

Sleep Conversation

As we make our way through this week and look toward mid-term exams, the focus for many is on academic preparation. That said, it's pretty unlikely that students will perform at their best if they aren't attending to their physical and emotional well-being.

Consider using communication time this week or any other opportunities you have to connect with students to talk about some practical ways to make it as productive and healthy a stretch as possible. Study smart, not just hard. Eat right. Take advantage of all the great wellness activities being offered. And last but not least, get enough sleep! A few fast facts, tips, links, and questions to get conversation going are below.

Fact: Researchers report that the average adolescent needs eight and a half to nine and a half hours of sleep each night. According to the National Sleep Foundation, 40 percent of all Americans and 85% of teenagers are sleep deprived.

- How much sleep do *you* get?
- Does it feel like that's enough for you?
- Does nine hours sound like it would even be possible for you to get during the school year? If not, why? What gets in your way? (homework? sports? theatre? social life? family obligations? community service? social media?...)

Fact: Getting enough sleep improves memory, concentration, mood, and our ability to regulate emotions.

Fact: The level of impairment associated with sleep-deprived driving is equivalent to driving drunk.

Fact: Sleep is a biological necessity, along with eating and drinking. In fact, you can survive three times longer without food than you can without sleep.

Fact: The [snooze button](#) can do more damage than good. Fragmented sleep is less restorative and leads to sleepiness-related daytime impairment. By breaking up those last minutes of sleep, you're more likely to be tired and perform poorly during the day.

- How do you feel when you've gotten *too little* sleep? enough sleep?
- What would you miss out on if you went to bed an hour earlier?
- As we look ahead toward midterms next week, are there changes you might make to manage your time differently and get more sleep?
- To avoid cramming and losing sleep, what's a smart study plan you might try?
- Thinking longer term, is it important to you to get more sleep? If so, what might you be able to do to increase the sleep you get on a regular basis?

Two articles on how to help teens get more sleep:

[Eight Ways to Help Teens Get More Sleep](#)

[Hard Lesson in Sleep for Teenagers](#)

This was shared through the PTA newsletter Monday and includes some practical, positively-spun tips on thinking about and managing stress:

[Five Simple Lessons to Help De-Stress Your Stressed Out Teen](#)