BACK TO SCHOOL 2023

Get into a sleep routine

These tips can help you feel rested and ready for returning to school.

Summer is wrapping up, and you're checking off all the supplies you need for an awesome school year. But there's something else you should think about when preparing for school: making sure you're sleeping enough. Getting nine to 12 hours of sleep per night can help kids your age feel their best and do better in school. If you've been staying up later over the summer, here are some smart steps you can take now to get your sleep back on track.

Stick to a bedtime

Going to bed at about the same time every night helps your body get used to a schedule and fall asleep more easily. One way to pinpoint your ideal bedtime is to think about what time you need to wake up in the morning and then count backward from there. For example, if you want to get 10 hours of sleep and have to wake up at 7 am to get ready for school, you would need to be asleep at 9 pm and start winding down earlier.

Wind down before bed

Try to spend about an hour before bed relaxing so your body and mind are ready for sleep. To use this time wisely, break it up into three 20-minute parts. For the first 20 minutes, get yourself prepared for the next day by setting up your backpack, laying out your clothes, and making your lunch. This helps ease your mind while

Wake at the same time each day.

you go to bed, since you won't be worrying about taking care of those tasks in the morning. Next, set aside 20 minutes for showering and brushing your teeth. Finally, for the last 20 minutes, do something relaxing that helps you fall asleep more easily (like reading a book, listening to calming music, or meditating). If you can't sleep after 20 minutes of lying in bed, it's OK to get up and do something else, such as reading a book, until you feel tired enough to drift off to sleep.

Don't sabotage your sleep

What you eat and do during the day can affect your sleep too. Try to avoid drinks and food that have caffeine (like soda, tea, and chocolate) in the afternoon and evening. Exercise can help you feel more tired, but working out within a couple of hours of your bedtime can make it hard to wind down. Try not to text, watch TV, or play video games for at least two hours before bed because the light from the screens—even a small screen like the one on your phone—can trick your body into thinking it's daytime.

Stay consistent

It's tempting to sleep in on weekends, but oversleeping on some days can interfere with your sleep rhythms the rest of the week. Wake up at your usual time, or as close to it as you can, to stay well rested all week.

4 interesting facts about sleeping

Have you ever wondered what happens—or doesn't—while you're snoozing? Check out this sleep trivia.

Scent science

Studies have shown that noise can wake us from slumber but smells won't. This is one of the reasons fire alarms were invented.

Colorful dreaming

Most people experience dreams in color, research shows. However, about 12% of the population dreams in black and white.
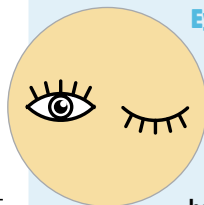
Staying still

Your brain keeps most of your muscles from being able to move during the time period when you dream most. This prevents you from acting out what you're dreaming.

Eyes wide open

The record for the longest time a human has stayed awake is 11 days and 25 minutes. Randy Gardner, age 17, set the record at the 10th Annual Great San Diego Science Fair in 1964. (He took a 14-hour nap afterward.)