



# REST, RECHARGE, THRIVE

A Sleep Health Workbook  
for Teens

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Supporting healthy sleep, emotional  
well-being, and daily functioning



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# Why Sleep Matters for Teens

Sleep is a foundational biological process that is essential for physical growth, brain development, regulating emotions, and overall well-being.<sup>1</sup> During adolescence, the brain and body undergo rapid development, and healthy sleep strengthens your mind and body as you navigate school, relationships, identity, and independence.

## What Sleep Helps With:



Attention, learning, and memory



Emotion regulation and mood



Stress recovery



Immune functioning



Decision-making



Problem-solving



Energy and motivation

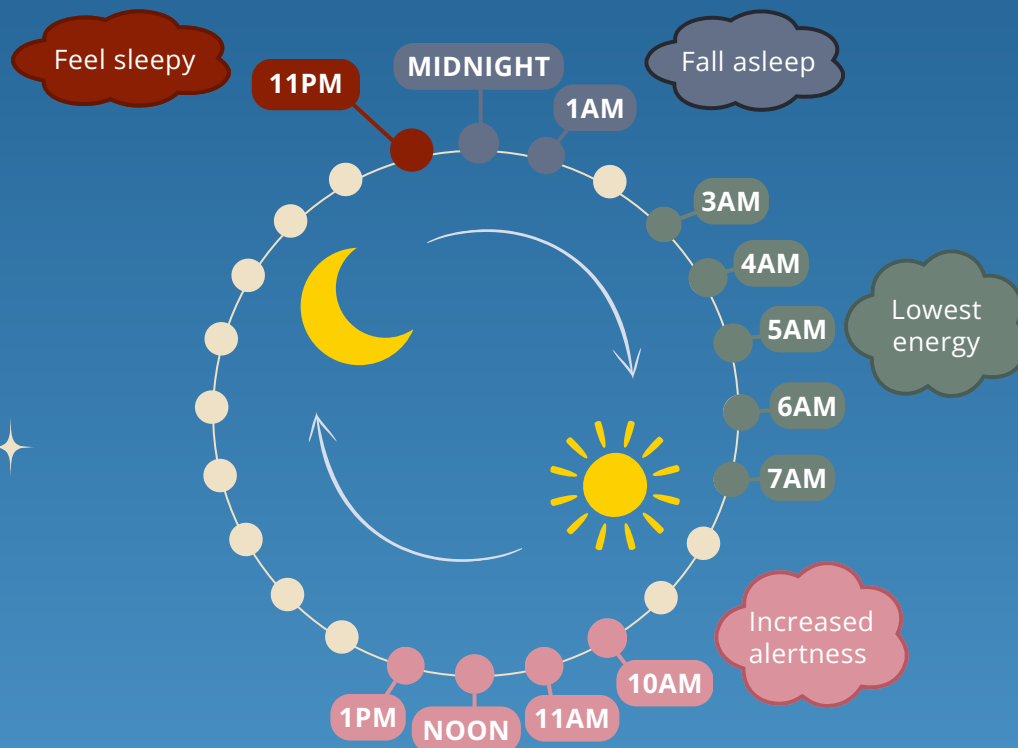
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**Why This Workbook?** This workbook helps you understand your sleep, build healthy routines, and learn practical strategies you can use every day.



# Puberty & Your Sleep-Wake Cycle

Beginning in early adolescence, your body's internal clock (aka circadian rhythm) and "need for sleep" (aka homeostatic sleep pressure) experience a shift.<sup>2-5</sup> You may have noticed that you don't feel tired until 11:00 p.m. and can't fall asleep until 12:00 a.m. or 1:00 a.m. You're not imagining this. Hormonal changes during puberty result in teens naturally staying awake longer, falling asleep later, and wanting to sleep more.<sup>6-10</sup> These biological delays can prevent teens from getting a good night's sleep and impair their daily functioning,<sup>6,10</sup> making early school mornings especially challenging.<sup>11,12</sup>



You're not lazy - your biology is changing.



# How Sleep Supports Your Health

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## Sleep Supports Your Brain<sup>13-16</sup>

- Supports learning and memory
- Enhances attention, concentration, and focus
- Improves decision-making and problem-solving
- Boosts academic performance



## Sleep Supports Your Emotions<sup>17-21</sup>

- Improves mood
- Reduces irritability and impulsivity
- Supports coping and emotion regulation
- Lowers risk of anxiety and depressive symptoms



## Sleep Supports Your Body<sup>22-24</sup>

- Strengthens immune functioning
- Supports growth and restores energy
- Enhances heart and metabolic functioning
- Regulates appetite and hormones

*✦✦ Sleep Helps You Thrive*

*Good sleep boosts academic performance, motivation, and daily functioning ✦*

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**QUICK FACT:** Adolescents need **8-10 hours** of sleep per night, but the majority of teens **do not** meet this recommendation.<sup>25</sup>

