

The background of the cover is a dark blue night sky filled with white and yellow stars. On the left, a stylized illustration of a person with brown skin is lying in bed, covered by a grey blanket, reading a book. The bed has a blue pillow and a red blanket. To the right of the person, a white speech bubble contains the text 'Teen Sleep Hub'. The overall design is modern and colorful, with large, bold text for the title.

Teen
Sleep
Hub

YOU AND YOUR
SLEEP

A guide to better sleep
for teenagers

ONCE UPON A BEDTIME

Everyone needs sleep – especially teenagers – yet you may find it can be difficult to get the sleep you need.

Why? Well there are lots of different reasons. Some of them you can't help and are biological, making you want to go to sleep later, whereas others you can monitor such as your social media usage and homework schedule.

Sleeping difficulties commonly arise due to physical, mental, and social changes taking place in a teenager's life. The pressures of homework, exams, relationships with friends, social activities, part-time jobs and a host of fluctuating emotions can make it difficult for you to relax at night.



45%

45% OF ADOLESCENTS REPORTED GETTING LESS THAN EIGHT HOURS PER NIGHT!

HIT THIS LOGO IF YOU WANT TO RETURN TO THE BEGINNING OF THE BOOK >>

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In this book and within our hub, we'll share our top tips to help you get good quality, restorative sleep. But more importantly than that, we'll also tell you WHY you should do these things, explaining the science behind it all and how it impacts on other areas of your wellbeing such as mental health. With this knowledge and understanding, you'll feel more confident in making the right changes to your sleep.

Everyone has issues with their sleep at some point but the trick is to discover why you are struggling and what you can do to improve things.

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WHY SLEEP IS IMPORTANT

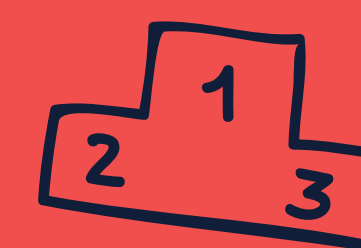
Sleep may be the last thing on your mind but here are some reasons why you should give it a little more thought...

SLEEP STARS

Having good quality sleep is vital to perform well and reach your potential in any sport.

During deep sleep, your body releases the growth hormone, repairs tissue, and restores your energy levels. Some of the best athletes in the world often talk about how important a good sleep routine is.

Sleep helps your body remain fit and healthy. This means you'll be faster, with better coordination, improved reaction times and increased mental and physical stamina. You will also recover quicker from injuries and be less susceptible to illness.



10 HOURS

ATHLETES WHO SLEPT FOR UP TO 10 HOURS A NIGHT SHOWED SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS IN SPRINT TIMES, SHOOTING PERCENTAGES, AND ENERGY LEVELS AFTER A FEW WEEKS COMPARED WITH THEIR PERFORMANCES WHEN THEY MANAGED ONLY 6-8 HOURS A NIGHT²

- Serena Williams

"I require consistent, restful sleep in order to be at my best"

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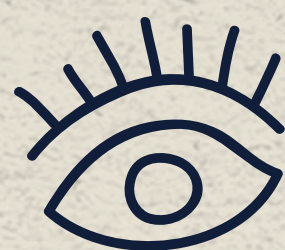
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SLEEPING BEAUTY

It's not called beauty sleep for nothing...

Getting the right amount of sleep makes it easier to maintain a healthy weight as it helps to control the appetite and reduces cravings for sugary junk food.

Hormones are released when we sleep and support different functions including our growth, strength and help us become more developed. Sleep also boosts our immune system and can help avoid those pesky spots and blemishes.



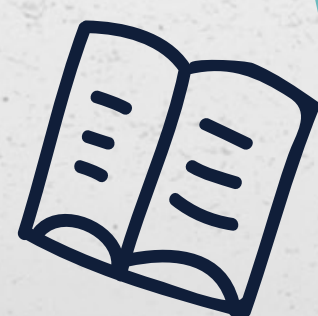
 A good sleep routine will help to make your skin clearer, eyes brighter, hair thicker and less greasy.



20%

20% MORE LIKELY TO BE INVOLVED IN A CAR CRASH OVER A TWO YEAR PERIOD SLEEPING SIX HOURS OR FEWER³

 Don't cram into the night for exams - a good night's sleep is one of the best revision tools to use.



BRAIN POWER

Lack of sleep will make it harder to concentrate and remember important things.

After a poor night's sleep, anything you learnt yesterday could be gone today – the last thing you need when you are in an exam! During sleep your brain is processing all the information you've received throughout the day, forming memories and keeping it for later.

If you're learning to drive or have passed your test, did you know that driving when sleep deprived is seriously dangerous? Your reaction times are slower, increasing the risk of an accident.

In fact, a study has shown that sleep deprivation has a bigger impact on reaction times while driving than alcohol consumption.



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MOOD MIX UP

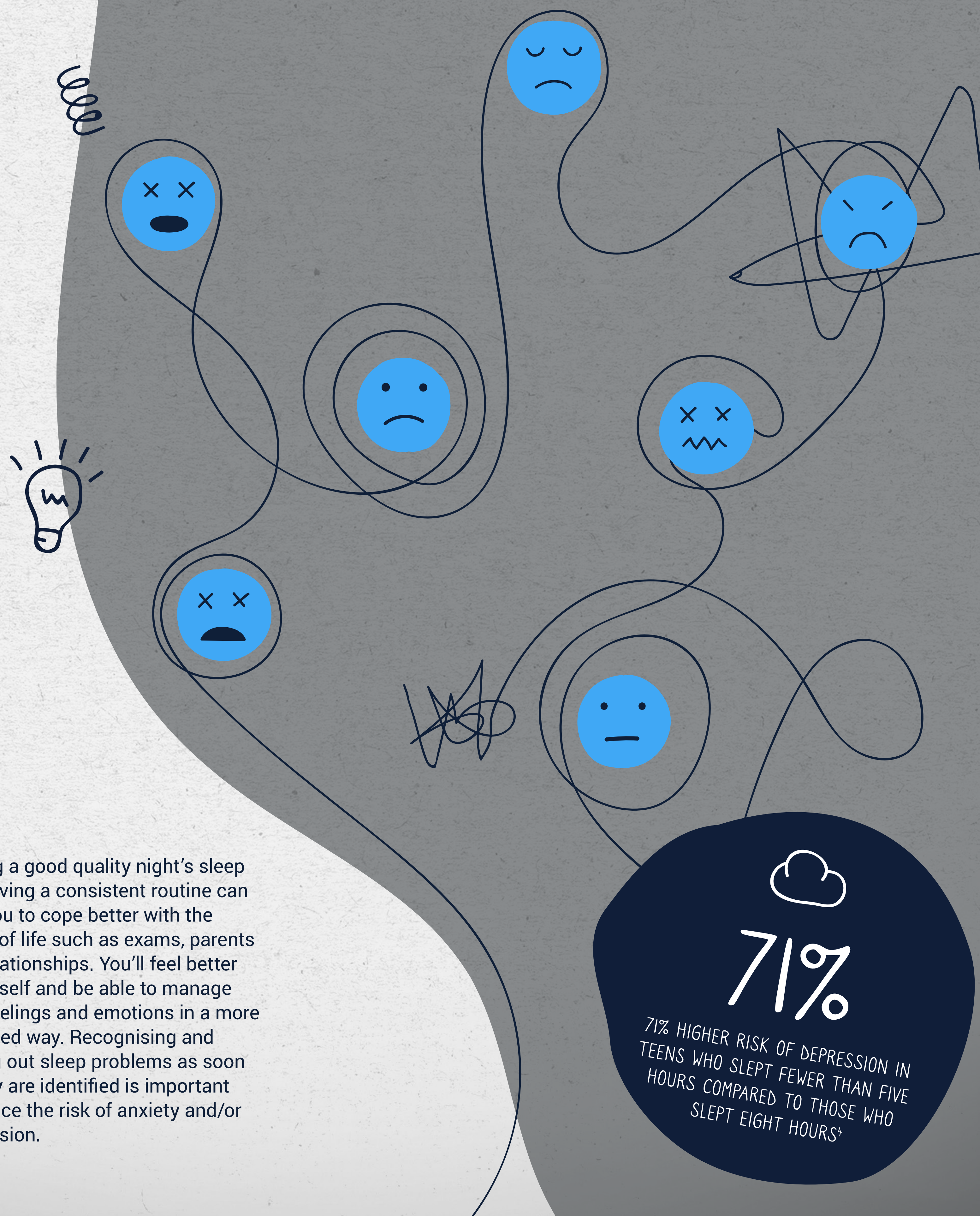
You're more likely to feel down when you are tired.

It's often easy to write off teenagers' moods as part of adolescence. Sometimes, that's the case however symptoms of sleep deprivation include low mood, anxiety, and irritability.

There's a close relationship between sleep and mental health. Lack of sleep can affect mental health, but mental health problems can also affect how well you sleep – both the quantity and the quality of it – so it's extremely important to look and address both issues. Ongoing poor sleep can be a huge risk factor for the development of major depressive disorder. Health professionals will always enquire about both mood and sleep behaviour when making any kind of diagnosis.

