

The #1 enemy of good sleep for school kids: Screens

August 21 2023, by Cara Murez



Video games and social media are keeping school kids up at night,

according to a new survey from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM).

But so, too, are more constructive pursuits, including homework and [extracurricular activities](#), which can be a problem when it comes to setting a good sleep routine early in the [school year](#).

"Getting enough sleep is just as crucial as nutrition and exercise when it comes to a child's overall health and well-being," said Dr. Anne Marie Morse, a pediatric sleep physician and AASM spokesperson.

"When a child achieves healthy sleep, they're more likely to look, feel and act their best, which allows them to stay focused and alert in the classroom, on the field and in their extracurriculars," Morse said in an academy news release.

Half of parents surveyed by AASM blamed video games for disrupting kids' sleep. About 44% blamed [social media](#); 34%, homework; and 28%, extracurriculars.

The academy offered some tips to offset these disruptors.

Start by avoiding caffeine after school in sodas, coffee and energy drinks. These make it harder to fall asleep at night.

Restrict screen time before bed. Encourage your child to disconnect from all [electronic devices](#) 30 to 60 minutes before bedtime, AASM recommends. This will help them wind down for the night.

Keep electronics in another room, not the bedroom, to avoid temptation. Use an [alarm clock](#) instead of a phone for waking up in the morning.

Establish and follow a relaxing nighttime routine, which might include

journaling, reading or taking a warm bath or shower.

Keep the bedroom quiet and cool.

Children between 6 and 12 years of age should sleep nine to 12 hours each night. Teens should get eight to 10 hours of shuteye.

Use the AASM's [Online Bedtime Calculator](#) to help you select an appropriate [bedtime](#) for your child or teen.

More information: The U.S. National Institutes for Health has more on [good sleep for good health](#).

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Citation: The #1 enemy of good sleep for school kids: Screens (2023, August 21) retrieved 29 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-08-enemy-good-school-kids-screens.html>

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