# Habits That Disrupt Restorative Sleep

- ✘ Using your phone or other electronics in bed
- ✘ Sleeping with the TV on
- ✘ Scrolling social media late at night
- ✘ Drinking caffeine after lunch (soda, energy drinks, coffee)
- ✘ Doing homework in bed
- ✘ Taking long naps or napping in the late afternoon
- ✘ Sleeping in too late on weekends
- ✘ Eating heavy meals close to bedtime
- ✘ Exercising right before bed
- ✘ Stress, racing thoughts, or nighttime worry
- ✘ Uncomfortable bedroom temperature, noise, or light

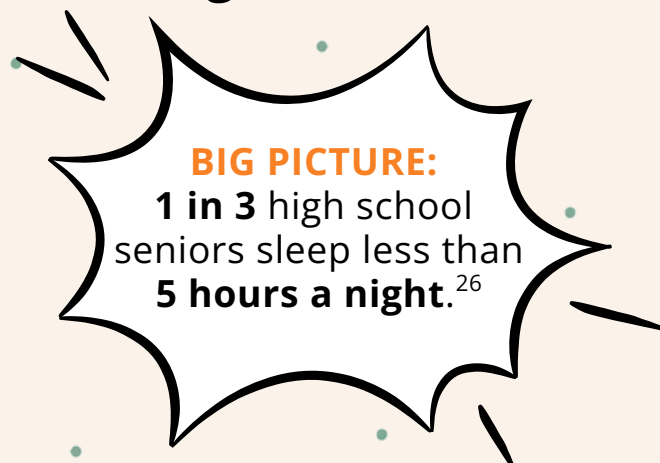
Try to notice which of these show up in your routine. Awareness is the first step.

**DID YOU KNOW?** 53% of middle school students and 79% of high school students say they aren't getting enough sleep.<sup>26</sup>

# Healthy Sleep Hygiene Practices

## Daily habits for better sleep

- ✓ Keep a consistent bedtime and wake time across the week
- ✓ Limit screens **30-60 minutes** before bed
- ✓ Create a relaxing wind-down routine
- ✓ Use your bed only for sleep
- ✓ Reduce caffeine intake after lunch
- ✓ Get exposure to morning sunlight
- ✓ Engage in regular physical activity
- ✓ Keep your bedroom quiet, cool, and dark
- ✓ Practice calming techniques (meditation, deep breathing)
- ✓ Prepare for tomorrow ahead of time to reduce nighttime worry and feeling rushed in the morning



# If You Struggle to Fall or Stay Asleep

- Keep the lights off or dimmed
- Avoid checking the clock and using your phone
- Try slow, deep breathing or mindfulness
- Use progressive muscle relaxation or grounding skills (e.g., 5-4-3-2-1 senses)
- Visualize a peaceful place
- Listen to soft music or guided meditation
- Read a book (avoid thrillers, though)
- Get out of bed after 20 minutes of restlessness and do something quiet until sleepy

**Rest counts – even if sleep hasn't come yet.**

## **Optional Exercise**

### 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding

- 5 things you can SEE
- 4 things you can FEEL
- 3 things you can HEAR
- 2 things you can SMELL
- 1 thing you can TASTE



# Build Your Bedtime Routine

My Ideal Bedtime: \_\_\_\_\_

My Screen-Off Time: \_\_\_\_\_

My Wind-Down Steps:

*Examples: take a warm shower, wash-up for bed, dim the lights, stretch, journal, or listen to soothing music (e.g., nature sounds, rain, etc.)*

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

My Sleep Environment Checklist:

- Quiet                       Cool                       Dark
- Comfortable               No screens
- I feel safe and calm

## Tips for a Great Routine

- Keep it consistent, even on weekends and school breaks
- Make your room feel as calm and comfortable as you can
- Avoid caffeine and heavy snacks before bed
- Use a bedtime reminder alarm to start winding down
- Focus only on what you can control in your sleep environment because we can't always change everything



# When Thoughts Race at Night

Use this page to write down your thoughts, worries, or ideas that show up before bed.

**What's on my mind right now (i.e., the thoughts keeping me awake)?**

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**Can I control this tonight?**

YES

NO

**Can I let it go until tomorrow?**

YES

NO

**What do I want to remind myself right now so I can go to sleep?**

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**What can wait until tomorrow?**

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**What can I do tomorrow to address this?**

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## **Tips to Address Racing Thoughts and Nighttime Worries**

- Keep a “thoughts journal” next to your bed
- Write out your concerns and revisit them the next day
- Use grounding or mindfulness skills to help you fall asleep

Month: \_\_\_\_\_



# My Sleep Goal for the Month



**One habit I want to improve this month**

**Steps I will take to help me improve this habit:**

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**How will I track my progress?**

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**What improvements do I hope to notice this month?**