You're more likely to feel down when you are tired. Sleep has an important restorative function in 'recharging' the brain at the end of each day and also gives you the ability to manage and cope. This is why just having one bad night's sleep can make you feel low, emotional, and grumpy the next day.

Getting a good quality night's sleep and having a consistent routine can help you to cope better with the stress of life such as exams, parents and relationships. You'll feel better in yourself and be able to manage your feelings and emotions in a more regulated way. Recognising and sorting out sleep problems as soon as they are identified is important to reduce the risk of anxiety and/or depression.



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WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU DON'T GET ENOUGH SLEEP?

Sleep is essential to your physical, emotional and mental wellbeing yet it often goes unrecognised.

When you don't get enough sleep, it could have a negative impact on all other areas of your life. It can affect the way you interact with your friends and family and make it difficult to maintain healthy relationships. It may be harder to retain information and perform to the best of your ability.

But by making some key changes you will be on your way to better sleep and a healthier, happier lifestyle.

★ It has even been said that you could survive for three times as long without food as you could without sleep.

“If I don't get enough sleep I feel grumpy, moody and unsettled throughout the day which can lead to me feeling unmotivated and not being able to concentrate properly.”

- Charlotte (Aged 15)

45%

45% OF PEOPLE SAID THEY HAD BEEN UNABLE TO SLEEP BECAUSE OF HOW THEY WERE FEELING⁵



CHECK OUT THIS VIDEO ABOUT SAM'S SLEEP CYCLE. IT'S PACKED WITH INFORMATION AROUND SLEEP CYCLES AND ALSO SLEEP DEPRIVATION IN TEENAGERS¹²
PLAY VIDEO >>



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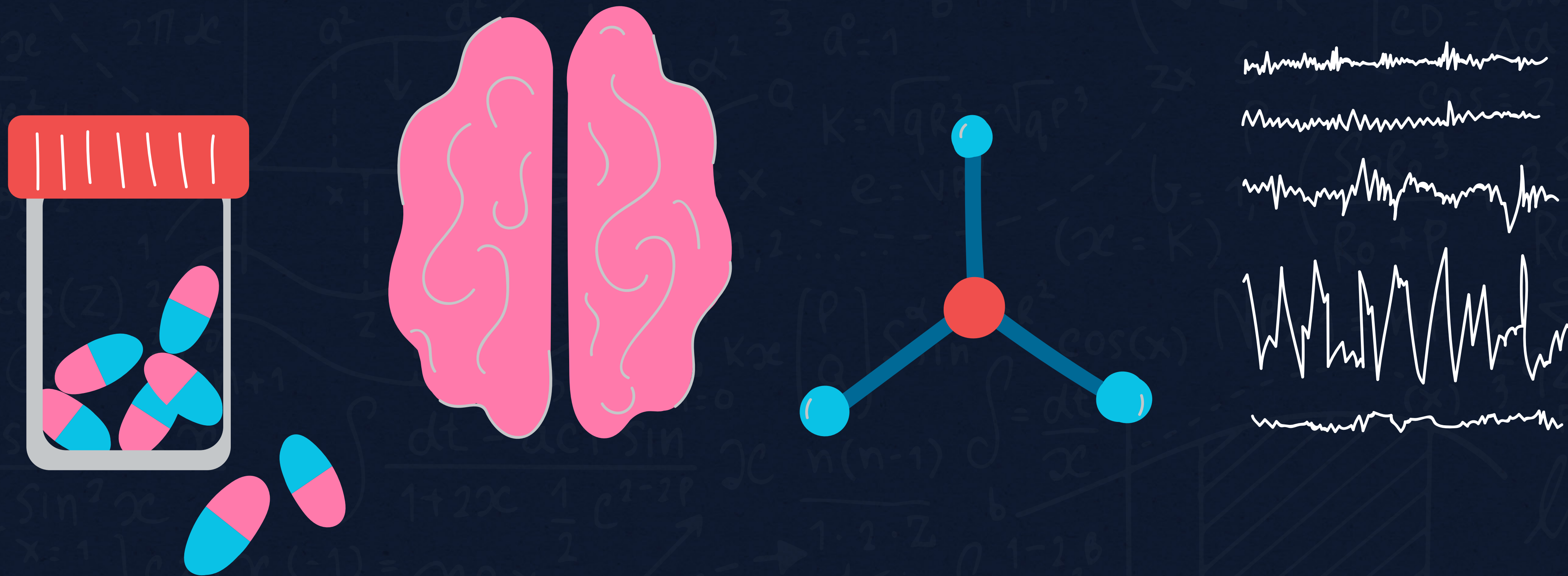
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THE SCIENCE BEHIND SLEEP

It's important to understand a little about the science of sleep – trust us, it IS interesting, and it will give you a much better understanding of how we sleep and why we need it.

First for the bad news: you can't force yourself to sleep. So, when adults say 'just go to sleep' you quite literally can't!

The good news: there are things you CAN control that will help you to fall asleep more easily – more about these later!



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STAGES OF SLEEP

There are four stages of sleep that everyone goes through several times each night. These are made up of two types of sleep: REM and Non-REM.

Non-REM sleep is made up of three stages. This is the restful and restorative sleep where your body is being repaired. Non-REM sleep lowers muscle tone, body temperature, heart rate and blood pressure.

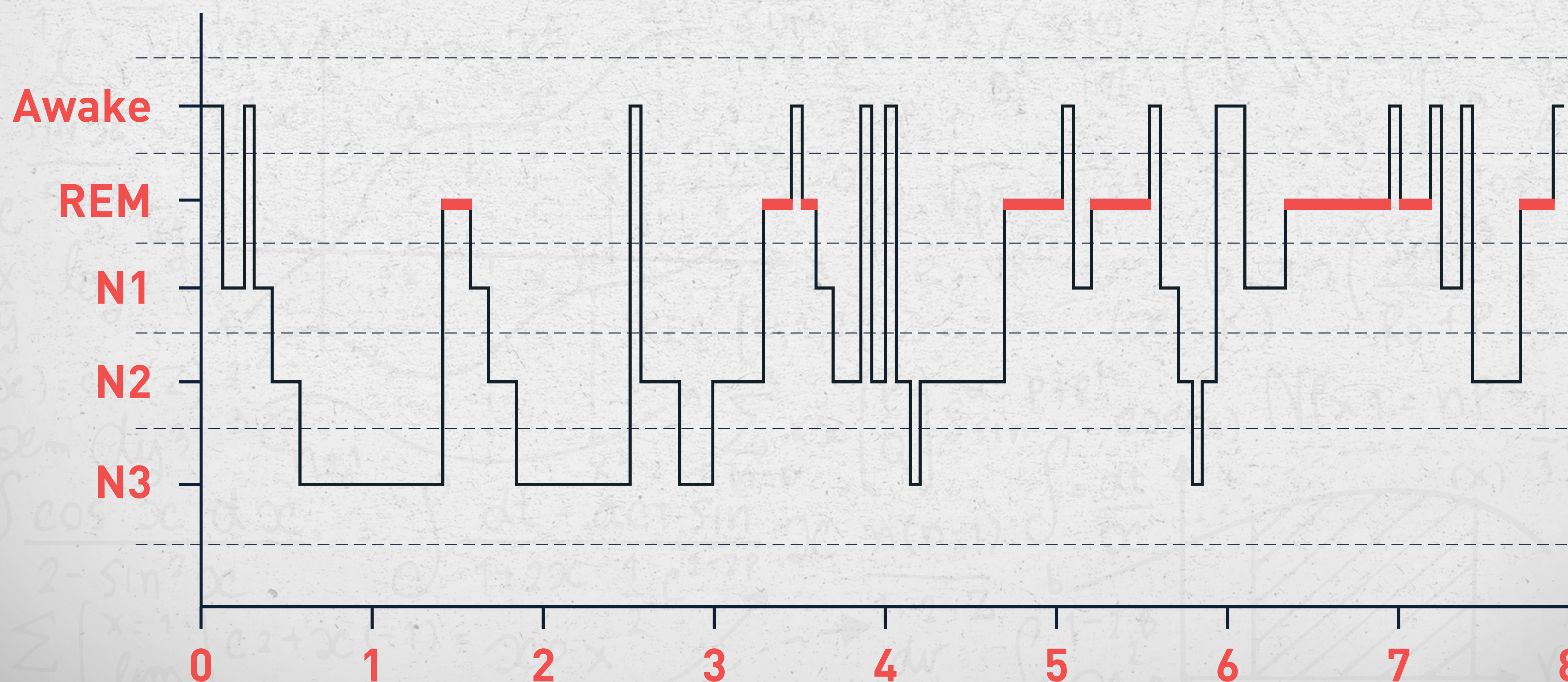
Stage N1 is where you experience light sleep, when you are nodding off but can be easily woken by a slight sound or movement.

Stage N2 is a deeper sleep, you are still aware of your surroundings, but if left undisturbed you will continue to Stage N3.

Stage N3 (slow wave sleep) is when you are in a deep sleep and may find it difficult to awaken.

REM (rapid eye movement) is where the body switches off and the brain receives extra blood and processes the day's events. This sleep consolidates your learning and

helps you develop your social and emotional abilities. In REM sleep you dream and during this period of sleep your body is paralysed, so you don't act out your dreams. As you get older, you spend less time in REM sleep.



