

Social Media and Screen Time in the Evening

Adolescents often fall into habits of using social media and devices in the evenings. Often, children reach for devices late at night to remedy issues with falling asleep. However, it is this evening use of screens and social media that is causing issues with sleep.

There is a significant association with children's' levels of anxiety and depression, late night social media uses, and poor sleep quality.

Adolescents using social media in the evening or in bed have been seen to have significantly poorer sleep-quality which in turn leads to a decline in mental wellbeing and increased struggles with anxiety and depression.

Poor sleep quality can be detrimental to a child's wellbeing. Not only mentally, but this can also be a cause for weight gain issues as well as a decline in academic performances in teenagers.

Tips to help children's sleep quality:

A bedroom should be a screen-free zone:

Keeping screens and devices out of the bedroom allows for it to be a sleeping-only area. This encourages better relaxation at the end of the day, free from distraction and stimulating lights.

Keep phones turned off at night or silence notifications:

Notifications can disrupt sleep in the middle of the night, having detrimental effects of the quality of sleep and children feeling well-rested in the mornings. Turning phones off ensure they won't be the cause of an interrupted sleep.

No screens at least an hour before bedtime:

Screens emit a blue light that prevents our brains from producing melatonin properly, which is what is responsible for feeling sleepy in the evening. By turning off screens well-before a child's bedtime means their brain can produce melatonin properly, making it much more likely they can get a full-nights worth of restful sleep.

Setting up a bed-time routine:

Establishing a healthy routine before bedtime can improve a child's sleep quality. This could include reading or self-care activities, such as a bath. Make sure this routine minimizes stress and avoids too much exercise that could potentially energise your child and prevent them from feeling ready to go to sleep.

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