

Are Electronics Keeping Your Children From Getting Proper Sleep?

Over the past decade there has been a rise in the use of technology. A study published in the British Medical Journal (BMJ) that surveyed approximately 10,000 adolescents, aged 16-19, found that 97% reported using electronics one hour prior to bed time.

Device use promotes wakefulness through increased blue light exposure and media content stimulates the mind. Increased light emissions can delay the natural circadian rhythm by promoting photoreceptors in our retina, which signals the brain to identify the differences between day and night. Distinguishing day and night helps us to become alert in the morning and helps us fall asleep at the appropriate time. Light emissions can miscue the brain to disrupt the natural circadian rhythm and delay sleep onset, and as a result, our brain sends a signal to our body to delay the onset of melatonin secretion. Melatonin, natural hormone produced in the absence of light, helps regulate sleep.

Device use prior to bed may also become a routine, creating a learned association between the bed as being a place of study, work or socializing, rather than just sleep.

Actively using electronic devices prior to bedtime may affect sleep in a negative way

- Later bed time & shortened sleep duration
- Longer Sleep Onset Latency (SOL: the length of time that it takes to accomplish the transition from full wakefulness to sleep)
- Increased daytime fatigue
- Physical discomfort through muscular pain and headaches (attributed to long use of media and console use)

How many hours per day/night do you spend on an electronic device?

The average amount of daytime screen use for adolescents is 5.5-7 hours a day.

How many hours do you need to feel rested?

When asked, adolescents (both male and female) prefer to have 8-9 hours of sleep in order to feel well rested the following day.

Experts recommend adolescences ages 14-17 to get 8-10 hours of sleep, not less than seven and not more than 11.

Total daytime screen use of 4 hours or more was found to be associated with an increased risk of less than 5 hours per night. The amount of sleep varies for each individual, however BMJ found that using more than 2 devices prior to bedtime increased the odds of delaying sleep onset for up to or more than 60 minutes.

How to decrease the effects of devices and sleep loss

- Disengaging from devices 1 hour prior to bedtime
- Decreasing a device's brightness can help keep melatonin secretion at more reasonable levels.

Basic sleep requirements and adequate sleep is essential for growth, learning, regulating mood, creativity and weight control.

Source: [British Medical Journal](#)

For more information about sleep, visit

www.accqsleeplabs.com

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