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PARTIAL WAKENINGS

If you use a sleep tracker watch or app you may notice it says you've woken up several times in the night. This isn't a problem – it's perfectly normal to wake several times a night (from noise, being uncomfortable or being too hot/cold) and most of the time you won't even realise – apart from the groggy trips to the loo! Your sleep runs in approximately 90-minute cycles and within that cycle we go through different stages of sleep (as seen previously in the hypnogram). These are broken up with several brief awakenings. As the night progresses, the need to sleep lessens and so we spend more time in lighter sleep which is why brief awakenings can feel more pronounced.

Sometimes you remember these brief awakenings (like checking the time before dozing back off), whereas other times you don't. But whether you remember them or not, you should fall back to sleep easily by yourself.

If you're not finding it so easy to nod off again, you may begin to feel worried, anxious or frustrated. This can send your body into something called the 'fight or flight' response. When this happens your mind starts to race, your heart rate increases and your blood pressure rises. At this point, it's important to avoid clock watching as this won't help your anxiety levels. Instead, focus on breathing and relaxation exercises

and if you haven't fallen asleep within 20 minutes, get up and try doing something else such as reading in a dimly lit room or listening to soothing music. Staying awake in bed leads the brain to associate the bed with being awake, planning, worrying etc instead of for sleeping.

Did you know you are more likely to wake if conditions have changed while you have been asleep? If you fall asleep watching TV and it turns off, you are more likely to wake up during a partial waking because the light and sound conditions in the room have changed. The key thing to learn from this is that conditions should be consistent all the way through the night for you to reduce your chances of waking once you have nodded off.

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TICK TOCK IT'S ALL ABOUT THE BODY CLOCK

We all have an internal body clock that runs roughly on a 24-hour cycle, called the circadian rhythm.

The environment (sunrise and sunset) regulates our clock so that we go to sleep and wake up on the same schedule. This helps us to feel sleepy at bedtime and helps us get up in the morning. Our own environmental cues also play a part.

The body clock can run slightly longer than 24-hours in some people (those who go to bed early and wake too early), and in others slightly less (people who go to bed late and sleep well into the morning). There are certain factors that can affect your circadian rhythm and the times that you feel sleepy, for example if you are a night owl or a morning lark. This is genetically programmed to some extent, so if your parents tend to be one or the other you are more likely to follow that pattern as an adult. It helps you know which camp you fit into when trying to improve your sleep.

Night Owls
Alert in the evening
Like sleeping in

Morning Larks
Alert in the morning
Prefer an earlier bedtime

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LARK OR NIGHT OWL?

Select the answer to each question that applies to you most. There is a tally at the end to help you work out whether you are a lark or night owl.

1. Which statement best describes your preferred wake up time:

- A) I like to be wake early, before 7.30am
- B) Between 7.30 and 9.30am, I don't want to waste the day
- C) Definitely after 9am, I love a lie in!

2. How easy do you find getting up in the morning?

- A) Very easy, I get up with no problems
- B) I don't find it particularly easy or difficult
- C) Really difficult, I prefer to stay in bed as long as possible

3. Thinking about a typical school/ college day, do you need an alarm or somebody else to wake you?

- A) No, I'm generally awake
- B) Yes, I do depend on being woken up
- C) Definitely or I would be unlikely to wake up and I would be late

4. Imagine you have nothing planned tomorrow and no need to get up in the morning. What time would you choose to go to bed compared to your usual bedtime?

- A) Same time as usual
- B) An hour or so later
- C) I'd stay up several hours later

5. How alert do you feel for the first half hour after you've woken?

- A) Very alert
- B) Somewhat alert
- C) Not at all alert, I'd like to go back to sleep

6. If you had to take an exam, what time of day would you prefer to take it at?

- A) 9am
- B) 11am
- C) 3pm

7. If your favourite series was launching a new season but it wasn't being shown until 11pm how would you feel?

- A) Gutted, that's far too late, I'll have to watch it the next day
- B) It's a bit late for me but I'll watch it
- C) Pleased, this is the ideal time for you to watch it



Answers

Mostly A) You tend to be more of a lark, getting up in the morning isn't a problem for you. You are most likely to be at your best earlier in the day.

As a morning lark you probably find it easier to get up for school in the morning but may struggle to complete your homework or revise later in the evening. Aiming to do your studies when you get in from school could be helpful.

Mostly B) You are not showing a strong tendency to be either a night owl or a lark.

An all-rounder, you are more adaptable to changes in your sleep schedule. You are able to get up early when needed, for example to attend an early class, but you can also function well later on in the evening, finding it easy to revise late into the night and socialise with friends on social media. Be sure to stick to the same time going to bed and

getting up in the morning to strengthen your body clock and making it easier to get good quality sleep.

Mostly C) You are more of a night owl, you are at your most alert later in the day. Mornings can be a challenge though!

Mornings are not your thing! You are a night owl - happier and more productive later in the day. This is when you have most energy and may find it easier to complete your studies. You will have no problems staying up and catch the latest series on TV but make sure you leave an hour before bedtime without any screens and make sure you nail your wind down routine – it's really important for sleeping well. You will probably find getting up for school in a morning difficult so using a light box or getting up and outside first thing can be helpful and make you feel more alert and awake.

Please note this quiz is just for fun. There is however a popular test used by professionals to assess sleep types called the Morningness Eveningness Questionnaire.

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GETTING TO SLEEP IS TRICKY!



Do you find nodding off hard work? That's because of your age!

During your teenage years, your sleep cycle is different to that of your parents. You may find yourself being called lazy or sloth-like, seemingly unwilling to get up in the morning when the alarm clock shouts. But... you are not lazy!

Why? Well it's less known that when you hit adolescence changes happen in the brain. It develops, and hormones are changing. You are biologically more likely to produce the sleep hormone, melatonin later at night meaning you don't feel sleepy until the early hours. For a period of time this shifts your natural circadian rhythm making it out of sync. This means you may struggle with falling asleep at an appropriate hour, need lengthy lie-ins at the weekend and find it harder to wake up in the

morning. This impacts on how you feel the next day- tired!

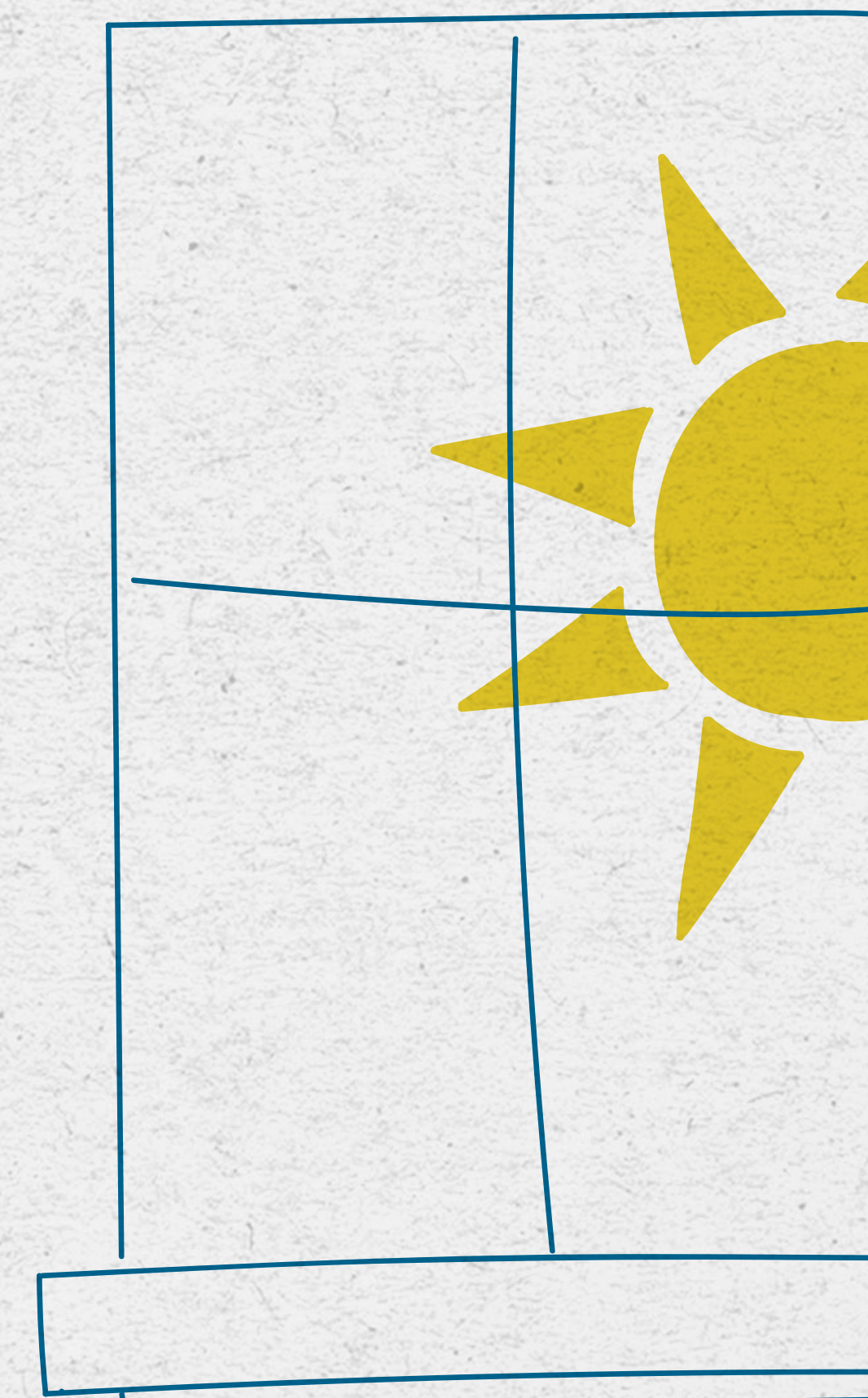
The school day, including any commuting, may also start early for you and you may have to get up before your body has had enough sleep. This has a knock-on effect - being overtired makes it even more difficult to fall asleep! You can't change the time that school starts but what you can do is have a consistent sleep and wake up time to help your body to cope better with the early mornings.

