

Why Sleep Really Matters for Teens



The Science Behind Teen Sleep



Ages 12–13

Recommended sleep: **9–11 hours** per night for early teens.



Ages 14–18

Recommended sleep: **8–10 hours** per night for older teens.



It's Physiology

Puberty delays melatonin release, making it biologically harder for teens to fall asleep early – it's not laziness.

Why Sleep Impacts Everything



Mood & Memory

Poor sleep can mimic or amplify anxiety, irritability, and low motivation.



Focus & School

Sleep deprivation directly reduces concentration and academic performance.



Immunity & Energy

A well-rested body fights illness better and sustains higher energy throughout the day.



Skin & Recovery

Sleep supports physical recovery, skin health, and overall growth during the teen years.



School Start Times

Early school start times clash with teens' natural rhythms – a systemic challenge, not a personal failing.

Modern Life Makes Sleep Harder



Screen Time

Blue light from devices delays melatonin release, pushing sleep later into the night.



Academic Pressure

Heavy workloads and late-night studying eat into essential rest time.



Social Stress

Social pressures and online interactions keep minds active long after bedtime.



Inconsistent Routines

Irregular sleep schedules — especially on weekends — disrupt the body's internal clock.



Physical Issues

Conditions like low iron causing cramps can interfere with comfortable, restful sleep.

The Bigger Picture



Compassion First

Supporting better sleep is about helping teens feel and function better — not control.



Gradual Skill-Building

Good sleep habits develop over time — like learning to brush teeth, it takes practice and patience.



Ollie Team Support


The Ollie team is here to help with strategies tailored for both parents and teens.



Understand the Teen

Compassion over confrontation — understanding where teens are coming from makes all the difference.

What Parents Can Do

 These strategies work best when introduced gradually and with empathy – small consistent changes create lasting habits.

1

Encourage screen-free time

at least 1 hour before bed to allow melatonin to rise naturally.

2

Create a sleep-friendly environment: cool, dark, and quiet – try soft lighting, calm music, or lavender spray.

3

Keep a consistent sleep schedule – even on weekends – to support a stable internal clock.

4

Support daily physical activity of 1+ hour of movement to promote deeper, more restful sleep.

5

Monitor caffeine and eating habits: no caffeine after lunch, and keep dinners lighter and earlier in the evening.

6

Short naps (10–30 min before 4 p.m.) can restore energy without disrupting nighttime sleep.