

[IMAGE]

Tips for Sleepy Teens

By Editorial Staff

Let's face it - teenagers stay up until the crack of dawn and sleep until noon every day, right? OK, so maybe we're exaggerating slightly, but there's a case to be made. A recent survey by the National Sleep Foundation found only 20 percent of teens got the recommended nine hours of sleep a night.

Furthermore, more than a quarter of the teens surveyed (28 percent) reported falling asleep in class and more than half (51 percent) reported driving while drowsy. Lack of sleep also affected academic performance: Teens who didn't get enough sleep were more likely than their peers to get lower grades, while 80 percent of those who got an optimal amount of sleep reported achieving A's and B's in school.

So, how do you help your sleepyheaded adolescent prepare for the added stress of college, particularly if you won't be around to serve as their alarm clock? Here are some tips, courtesy of *US News & World Report*, to help your college-bound kid get adequate sleep:

- Sleepy Girl - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark **Be consistent** Tempting as it might be to sleep in on weekends, try and keep to as regular a schedule as possible. Sleep researchers suggest a bedtime of somewhere between 11 p.m. and midnight, but if you find yourself getting up later once college begins, try and keep to that schedule.
- **Become a morning person** Painful as it might be, one of the best ways to retrain your body to a better sleep schedule is to be more alert earlier in the day. Starting at least three weeks before the school year begins, wake yourself up progressively earlier several days in a row and get out in the sun. The sunlight helps your internal body clock reset itself to your new schedule.
- **Schedule classes carefully** If you are naturally a night owl, don't schedule an 8 a.m. class three days a week. Just because you had to be up that early in high school doesn't mean you have to do so in college.
- **Compensate** If being a morning person is just out of the question, but you get stuck with that 8 a.m. physics class, try and shift your schedule to study in the afternoons. But don't pull an all-nighter of studying - you'll just be even more exhausted in class the next day.

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