In addition to your circadian rhythm, sleep is also regulated by your sleep/wake homeostasis. This tells you when you are tired and need to rest. You build up a need for sleep during the day and then when bedtime comes you are tired and ready to rest.

Think of it like a battery. In the morning, after a good night's sleep, your battery is fully charged. As the day goes on your battery depletes. If you have a nap that will charge it up a little more meaning you may not be quite as tired at bedtime!

For some teens, a short, early afternoon nap may be helpful in improving alertness as it's much better for supporting your circadian rhythm than having a lengthy lie in. However, naps shouldn't be used as a substitute for a getting a good night's sleep.

There are also other things you can do to help ease this shift, such as having a consistent routine that incorporates steps that are tailored to you. You can explore this in more depth in Chapter 4.



 Limit power naps to around 20-30 minutes for maximum impact – any longer and they may leave you feeling groggy and interfere with your night time sleep.

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DON'T BE AFRAID OF THE DARK

Light and dark are strong cues in telling your body when it's time to wake up or go to sleep.

Light is a common sleep 'robber' because it suppresses melatonin (the naturally occurring hormone that helps regulate the body's circadian rhythm and helps you drift off). It is sometimes referred to as the (much cooler sounding) 'hormone of darkness'.

Dark and light signals enter the eyes which then send a command to the brain to either start or stop producing melatonin. Right now, we have more exposure to artificial light than ever before. This disrupts our circadian rhythms, keeping us alert and feeling less sleepy. Having a dimmed

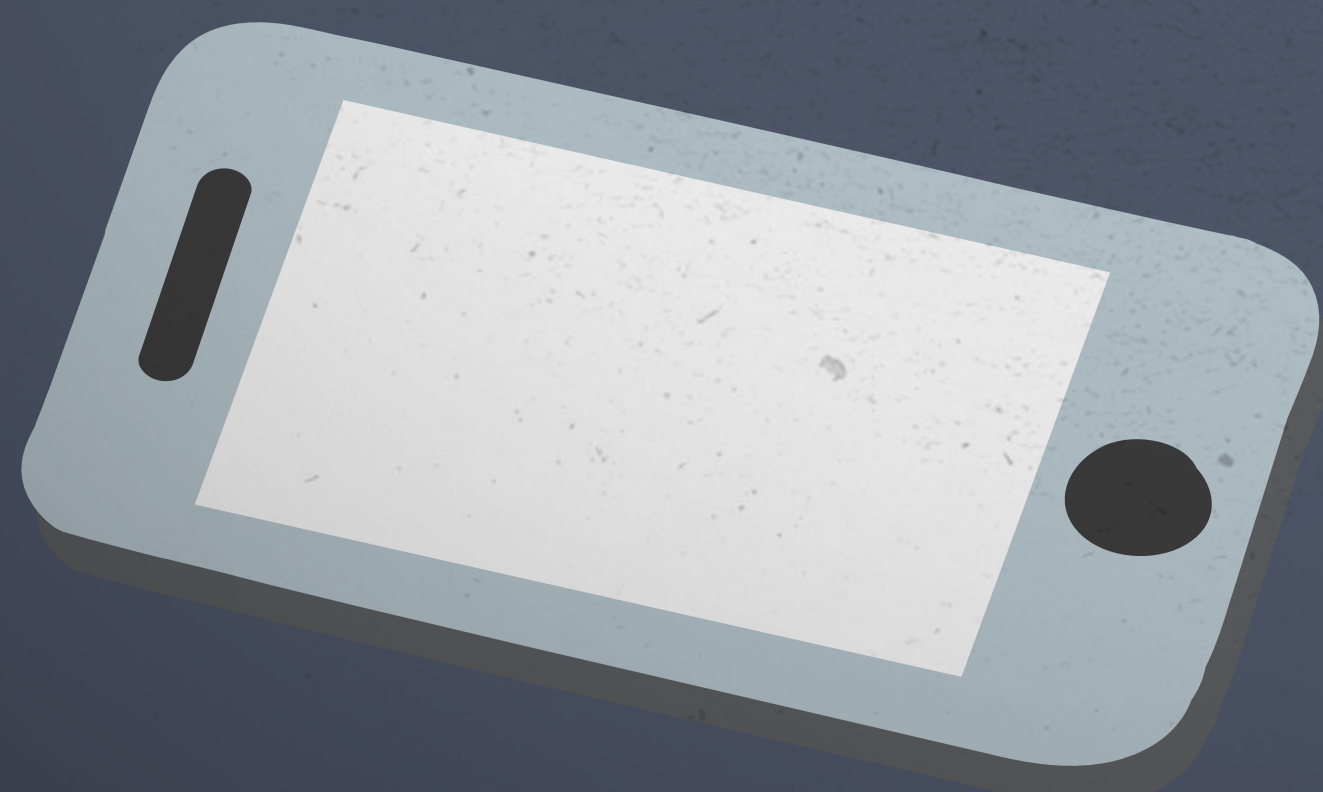
environment in the run up to and during sleep time helps aid better sleep.

In the morning it's helpful to get as much natural light as you can. Open your curtains first thing and let the light flood in. Where possible try to get outside for 30 minutes each morning doing something you enjoy like a walk/run/cycle or even just reading in the garden. If you struggle getting up, you might find a lightbox useful at breakfast time to get a direct hit of light. This will suppress melatonin levels and make you feel more alert.



"I find that a dark room extricates me from the worries of everyday life whilst providing the ideal backdrop for a restful night's sleep."

- Daniella (Aged 18)



 You only need 4 minutes of daylight to stop producing melatonin. Getting up and going outside in the morning for some exposure to natural daylight can really give you a boost for the day.

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WHY SLEEP ISSUES OCCUR

HOMEWORK OVERLOAD

Find yourself suffering sleepless nights working on (and worrying about) homework or exams?

Students have complained about school for generations, but it turns out that teens today really do have a problem with it. During school life, especially in the run up to exams, teens face a massive amount of pressure to do well. This can be from parents, teachers, and even themselves!

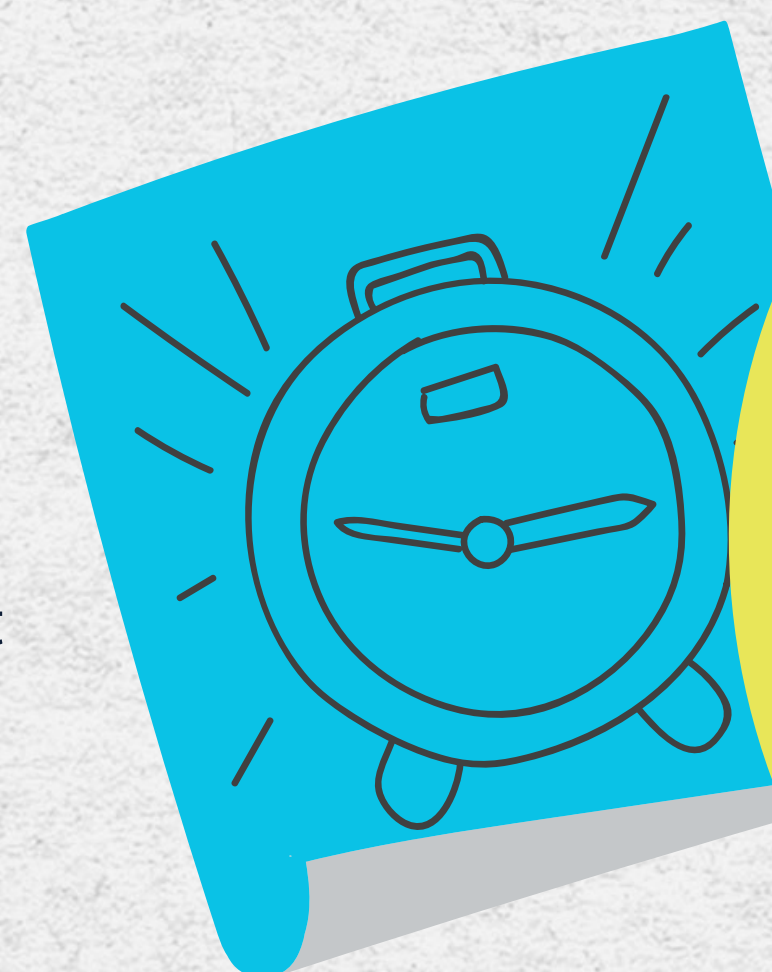
You may be studying late into the night due to a busy lifestyle and find yourself in danger of pulling an all-nighter. If you want to catch up with your friends but haven't yet finished your homework, it can be tempting to delay your studies until the early hours. You may also decide to wait and chat to your friends after you've completed your homework which again leaves no time to wind down, making falling asleep even harder. Consider creating a homework schedule with rest breaks and times for you to catch up with friends.

