

This period of growth also means teenagers' brains are more sensitive to drug use – much more so than those of adults. Excessive alcohol – such as that from binge drinking (more than 5 standard drinks drunk quickly over a short period) can cause actual physical damage to their brain. Alcohol also interferes with their learning, causing both short- and long-term memory problems and can also lead to higher stress levels and risk of depression and suicide.

Starting to drink at an early age is also associated with alcohol dependency and related problems during adult life.

For these reasons, it is important for parents to delay and limit alcohol consumption and use by teenagers for as long as possible and the same applies to tobacco and Marijuana use.

PHYSICAL NEEDS

MORE SLEEP.

Teenagers need an average of 9 hours of sleep each night – 1-2 hours more than younger children and adults. Sleep is important – it is the time when growing happens.

During the teenage years, the body's 'clock' is temporarily reset, telling a person to fall asleep later and wake up later. It is natural for teenagers NOT to feel tired later in the evening.



One study showed that for young people who started drinking by the age of 14, almost half (1 out of every 2) went on to develop alcohol dependency problems, compared with only 1 in 10 who didn't drink alcohol until they were 21.¹

HOW CAN I TELL IF MY TEEN IS GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP?

Here are some of the signs that your teen might need more sleep:

- *difficulty waking up in the morning*
- *inability to concentrate*
- *falling asleep during classes*
- *feelings of moodiness and even depression*

Teens also have high risk of having car accidents because of falling asleep behind the wheel.

Here are a few suggestions to get your teen the sleep they need:

- *establish a reasonable bedtime and wake time, make this consistent throughout the week (remember they need about 9 hours sleep)*
- *establish a bedtime routine, taking a hot shower or quiet activity like reading, beforehand*
- *cut down on caffeine (especially from energy drinks)*
- *encourage daily exercise (make sure this is at least 2 hours before bedtime)*
- *unless it's important (like sports or an appointment), let them sleep later in the morning in the weekends*

