

## BRISTOL CHILD PARENT SUPPORT TOP TIPS TO HELP YOUR TEENAGER SLEEP



Research shows all teenagers need at least nine hours of sleep a night ( National Sleep Foundation) Do you know how many hours your child sleeps? Are they up doing lots of homework, or talking to their friends via social media. Teenagers are influenced by their peers most at this developmental stage so it can be hard for any parent to have any influence at this time. Be reassured you are not the only one, have faith and have some rules. ( Three at the most, try not to sweat the small stuff)

Most teenagers catch up on sleep at weekends however according to Dennis Rosen, M.D., Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School Harvard Health blog 2015, it's actually doing them more harm than good. It can shift the internal clock even more so creates more deficit and make it even harder to wake up in the week

So what can you do, follow my five steps below,

**1** Educate your teenager, they may not like you for it but tell them the importance of going to bed a regular time. each night and having nine hours sleep.

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**2** Discuss how the blue light in all screens interferes with melatonin. Melatonin is the chemical responsible at night for helping to go to sleep. ( our 24-hour cycle Circadium Rhythm) So shutting down their phones, screens one to two hours prior to sleep. Be firm, you may want to make this a family rule. Some families I have worked with have a rule of no screens after 9.00pm

**3** Expose them to sunlight in the mornings, this shows that this can help to invoke melatonin. Try and go for walk or run, operate a point system to help encourage them to get rewards for getting up. Prevent them going on screens in the morning. Exercise has powerful benefits for mood and sleep.

**4** Help them to manage their anxiety. anxiety gets in the way of a good nights sleep. There are some great APPS, for anxiety I love the SAM App from UWE in England. More at my blog page  
<https://bristolchildparentsupport.co.uk/2017/01/helping-your-anxious-teen-using-free-helpful-apps/>

**5** Help them with their diet, avoid all stimulants sugar, caffeine drinks, fizzy drinks such as cola and Red Bull, they are prime offenders prior to going to bed ( this article is for information only, its not be used instead of medical advice)

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