68%

68% OF TEENS DON'T GET ENOUGH SLEEP ON SCHOOL NIGHTS*

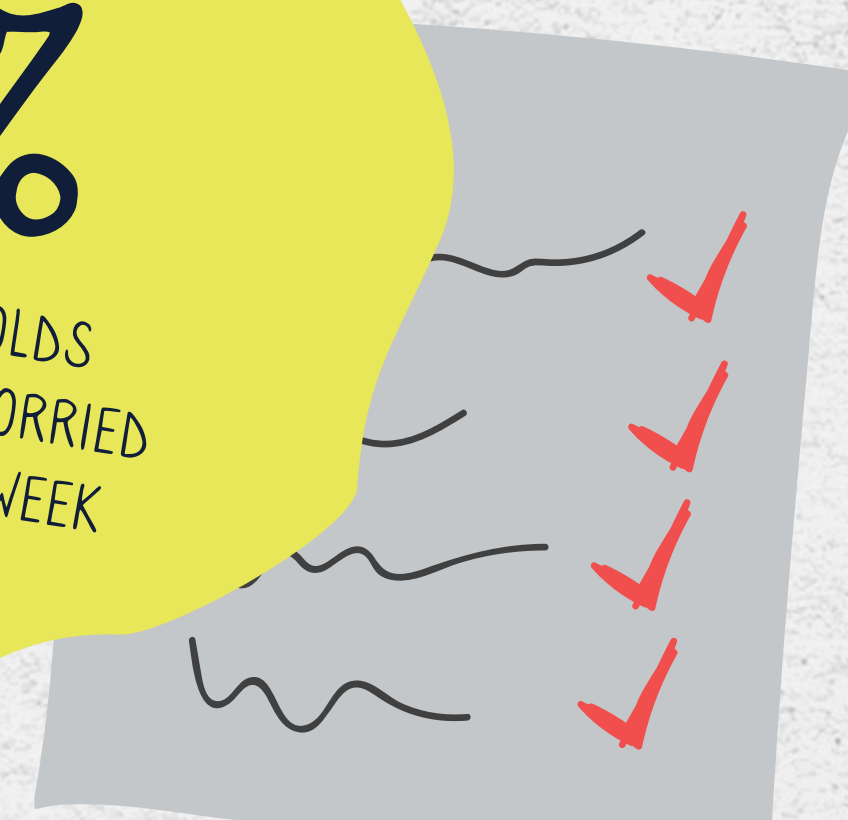


There are times when we all struggle to sleep, whatever our age, but it's important to identify causes so you can put strategies in place to help tackle the problem. Here are the most common struggles for you to consider:



58%

58% OF 10-14 YEAR OLDS ADMITTED THEY FELT WORRIED OR STRESSED ONCE A WEEK OR MORE*



ANXIETY AND WORRIES

Navigating life can be complex and a struggle at times, adding further worries and anxieties to an already challenging period.

Relationships, friendships, family life, school, exams, studying, or a change in your life, such as moving home or school can all contribute. The list of things to worry about, and consider is endless, and you can guarantee that your brain will start to ponder these thoughts just as you are trying to get some shut-eye!

It's important to take some time to work through these thoughts, feelings and emotions outside of bedtime. Writing down your worries and anxieties can make them feel easier to deal with. Talking is power - if you have someone you feel safe talking to, it can be really helpful to put those worries into perspective. However, if you feel your anxieties and worries are getting harder to deal with, speak to your GP or organisations such as Young Minds.



EAT TO SLEEP

Did you know your diet may impact on your night-time sleep?

Fuelling yourself with energy drinks will make it harder to nod off

Likewise reaching for sugary snacks to give you that much needed energy boost can also increase the chance of a restless night.

Caffeine can influence how long it takes you to fall asleep, how long you sleep for, and the quality of your sleep. Caffeine is also hidden in lots of products that we might associate with bedtime, such as hot chocolate. It's best to avoid them in the evening before you go to sleep.

You may be tempted to reach for a bag of crisps or a chocolate bar

as a bedtime snack, but try to avoid the temptation. Instead, there are some foods that we can eat in the run up to bedtime to help promote sleep and encourage the body to produce melatonin. Snacks like low sugar cereal and milk, bananas, cherries and even cheese are all good choices. More on this later on.



18%

18% OF TEENS SLEEPING FEWER THAN SEVEN HOURS A NIGHT WERE MORE LIKELY TO CONSUME FAST FOOD TWO TO THREE TIMES A WEEK*



“Diet can affect sleep a lot because if you don't eat enough then you will be hungry and won't be able to sleep but if you eat too much then it can make you have stomach pains and lose sleep.”

- Taylor (Aged 13)



Did you know, the half-life of caffeine is around 5 hours, that means it takes five hours for just half of the caffeine you have consumed to leave your body!



SCREEN TIME OUT

We're just going to come out and say it – screens are bad for sleep! At least, screens too close to bedtime are bad for sleep.

You may have heard this a million times before... but has anyone told you WHY?

Well it's all to do with the blue light that emits from the screen. This light frequency mimics the sunlight and sends a signal to the brain to stop producing melatonin. You may consider using a blue light filter screen to help but it's important to remember that we advise screen avoidance right before bedtime (not just because of the blue light but because the screen and content are usually visually stimulating).

According to some research, using screens before you go to bed can double the length of time it takes you to fall asleep, as it suppresses the production of your sleep hormone, melatonin. Ditch your phone, tablet or games console in the hour leading up to your bedtime.

These are just some of the more common factors that could be contributing to your sleep issues, but there are others too. Keeping a sleep diary will help identify any patterns in your disturbed sleep so that you can take the right action. You can find out more in Chapter 5.



THE SNOWBALL EFFECT

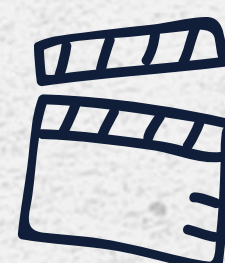
An untreated sleep problem will continue to grow the longer you leave it, eventually impacting all other areas of your physical and mental health. Making small, manageable changes when a sleep problem starts can stop it developing into something bigger.

Did you know that the Netflix highlighted sleep as its biggest competitor?



5+ HOURS

A FIFTH OF 13 TO 15-YEAR-OLDS SPEND FIVE HOURS OR MORE A DAY ON SOCIAL MEDIA⁹



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WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT SLEEP?



ROUTINE ROUTINE ROUTINE

Bedtime routines aren't just for young kids! Everyone benefits from having a routine in the run up to bedtime – even your parents.

