set the body clock...

1. **U**se an alarm clock
2. **T**ry to discourage day-time naps
3. **E**ncourage your teenager to open the curtains to let the light in when they wake up
4. **E**ncourage them to eat breakfast

For more information and guidance, please contact: Kylie Upsdell:
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THE TEENAGE BRAIN Notes for parents

Research about the sleep patterns of adolescents tells us that teenagers apparently need at least nine hours sleep each night, as much as younger children, and very few of them get that. They are going through a lot of changes, both physically and emotionally, and their brains are working hard to process these - although it may not always look like that from the outside!

Sleep deprivation will increase moodiness and will contribute to the short fuses and crankiness that often erupt in adolescence. Teenagers who get less sleep than their peers use more caffeine, alcohol, marijuana, and other drugs. Depressed teenagers often replay mental tapes of real or imagined stresses at bedtime and this will make it even harder for them to get to sleep.

Teenagers live in a different biological time zone from the rest of us. Puberty triggers changes in their biological clocks that make it hard for most of them to fall asleep before 11.30pm or midnight. Secretion of the hormone melatonin, which promotes sleepiness, starts about an hour later in the evening in adolescents than younger children, and also ends about an hour later in the morning. This means adolescents who have to get up to start school on time are in a state similar to jetlag and are not able to perform well. They perform much better later in the day.

So when they say that they can't get to sleep if they go to bed too early, and find it hard to get up in the morning, there are some reasons for this! However, we can help by encouraging good sleep habits and setting some clear boundaries.

**For parenting support please do contact Kylie Upsdell:
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