if you are struggling to sleep

**Why is sleep important?**

Sleep benefits the brain, promotes attention, analytical thinking and your memory. It also makes thinking sharper, and it consolidates learning. **Sleeping is one of the most important aspects of our lives and it should not be underestimated**.

Lack of sleep may be very harmful and may lead to excessive drowsiness, issues with attention and harm your academic performance. Not having enough sleep may also affect your mood, make you more irritable and impact your relationship with others. In the long-term, lack of sleep may also increase the risk of you struggling with serious mental health issues. Therefore, having enough sleep is crucial in keeping you well and preventing from developing mental health disorders.

**Causes of issues with sleep**

There are many reasons why teenagers may struggle to sleep. One of them is tendency to stay awake till late. This may affect sleep-wake cycle and delay the production of melatonin (hormone that helps to promote sleep). Time pressure in managing various expectations, excessive screen time use in the evening may also affect your sleep. Certain mental health and neurodevelopmental disorders may also challenge the quality and length of sleep.



**Tips to improve your sleep**

* Plan 8 hours sleep in your daily schedule.
* Keep regular sleep hours.
* Keep consistent pre-bed routine. This will help you to feel more relaxed and fall asleep faster.
* Keeping similar bedtime routine during the week as well as the weekend is also a good idea. It may make getting up on Monday morning less challenging.
* Go offline and do not use electronic devices for at least 30 minutes before going to bed.
* Avoid caffeine and energy drinks in the afternoon and evening. Couple of hours before you plan to go to bed, try avoiding foods high in sugars. They will also give your body a bunch of energy and keep you awake.
* Pay attention to your environment and make it as relaxing as possible. Make sure your bedroom is cool and not too warm. Check if the bedroom’s light is not too bright and if the room is quiet enough for you to sleep.
* Avoid excessive or late napping.
* Exercise during the day. This will help your body to be less fidgety or agitated in the evening.
* If the reason that keeps you awake is your worry, write it down. Journaling can be very comforting.

**Further support**

ChildLine 0800 1111

Samaritans 116 123

Young Minds 0808 802 5544

Text **SHOUT** to 85258

**In an emergency, if you are not safe or feel out of control go to A&E. If you cannot get there safely, call 999**

**Useful websites**

[www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org)

[www.chidline.org.uk](http://www.chidline.org.uk)

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

[www.samaritans.org.uk](http://www.samaritans.org.uk)

[www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)

Calm Harm (free App)

**How much sleep do I need?**

**Teenagers need between 8 and 10 hours of sleep per night**