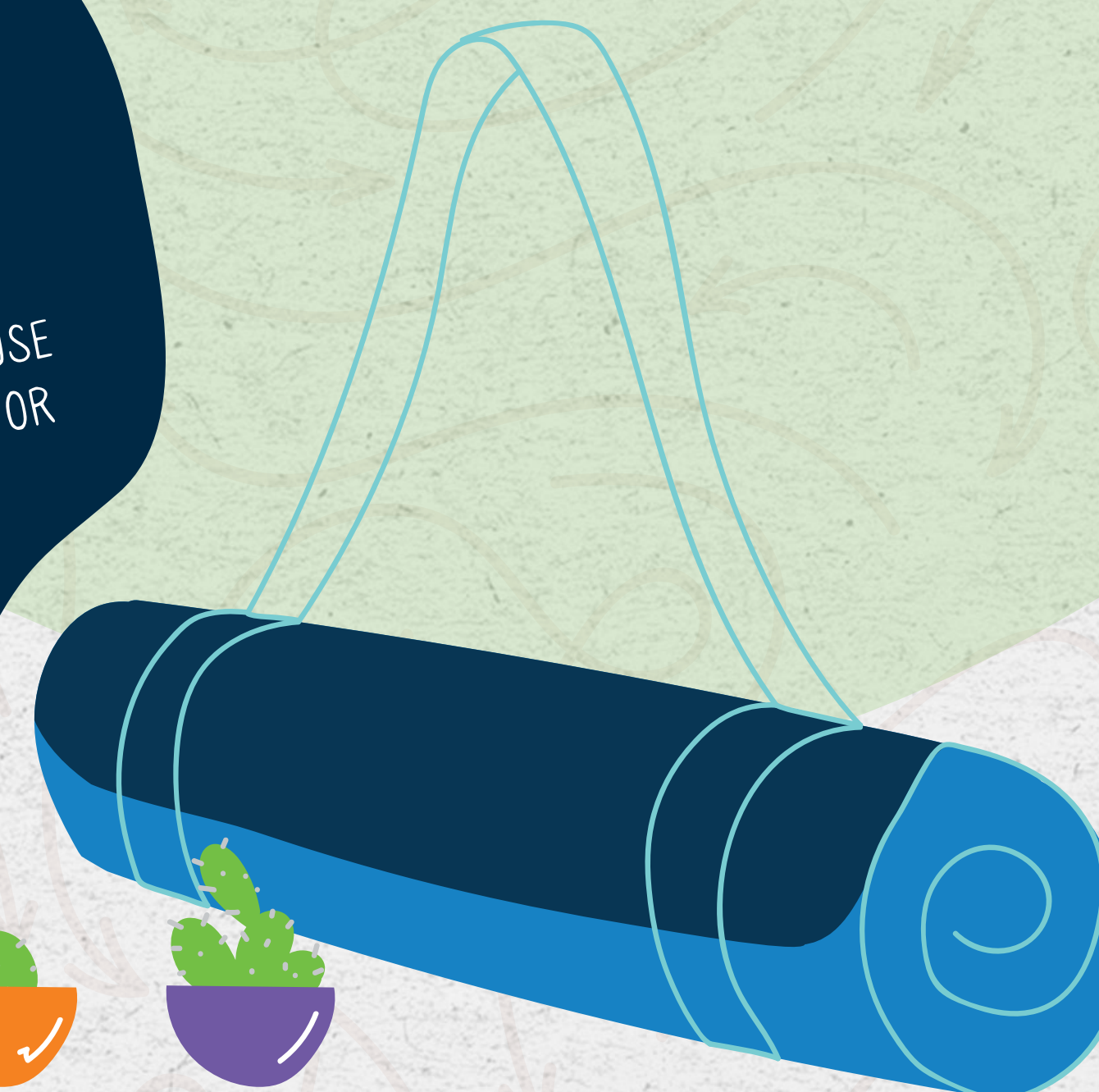
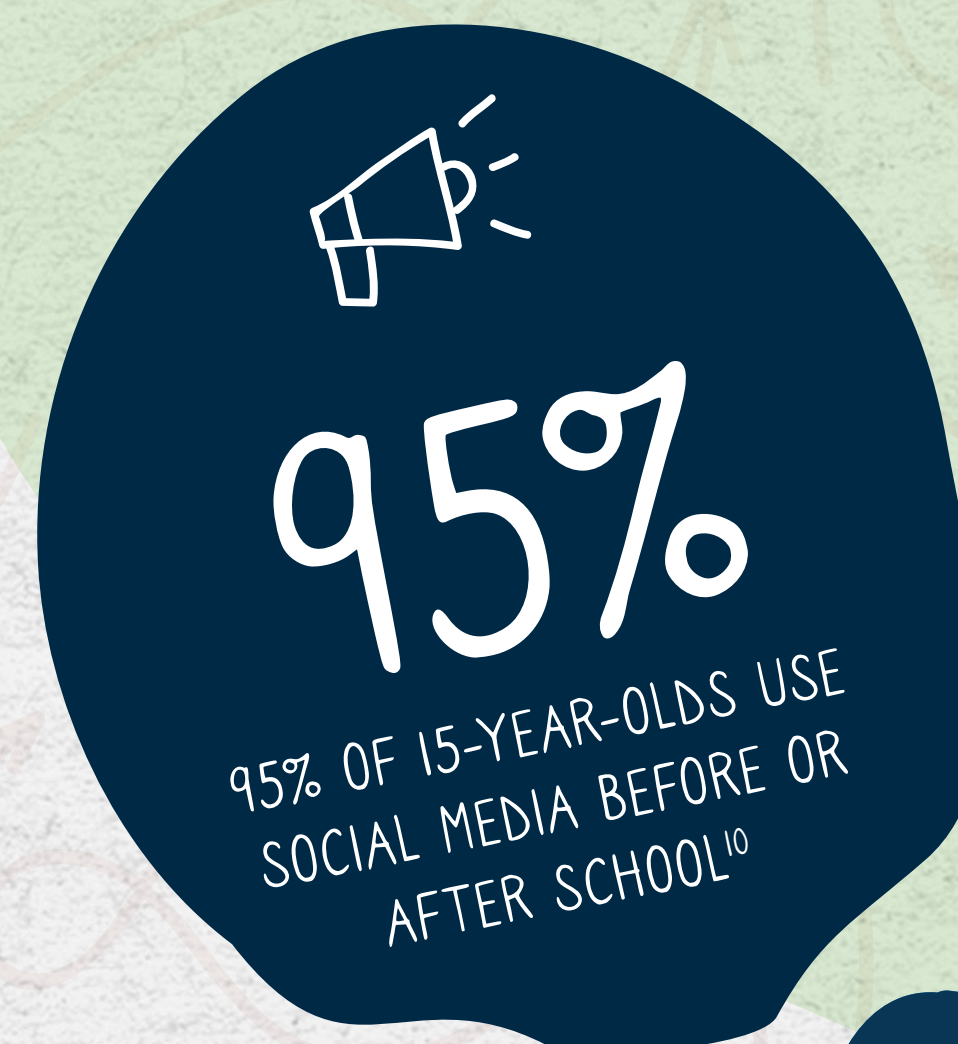
What makes a good routine? Firstly, try and do the same things at around the same time each night so that your body has time to prepare for relaxation and sleep. Following the same routine each evening, and going to bed at the same time, will help pin your circadian rhythm, meaning you will begin to feel sleepy at the same time each night. Secondly, for this to be effective we also have to pin our circadian rhythms at the other end of the day too, meaning we need to be getting up at the same time each morning. Even at the weekend. Sorry!

For something to become routine we need to repeat it a number of times and do the same thing at the same time each day. This will strengthen our body clock and help to aid a good night's sleep.

You should start a routine an hour before getting into bed and spend this hour out of the bedroom.

Begin by turning off all screens, and dim the lighting to give your natural melatonin production a boost.

Spend some quiet time focusing on an activity you find calming/relaxing, this can be meditation, yoga, mindfulness, breathing techniques, craft activities, drawing, reading or playing musical instruments.



TURN OFF TECH

We've already explored why tech shouldn't be used too close to bedtime in Chapter 3.

Here's a reminder: In the hour before bed, screens should be a no go! We understand it can be hard to turn off your devices especially if you've been revising all night and want to chat to friends or even unwind with a game. But remember, the blue light does suppress melatonin and you will feel less sleepy.

If you use your phone as your alarm, turn off notifications for other apps or set it to the 'do not disturb' mode so you're not tempted to pick it up during the night. Also, putting it on the other side of your room can help with the temptation to have a sneaky peak. You'll have to get out of bed in the morning to turn it off too. Bonus!

If you struggle with waking in the night, worrying about the time and how long you have left to sleep, you may find it helpful to turn your alarm clock around so you can't see the time. Your body can't tell the time and if clock-watching makes you anxious, you'll find it easier to nod back off.

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BEDROOM ENVIRONMENT

It's now time to think about your sleeping environment and to see if there are any changes you can make so that you find it a dream to fall asleep in rather than a nightmare.

Let's face it, teenagers' bedrooms aren't always the most relaxing of places!

An ideal bedroom environment needs to be free of distractions, quiet, dark, clutter free and cool. We often tend to make our sleeping environment warmer than needed, thinking this might help us sleep when in fact a cooler room will aid better sleep. Between 16 – 18 degrees is an ideal temperature.

Think about the colours in your bedroom. A room screaming with bright red walls won't help you get a good night's sleep. Instead, you should try opting for neutral colours. You may not be able to redecorate but that doesn't stop you from getting creative. If you have quite a loud feature wall position your bed so you're facing away from it whilst sleeping.

Talking of beds, comfort is a must. No one is going to sleep well if they're uncomfortable. Get into your bed and decide, is it a comfy and inviting place to be? If it's not, why not? Do you need a new mattress? Sometime teens can find themselves sleeping on a mattress they've had (and outgrown) since they were at primary school. Consider changing your pillows or asking your parents for some new bedding.

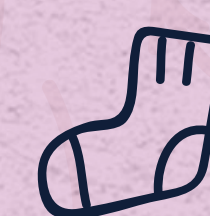
Your parents may complain about how messy your bedroom is but do they have a point? Did you know that a tidy bedroom does help you sleep? You may not be able to make the bedroom a complete clutter-free zone but try to keep it as tidy as possible. Put clothes away, dirty cups in

the dishwasher and tidy your working area. Clutter can make you feel worried and stressed especially if you see a pile of school-work you need to do. Although you sleep with your eyes closed – and can't see the clutter when you're asleep – it's the last thing you look at before you catch some ZZZs, which may influence any anxious or worrying thoughts.

Think about sound and light levels. If you need some light or sound to help you fall asleep, that's fine. Just make sure it's appropriate, like a low emitting night light with a soft glow or a gentle, relaxing piece of music. White noise, left on all night, can also be useful especially if there are external environmental sounds you can't control such as busy roads, railways or noisy neighbours. Just remember your sleep cycles and keep anything you have in place to help you fall asleep consistent throughout the night.

42 MINS

THE AMOUNT OF EXTRA SLEEP IN MINUTES WE GET WHEN REPLACING AN OLD, UNCOMFORTABLE BED WITH A NEW BED!



