

# Education Sleep – Snooze Your Way to Exam Success

With revision and exam time underway, The Sleep Council is encouraging pupils to snooze their way to success.

As thousands prepare to take their GCSEs and A-Levels, sleep deprivation could cause many to switch off at this all important time. Research by The Sleep Council in 2015 found that as teens head into exam season they skimp on vital sleep as they cram in up to 14-plus hours of exam revision each week.

The survey found that a good night's sleep is the first thing to suffer. In the month leading up to exams, the number of teenagers who have just five to six hours sleep a night doubles from 10% to 20%.

Said Lisa Artis of The Sleep Council: "This is a worryingly high number of teenagers who are not getting as much sleep as they need to function and perform at their best. Sacrificing sleep is more detrimental to mental alertness than cramming in last minute revision.

"The extra pressure and stress of exams alongside relationships with friends, social activities, part-time jobs and a host of fluctuating emotions can make it difficult for teenagers to relax at night."

With many students 'cramming' in revision, their natural sleeping cycle (circadian rhythm) may be out of balance making it harder for them to fall to sleep at night and wake up early in the morning.

The Sleep Council states that quality sleep is essential for a teenager's growth and development but the proliferation of mobile phones and laptops – particularly during exam periods – mean young people find it hard to 'switch off'. Indulging in quiet time and ensuring at least an hour of revision and computer free time before bed will really help teenagers to sleep. Parents can help by limiting computer time and encouraging an electronic-free bedroom environment.

A healthy diet and exercising regularly is essential for a good night's sleep. When stress levels are high and time is short, these things can be pushed aside.

Said Lisa: "Getting enough sleep allows teenagers to react more quickly to situations, have a more developed memory, learn more effectively and solve problems. Teenagers don't always understand the importance of sleep which is why it is essential for parents to be aware that good sleep has a link to good health and educational benefits.

"With some 83% of teenagers admitting their sleep is affected by worry and stress over exams, it's important to teach them the importance of a good night's sleep and how it may just be the thing that helps them pass with flying colours!"

The infographic is set against a light orange background. It features two white rounded rectangular boxes with dashed borders. The left box is titled 'Sleep Advice' and contains a list of ten items. The right box is titled 'Sleep Tools' and contains a list of five items.

| Sleep Advice                        | Sleep Tools                |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Sleep Advice Scenarios            | • 30 Day Better Sleep Plan |
| • 7 Steps To A Better Night's Sleep | • Sleep Diary              |
| • Perfect Sleep Environment         | • Nodcasts                 |
| • How much sleep do we need?        | • Helpful Leaflets         |
| • Teen Sleep                        | • Stress Test              |
| • Still not sleeping?               | • Bed MOT                  |
| • Where to get help                 |                            |
| • FAQs                              |                            |