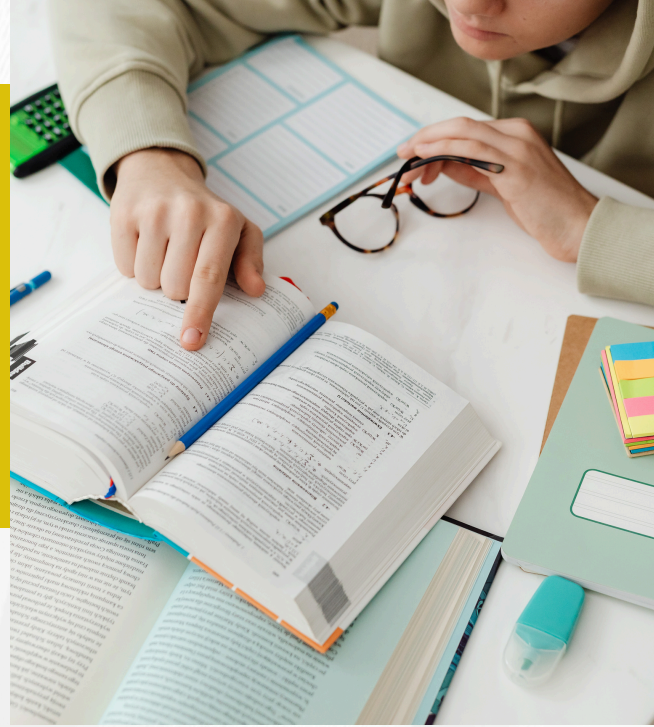




INSIGHTS ON ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT

FROM YOUR DIVISION DIRECTORS AND
COUNSELORS



HELLO!

Welcome back and Happy New Year! We hope you had a restful and joyful holiday break. As we return for the Spring Semester, we'd like to take this month to discuss the importance of sleep. Adolescents and sleep have complicated relationships. Teens need between 8 - 10 hours of sleep per night for healthy physical and mental development. However, due to changing biological clocks, teens have a tendency to stay up later at night. Layered on top of that is the impact of electronic devices, busy schedules, poor time management, and constant social engagement. While a late night or two is harmless, chronic sleep deprivation can have severe consequences. We encourage you to talk to your teens about the information we've shared here and reach out individually if you feel you need extra support in helping your teen build a healthy relationship with sleep.

Thank you for your partnership and commitment to our community!

Danielle Wattleton-Anderson, Lia Gerety, Lauren Garrett, and Kate Smith



PARTICIPATE IN A 2 WEEK SLEEP CHALLENGE WITH YOUR FAMILY!



Week 1: Establish norms & track your sleep using this form: [Track Your Sleep form.pdf](#)
Each family member should complete the form every day.

Week 2: Based on the patterns you see from last week, each family member should set 1-2 goals to improve their sleep habits. Use this form: [Sleep Goals.pdf](#)

Tip: Incentivize your child's involvement by offering a prize or fun activity at the end of Week 2!

We'd love to hear about your experience! Let us know if you participate and how it goes for your family!

AT A GLANCE

- 1) SLEEP CHALLENGE
- 2) UPCOMING CHANCE FOR PARENT EDUCATION
- 3) HOW DOES A LACK OF SLEEP AFFECT MY TEEN?
- 4) SHOULD I ALLOW ELECTRONICS IN MY TEEN'S ROOM AT NIGHT?
- 5) EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING TIPS



OPPORTUNITY FOR PARENT EDUCATION

We are excited to partner with Dr. Richard Rector, former Psychology professor at BSC, and current provider at Glenwood, to host an opportunity in March for parents to learn more about their children's sleep. Stay tuned for more details!