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WORK IT!

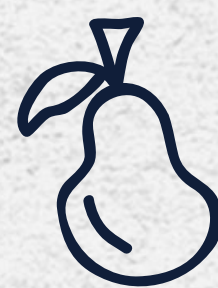
It's official, exercise is good for sleep...!

So haul your bum off the bed, drag yourself away from social media and grab your trainers. Go for a run, walk or cycle. Get your family or friends involved too.

Working out effectively gradually tires your body, promoting a better night's sleep. Releasing pent-up tension through exercise is also highly beneficial, helping to reduce stress before bedtime. Exercising is also followed by a drop in your body's temperature, which aids better sleep.

While exercise is great in helping us sleep well, if you do it too close to bedtime, it can have the opposite effect, with the release of adrenaline and feel good endorphins.

 **AIM TO GET SOME EXERCISE EACH DAY - 20-30 MINUTES IS SUFFICIENT - BUT NOT IN THE TWO TO THREE HOURS BEFORE BED**



EVENING MUNCHIES

We've talked about the need to avoid caffeine and sweet treats too close to bedtime but adding in a small evening snack of certain foods can really help aid sleep.

It is worth noting more research needs to be done around this area. These foods either contain natural melatonin, or tryptophan, an amino acid that promotes sleep. During the hour before bed, stick to drinking milk or water.

Sleepy food consists of almonds, bananas, oatmeal, cherries, sugar free cereal and turkey (we now have a genuine excuse for that post-Christmas dinner nap!) as well as anything dairy – it's a myth that cheese gives you nightmares!



 **BAD DREAMS, BLAME THE CHEESE! THIS IS A MYTH THOUGHT TO DERIVE FROM THE CLASSIC DICKENS STORY 'A CHRISTMAS CAROL', WHERE SCROOGE BLAMES SEEING THE THREE GHOSTS ON EATING A MOULDY PIECE OF CHEESE.**

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MORNING BLUES

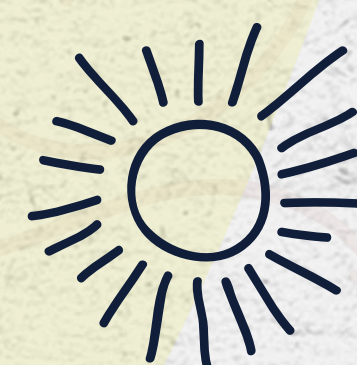
Many of us often wake up feeling groggy, disorientated and tired, especially teens who wake before their body clocks want them to.

If you feel like this, you are suffering from something called sleep inertia. It happens when you wake suddenly during slow wave sleep often because of an alarm clock.

Sleep inertia usually lasts from around five to 30 minutes but it can last for as long as two to four hours. During this time you may feel like your concentration is impaired and you don't feel as alert.

You can help to combat this by exposure to light first thing in the morning. Open your curtains as soon as you get up and if possible, get outside into the natural daylight, it helps to strengthen your body clock. If using a lightbox, breakfast is the time to switch it on.

Also avoid pressing the snooze button on your alarm. If you press the snooze button, your brain knows it'll go off again. You won't get any of the deep, resting slumber in between those snoozes. Set your alarm for when you definitely have to get up. If you have a hard time not pressing the snooze button, try putting your alarm across the room so you have to get out of your bed to turn it off, which will wake you up along the way.



HERE, WE LOOK AT SLEEP STRATEGIES IN BRIEF. TAKE A LOOK AND SEE IF THERE IS ANYTHING THAT YOU FEEL YOU COULD IMPLEMENT TO HELP IMPROVE YOUR SLEEP.¹³

PLAY VIDEO >>



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RELAXATION

Relaxation and mindfulness exercises can be really useful in looking after yourself when you're stressed and worried, helping to combat sleep issues.

Whether you do this during your bedtime routine, or once you're in bed, pick something that really helps you to feel calm and content.

MINDFULNESS - USE YOUR SENSES

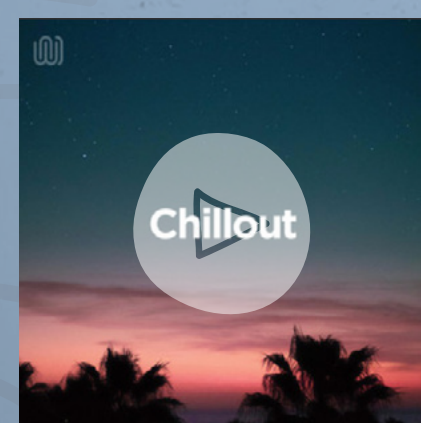
Notice 5 things you can see

Notice 4 things you can feel

Notice 3 things you can hear

Notice 2 things you can smell

Notice 1 thing you can taste



PLAYLIST

Chillout

Created By **WE ARE DIAMOND**

[GO TO PLAYLIST >>](#)



BREATHING

In bed simply focus on your breath going in and out. Experience each breath and pay attention to how this makes you feel. You could try the 7/11 breathing exercise. This is where you breathe in deeply whilst counting to 7, then breathe out slowly to the count of 11. Repeating this for a few minutes can help you feel calm and relaxed and can help you avoid being consumed by negative thoughts.



PODCAST

Calm Down, Wake Up

Created By **SPACE WITH-IN**



WE HAVE PARTNERED WITH SPACE WITH-IN TO PROVIDE YOU WITH MEDITATION AND YOGA NIDRA PODCASTS. CHECK THEM OUT HERE [GO TO PODCASTS >>](#)

BODY SCANNING

Sometimes our bodies are tense as well as our minds. Progressive Muscle Relaxation can help your body to relax.

- Begin by focusing all your attention on your feet, tighten up the muscles and then relax them.
- Move up to the calves, knees and thighs – tighten and relax.
- Move on to the stomach, chest, shoulders, arms and hands doing the same thing.
- Finally focus on your neck and head, relax all your muscles, feeling the tension leave your body.



HERE IS A BRILLIANT BODY SCANNING WALK THROUGH FOR YOU TO HAVE A LOOK AT!
[PLAY VIDEO >>](#)

“When well rested I am able to approach challenges logically and formulate solutions.”
- Emily (Aged 17)

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KEEPING A SLEEP DIARY

If you're having trouble sleeping and can't understand why, keeping a sleep diary can be helpful to unpick what is happening with your sleep.

It can help you identify patterns, track your sleep cycle and work out how much sleep you're getting. Sometimes your sleep troubles are a result of bad sleep habits for example drinking too much caffeine before bedtime, not exercising, poor sleep hygiene or even your emotional and mental wellbeing. The diary will help to pinpoint if you're consistently waking at a similar time, what you've done that day and what you've eaten to see if there's any pattern.

You need to complete it for two weeks. A sleep diary is also worth keeping and sharing if you need to see your GP about any sleep issues you have.

Some useful tips for completing diaries are:

- Keep the diary beside your bed – this way you're more likely to fill it in at the time and get the details accurate.
- It doesn't matter what day you start the diary on, simply fill in day 1 and move through the week to day 7.
- If the diary isn't large enough, make additional notes on a separate sheet.
- Be honest when filling in the diary.



SLEEP DIARY

NAME _____

AGE _____

START DATE:

DAY 1

DAY 2

DAY 3

DAY 4

DAY 5

DAY 6

DAY 7

What time did you begin to relax before going to bed?

What time did you get into bed?

What time did you fall asleep?

What did you do in between getting into bed and falling asleep?

Did you wake up in the night? If so, what time(s)?

What did you do while you were awake?

What time did you fall back to sleep?

What time did you wake up in the morning?

Total number of hours sleep

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YOU CAN
DOWNLOAD A PDF
VERSION OF THE
SLEEP DIARY HERE!
DOWNLOAD >>

CHAPTER SIX: WHEN TO ASK FOR HELP



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WHERE TO LOOK

CLICK ON THE
LINKS TO DISCOVER
MORE >>

It's important to look after yourself but sometimes we all need a little extra help. However, you may find it difficult to know who to turn to. Here are some resources that may be useful.

Professionals

Try talking to a trusted adult if possible, a professional who knows you or your GP.

The Teen Sleep Hub

Our dedicated site for Teens!
www.teensleephub.org.uk

The Sleep Charity

We are adding new information to the site all the time.
www.thesleepcharity.org.uk

Headspace

An app that gives you tools and resources to look after your mind, they also have a section on sleep.
www.headspace.com

Calm

An app for guided meditation and sleep stories.
www.calm.com

Mind

Mind offer advice and support to anyone experiencing a mental health problem.
0300 123 3393
www.mind.org.uk

Mental Health Foundation

Provides a range of content for more information on mental health and how to look after it.
www.mentalhealth.org.uk

Anna Freud Crisis Messenger

A text service providing free 24/7 crisis support for young people in the UK. If you are experiencing a mental health crisis and need support you can text **AFC to 85258**.

