

# The importance of sleep to learning

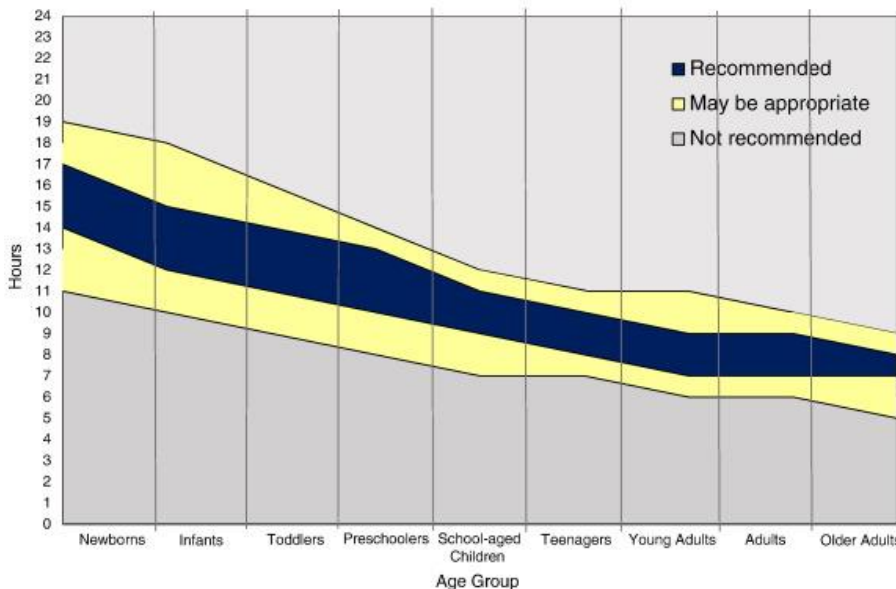
We know that we are working in partnership with our parents to create the very best conditions for learning for our students. One area that has been drawn to my attention recently, is the importance of sleep to learning and student well-being. Let me get straight to the point.

## A good night's sleep – worth half a grade

Sleep has been scientifically proven to promote attention and improve self-control during lessons. It has been proven to aid remembering and the recall of learning. What is more, sleep has been scientifically proven to build a stronger immune system, reduce illness (absenteeism) and promote well-being. In fact, students achieving a full night's sleep (9+ hrs) achieved, on average, **half a grade higher** than those students that were sleep deprived, carrying a debt of two hours or more.

How much sleep do our students need to be ready to learn and to benefit from learning? In recent years, recommendations for children and young people's 'Total Sleep Time' have been extended. It is now recommended that [add school name here] School age children achieve between 8-11 hours sleep each night and that is in fact quantity of sleep that matters most.

Sleep Duration Recommendations Across the Life Span



### Preschoolers

Sleep range widened by 1 hr to 10-13 hrs

### School age children 6-13

Sleep range widened by 1 hr to 9-11 hrs

### Teenagers 14-17

Sleep range widened by 1 hr to 8-10 hrs

### Young adults 18-25

Sleep range is 7-9 hrs

### Adults (26-64)

Sleep range remains 7-9 hrs

[National Sleep Foundation's updated sleep duration recommendations: final report](#)

Too many students are not sleeping... enough

We know that sleep deprivation (a debt of two hours) is a progressively worrying concern for educators and parents as students move through to their examining school years.

Approximately 16% of 11 year olds, rising to 40.5% of 15 year olds, are technically sleep deprived, hindering their focused in class, hindering their ability to retain information and ultimately hindering their achievement in their examinations.

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year olds are  
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## Sleep your way to success

### Promotes a good night sleep

- ✓ Sleep management (a more appealing term than bedtime) requires routine. Setting sleep and rise times, improve sleep patterns
- ✓ Turn the brightness down on your devices
- ✓ Exercising improves readiness to sleep
- ✓ Warm bath / shower in the evenings
- ✓ Studies show that cherries are one of the few foods that are a natural source of melatonin, the chemical that controls the body's internal clock and regulates sleep. Eating cherries about an hour before hitting the hay may help you get a good night's sleep.

### Avoid

- Avoid** caffeinated drinks in the evenings
- Avoid** screen time an hour before bedtime
- Avoid** playing video games before bed led to 27 less minutes of total sleep time and also led to a 39 minute delay in sleep onset.
- Avoid** taking your phone to bed (even as your alarm clock)
- Avoid** falling asleep before bed
- Avoid** thinking about tomorrow...
- Avoid** "devices" being stored in bedrooms – the mere presence of a mobile phone hinders total sleep time by up to 14%. Television in bedroom led to 31 minutes less sleep per night