

SLEEP

Sleep helps mood, attention, learning, and behaviour. When sleep is off, everything feels harder.

What sleep problems can look like

- Takes more than 30–45 minutes to fall asleep most nights
- Waking often, waking too early, or sleeping through alarms
- Difficulty waking for school or work
- Reversed schedule (late nights, late mornings)
- Daytime tiredness, irritability, meltdowns, or poor focus
- Bedtime battles or nighttime anxiety

First: check for “sleep stealers”

Sleep is often disrupted by stress or anxiety, late-night screens, caffeine, long naps, late workouts, or untreated medical issues (e.g., pain, reflux, asthma, eczema, loud snoring).

If snoring is loud or breathing seems unusual at night, talk to your doctor.

The Sleep Reset Plan (start tonight)

Pick 2–3 steps to start. Small changes done daily work best.

A) Keep wake-up time steady (most important)

Wake up at the same time every day (weekends too, within 1 hour). This is the “anchor” that resets the body clock.

B) Create a wind-down routine (20–40 minutes)

Dim lights and choose calm activities (shower/bath, reading on paper, calm music, gentle stretching). Do the same steps in the same order each night.

C) Put screens to bed early

Aim for screens OFF 30–60 minutes before sleep. If that’s too hard, start with 15 minutes and build up.

Continue to Build the Reset

D) Keep the bed for sleep (and quiet rest)

Avoid homework, gaming, or long phone use in bed. We want: bed = sleep zone.

E) If you can't sleep after ~20 minutes, reset gently

Get up and do a quiet activity in dim light. Return to bed when sleepy. This helps your brain stop linking bed with frustration.

F) Morning light + movement

Open curtains or go outside soon after waking. A short morning walk can help shift the body clock earlier.

Age Specific Tips

Ages 4–10 (“Routine years”)

Use a simple visual routine; offer limited choices (“one story or two?”); for night fears, validate and return to routine (“You’re safe. I’ll check on you in 10 minutes.”)

Ages 11–14 (“Transition years”)

Sleep may shift later, but wake times shouldn’t. Keep mornings consistent; limit naps to 20–30 minutes, not late in the day.

Ages 15–21 (“Delayed sleep phase”)

Keep wake time steady (even weekends), get bright morning light, dim lights and reduce screens at night, and avoid sleeping in to “catch up.”

When to get extra help

Seek extra support if sleep problems happen most nights for 3–4 weeks, affect daytime functioning, involve loud snoring or breathing pauses, or occur alongside significant anxiety, depression, ADHD, or stress - especially with delayed sleep schedules in teens or young adults.