Childline

Offering a telephone helpline, online chat and email service.
0800 1111
www.childline.org.uk

Samaritans offer a free telephone service day and night.
116 123
www.samaritans.org

Young Minds

Young Minds offer a range of information on their website. They also run a crisis messenger service if you are experiencing a mental health crisis text **YM to 85258**
www.youngminds.org.uk

National Bullying Helpline

Mon-Fri 9-5
www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk

Anxiety UK

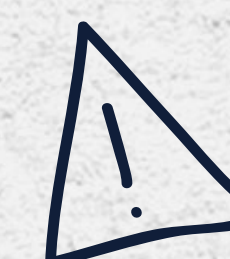
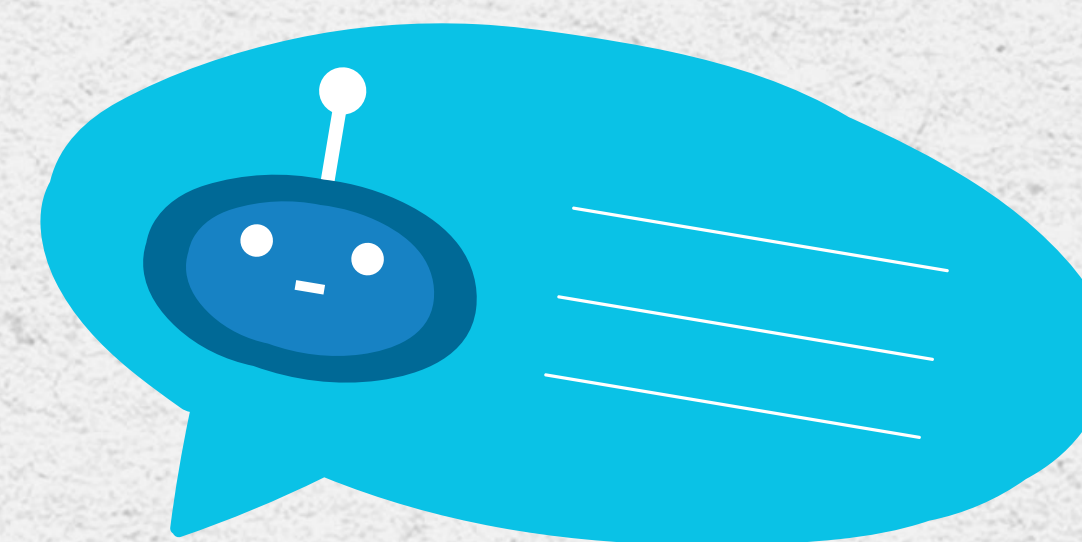
www.anxietyuk.org.uk
Call: 03444 775 774
Text Service: 07537 416 905
support@anxietyuk.org.uk

Chathealth

Text service for young people at secondary school to talk to school nurse team. For physical and emotional health. Usually 9-5 Mon-Fri
www.nhs.uk/apps-library/chathealth

SupportLine

A phone helpline, particularly aimed at those who are socially isolated, vulnerable, at risk groups and victims of any form of abuse.
www.supportline.org.uk
01708 765200
info@supportline.org.uk



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WE ARE THE SLEEP CHARITY



The Sleep Charity is one of the leading, independent expert voices on sleep issues in the UK and we are here to help everyone get a better night's sleep.



3,281

SINCE MARCH 2020, WE'VE PROVIDED SUPPORT TO 3,281 POINTS OF CONTACT



42,000

WE HAVE INDIRECTLY REACHED AND PROVIDED A HELPING HAND TO 42,000 PEOPLE AND FAMILIES SINCE 2012



5000+

IN 2020, WE'VE TRAINED 60+ PROFESSIONALS IN TEEN SLEEP, PROVIDING A REACH OF UP-TO 5000 YOUNG PEOPLE, RECEIVING OUR EVIDENCE BASED INFORMATION



400

IN TOTAL WE HAVE OVER 400 SLEEP PRACTITIONERS NATIONALLY

We believe that the importance of sleep for the mental, emotional and physical wellbeing of the nation should be valued and established across England and Wales.

Set up in 2012, the charity has gone from strength to strength, offering sleep advice and support in a range of ways. From one to one clinic appointments working directly with families, delivering our accredited training packages to other professionals, speaking at events and seminars, providing high quality information on our website and campaigning around the subject of sleep.

We joined forces with The Sleep Council in Summer 2020, strengthening our complementary services to drive forward our ambition to empower the nation to sleep better and to raise the profile of sleep as a major factor for health and wellbeing. Whether it's advice, education or support for children, teenagers, adults, workplaces or professionals, we are on hand with expert knowledge, resources and training.

If you would like any further information about us and what we do you can visit our main website www.thesleepcharity.org.uk or you can email us on info@thesleepcharity.org.uk

You can also help us to spread the word about sleep and our work by liking our Facebook or Instagram pages or following us on Twitter.

Wake up to Sleep.



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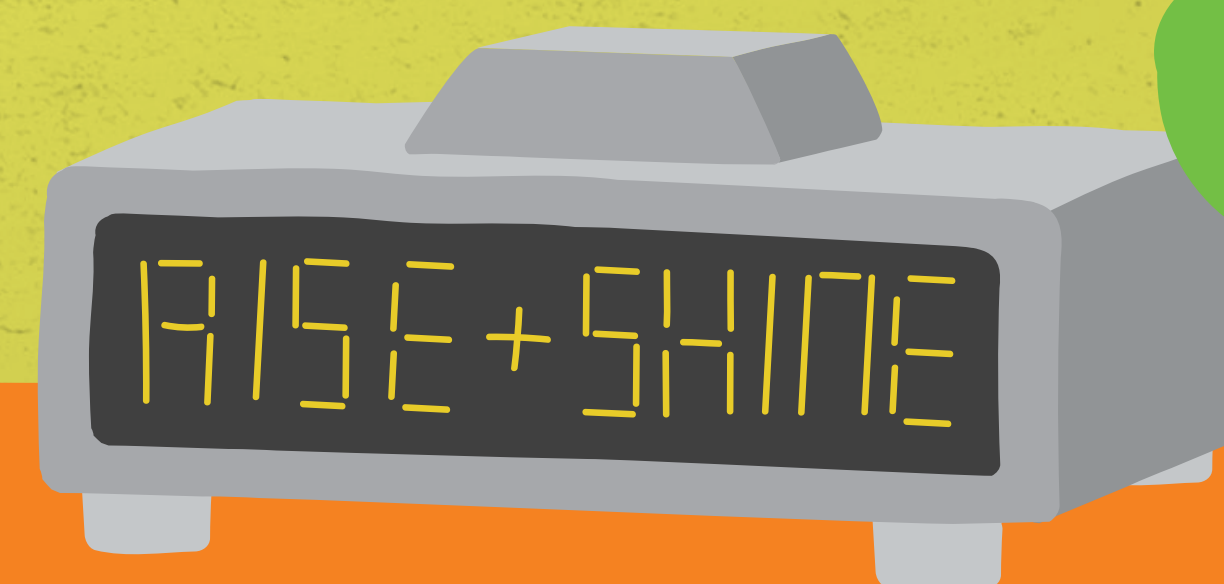
1. **45% of adolescents reported getting less than eight hours per night** - The 2006 Sleep in America Poll by the National Sleep Foundation
2. **Athletes who slept for up to 10 hours a night showed significant improvements in sprint times, shooting percentages, and energy levels after a few weeks compared with their performances when they managed only 6-8 hours a night** - <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/health-fitness/sleeping-habits-of-elite-athletes/>
3. **20% more likely to be involved in a car crash over a two year period sleeping six hours or fewer** - New South Wales, Australian study published in the Journal JAMA Pediatrics, May 2013
4. **71% higher risk of depression in teens who slept fewer than five hours compared to those who slept eight hours** - Columbia University Medical Center, published in journal Sleep
5. **45% of people said they had been unable to sleep because of how they were feeling** - <https://www.sleepio.com/articles/sleep-science/how-long-can-you-go-without-sleep/>
6. **58% of 10-14 year olds admitted they felt worried or stressed once a week or more** - Big Lottery Fund, November 2013
7. **68% of teens do not sleep enough during school nights** - Journal of Adolescent Health, November 2013
8. **18% of teens sleeping fewer than seven hours a night were more likely to consumer fast food two to three times a week** - Stony Brook University School of Medicine, 2013 <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2013/06/130620162746.html>
9. **A fifth of 13- to 15-year-olds spend five hours or more a day on social media** - University of Glasgow, 2019 <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31641035/>
10. **95% of 15-year-olds use social media before or after school** - University of Glasgow, 2019 <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31641035/>
11. **42 Minutes - the amount of extra sleep in minutes we get when replacing an old, uncomfortable bed with a new bed** - The Sleep Council and Dr Chris Idzikowski 'New Bed Old Bed' two year research project 1999-2001 - Dr Chris Idzikowski, study, 2001
12. **SLEEP DEPRIVATION AMONG TEENS: SAM'S SLEEP CYCLE** - Tera Lloyd - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SU2y6j9qFgE>
13. **Teen Sleep Pilot Project** - The Sleep Charity - <https://vimeo.com/460468916>
14. **Sleep Easy - Hypnosis CD** - Minds in Unison - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=syQ_nzmgyxk
15. **A Sleep Journal May Be The Sleep Hack You've Been Looking For** - NBC News - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XtT6hA5DBLE>

CREDITS

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YOU AND YOUR
SLEEP

A guide to better sleep
for teenagers