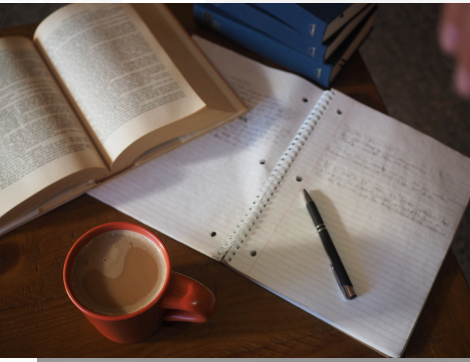


SHOULD I ALLOW ELECTRONICS IN MY TEEN'S ROOM AT NIGHT?



Research answers this question with a resounding “no”. However, as a parent, you know that it is not that simple. You’ve likely engaged in at least one heated discussion with your teen about the “need” to have their phone or their computer in their room over-night. In the Executive Function Tips portion of this newsletter, we’ll offer some tips on helping your teen create better boundaries, but here we’d like to clarify *why* the research says “no”.

1. **Reduced sleep** - In a 2014 study, 80% of teens admitted to being on their phones when their parents thought they were asleep. They were losing 1 - 4 hours of sleep/night to scrolling and texting. Even after falling asleep, they were being awoken by the dinging of alerts. In addition to the sleep loss caused by distraction, the blue light emitted by their electronics stops the release of melatonin which aids in falling and staying asleep. This is compounded by an increase in adrenaline and cortisol that comes from texting and scrolling.
2. **Online safety & tendency to make risky decisions** - Even if their electronics have parental controls on them, tech savvy kids can easily bypass them. When adolescents are online without supervision or accountability, they are more likely to encounter online predators. Additionally, teens on their phone late at night are more likely to get drawn into social conflicts, and make unhealthy, unwise, or unsafe decisions.
3. **Access to inappropriate content** - Similar to the safety concerns, without supervision or accountability, it is almost inevitable that adolescents will encounter pornography and other inappropriate content. Exposure to this content at an early age can negatively impact healthy sexual development and increase likelihood of engaging in risky sexual behaviors.
4. **Addictive properties** - The scrolling features of social media are designed to keep users hooked and engaging continuously because of the dopamine release that it brings.



How does a lack of sleep affect my teen?

Academic Achievement - Healthy sleep promotes attention, memory, critical thinking skills, and creativity. All of these are essential for academic success.

Mental and Emotional Health - Lack of sleep affects mood and emotional reactivity. Sleep deprived teens are more likely to report mental health concerns and behavioral issues.

Physical Health and Development - As critical physical development occurs in the teenage years, lack of sleep can have a strong impact on physical health. Teens with poor sleep habits are more likely to have issues with blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and be more at risk for long term cardiovascular problems among other concerns.

Risk taking and Decision Making - As lack of sleep affects the frontal lobe, teens who sleep less are more likely to engage in high-risk behaviors.

Accidents and Injuries - Risk of injury comes hand in hand with increased high-risk behaviors. Sleep deprivation can reduce reaction times in an effect similar to high levels of alcohol consumption.

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING TIPS - IMPROVING SLEEP HYGIENE

Executive functioning skills are the skills that we use on a daily basis to make decisions, problem solve, manage our emotions and impulses, and organize our thoughts and tasks. These skills are crucial for success.

While sleeping is not an executive functioning skill, poor EF skills may lead to impacted sleep. For example, a student with poor time management may end up staying up too late to finish their homework. Here are some habits that can improve executive functioning skills & improve sleep hygiene:

1. **Time management** - Help your children manage their afterschool schedules to ensure they are effectively balancing extra curriculars and schoolwork so that they can get 8-10 hours of sleep/night. Encourage students to pace larger assignments so that they are not up late the night before they are due doing large amounts of work.
2. **Impulse control** - Help your children resist temptation to stay up late scrolling or communicating with friends by keeping electronics out of rooms. You can model this by committing to all family devices staying in a designated to charge overnight. Students can use an analog alarm clock or a device such as Alexa to get up in the morning. Teens may balk at this idea at first, but after a couple of weeks the practice, they may actually start to see the benefits of it.
3. **Emotional control** - Encourage your kids to practice calming activities (and activities away from screens) in the hour before bed when possible.

