

# What happens when teens don't sleep???

The Staples Resilience Project has encouraged parents to be aware of the ways that a lack of sleep can affect their child's social, emotional, and intellectual development.

When teens don't get enough sleep (or don't experience a normal sleep cycle), it can...

- A. **Affect cognitive performance.** *Teens who have four or more technological devices in their bedroom are 2x more likely to fall asleep in school or while doing homework. They also do not perform as well on assessments.*
- B. **Create changes in mood.** *Younger teens who don't get enough sleep are more likely to be inattentive, impulsive, anxious, and oppositional.*
- C. **Lead to Mental Health issues.** *Teens who sleep **six or fewer hours** a night are 3x more likely to suffer from depression.*
- D. **Make them turn to substances.** *Sleep deprivation increases the risk of alcohol and drug abuse, especially among teens who are prescribed sleeping pills.*

## Quick Facts:

A **major study** showed that lack of sleep among our children has become a public health concern: **75%** of teens do not get the recommended **8 to 10 hours of sleep**. This can lead to higher levels of mental health problems, car accidents, lower academic engagement, and much more.

**Forty percent** of teens say that on most school nights they get *less than seven hours of sleep*, and there's a strong association between more screen time and less sleep. Since 2012, when the prevalence of teens owning smartphones started to increase, the number of hours teens sleep has steeply decreased. We hear this continually from students who have trouble shutting it down at night.

## What should I do? How can I talk to my child(ren) about the importance of sleep?

Here are a few tips and ways to get the conversation started this week:

1. Ask: how many hours of sleep do you think is optimal for you? Then, show them what the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM) recommends.

2. Agree on a family docking spot that everyone uses (the kids take notice when they don't see their parents modeling this behavior).
3. Instead of using a phone, have your child choose an old-fashioned alarm clock that you can purchase for them to use. You may decide to get one for yourself as well.
4. Encourage your teen to stick to a consistent bedtime that gives them 8 hours of sleep, just for one week – only a week. See if they feel better or perform better after that. After a week (hopefully!) they'll be able to see for themselves that a full night's sleep can make a beautiful difference.

*The Staples Resilience Project is an ongoing endeavor by the Staples Guidance Department aimed to promote the well-being of our students and foster a positive, inclusive school community.*

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