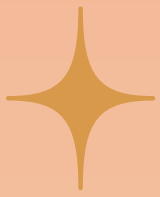
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**Who can support me or keep me accountable?**



# Weekly Sleep Reflection

Month: \_\_\_\_\_

Week: \_\_\_\_\_



**Which habits helped me sleep well this week?**

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**What challenges came up?**

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**How did sleep affect my mood, focus, and energy?**

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**Which new sleep habit do I want to try next week?**

**What changes will help me to try this new sleep habit?**

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# WHEN TO TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

- You have trouble falling or staying asleep **most nights** for 2+ weeks.
- You feel **very tired during the day**, even when you slept enough.
- You **often fall asleep** in class, doing homework, or while riding in a car.
- You feel **irritable, sad, anxious, or overwhelmed**, and sleep problems seem to make it worse.
- You have frequent **headaches, stomachaches, or body aches** that may be related to poor sleep.
- You **snore loudly, stop breathing, gasp, or choke** during sleep (or someone tells you that you do).
- You have **nightmares, night terrors, or panic symptoms** during sleep.
- Your sleep problems are affecting your **school performance, friendships, sports, or motivation**.

To help your doctor help you, track your sleep for up to 2 weeks using the Sleep Diary on the next two pages. Don't worry about doing it perfectly - even 1 week of tracking can give your doctor helpful information about your sleep patterns.

Scan the QR code to contact Teen Health Connection

#### Address

3541 Randolph Road, Suite 206  
Charlotte, NC 28211

#### Phone Numbers

Physical Services: (704) 381-8336  
Behavioral Health: (704) 381-8379  
Health Education: (704) 381-8368

#### Email

TeenHealthConnection@TeenHealthConnection.org

#### Hours

Monday - Thursday: 8am - 7pm  
Friday: 8am - 5pm

#### Website

TeenHealthConnection.org





# SLEEP DIARY - MORNING

Complete When You Wake Up

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7
<b>I went to bed at...</b> (write the time and circle am or pm)						
am/pm	am/pm	am/pm	am/pm	am/pm	am/pm	am/pm
<b>When I went to bed, I fell asleep...</b> (circle one) <b>1 = with difficulty, 2 = after some time, 3 = easily</b>						
1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
<b>After I fell asleep, I woke up...</b> (write the number of times and the number of minutes)						
# times: ____ # mins: ____	# times: ____ # mins: ____	# times: ____ # mins: ____	# times: ____ # mins: ____	# times: ____ # mins: ____	# times: ____ # mins: ____	# times: ____ # mins: ____
<b>How much sleep did I get?</b> (write the approximate number of hours and/or minutes)						
<b>When I woke up, I felt...</b> (circle one) <b>1 = sleepy, 2 = somewhat tired, 3 = rested</b>						
1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
<b>What made it hard to sleep?</b> (e.g., noise, lights, pets, allergies, temperature, pain, stress, thoughts, etc.)						

Adapted from "Sleep Diary: Track Your Habits and Get on the Path to a Better Night's Sleep!" by National Sleep Foundation, 2021 (<https://www.thensf.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/NSF-Sleep-Diary-Rev-2-2021.pdf>).



# SLEEP DIARY - NIGHT

Complete When You Get Into Bed

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7
<b>I exercised at least 30 minutes at...</b> (circle all that apply) <span style="float: right;"><b>M = morning, A = afternoon, E = evening</b></span>						
M A E	M A E	M A E	M A E	M A E	M A E	M A E
<b>Did I take a nap today?</b> (circle Y or N. If Y, write how long you napped)						
Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
<b>While doing daily activities today, I felt like dozing off...</b> (circle one) <span style="float: right;"><b>1 = always 2 = sometimes, 3 = never</b></span>						
1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
<b>I drank/ate something with caffeine at...</b> (circle all that apply) <span style="float: right;"><b>M = morning, A = afternoon, E = evening</b></span>						
M A E	M A E	M A E	M A E	M A E	M A E	M A E
<b>Roughly 2-3 hours before going to bed, I ate/drank...</b> (circle all that apply) <span style="float: right;"> heavy meal  caffeine</span>						
<b>My mood today was...</b> (circle one) <span style="float: right;"> bad  okay  good</span>						
<b>In the hour before going to sleep, my bedtime routine consisted of...</b> (e.g., brushed teeth, read book, etc.)						

Adapted from "Sleep Diary: Track Your Habits and Get on the Path to a Better Night's Sleep!" by National Sleep Foundation, 2021 (<https://www.thensf.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/NSF-Sleep-Diary-Rev-2-2021.pdf>).

# Additional Resources

National Sleep  
Foundation  
(NSF)



American Academy  
of Sleep Medicine  
(AASM)



Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention  
(CDC)



National Heart, Lung,  
and Blood Institute  
(NHLBI)



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