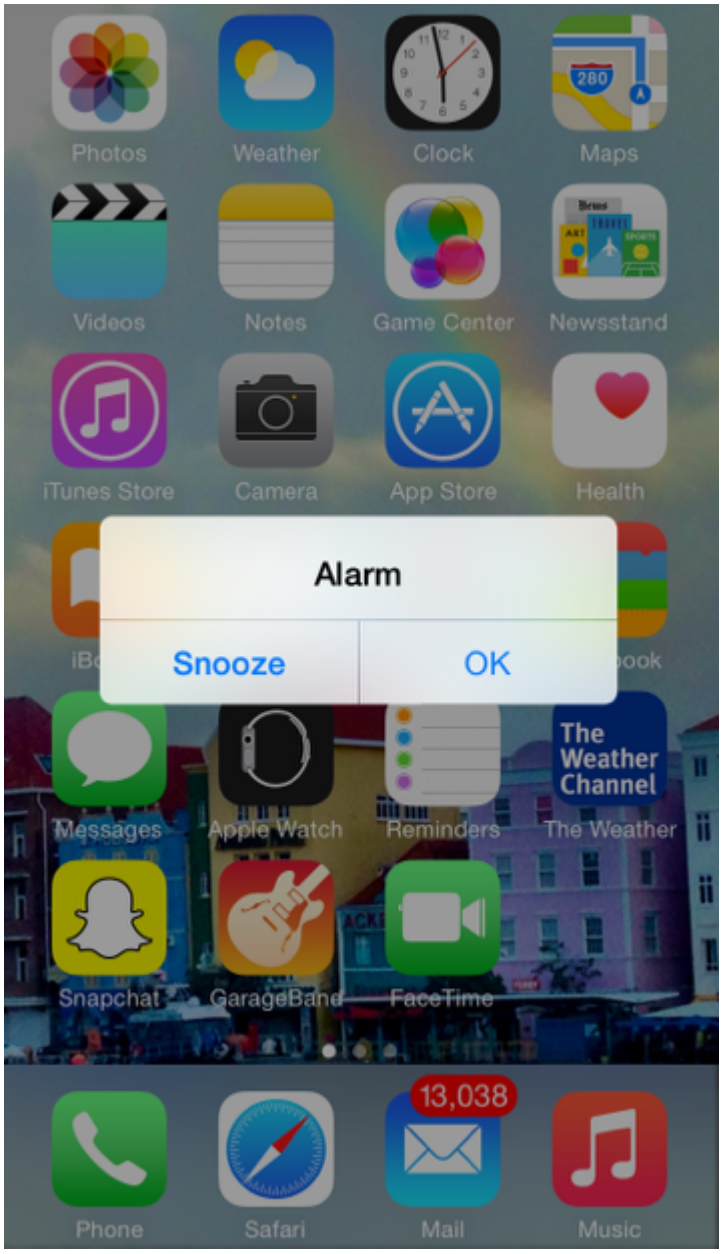
A Tired Teen’s Guide to Good Sleep



As a follow up to our tired teen post, we’re posting the handout we gave out at the Community Conversations Workshop last week at Council Rock South High School, Holland, PA. This handout is designed for teens to read:

A teen’s guide to healthy sleep habits

Most teens need 8-10 hours of sleep per night to be healthy, perform optimally, and act safely.

All teens should be able to get themselves up, washed, dressed, fed, lunch packed, and out the door for school WITHOUT a parent’s help.

Establish a bedtime routine which includes an adult family member – even if you just say “goodnight.”

Routinely give yourself time before falling asleep to clear your mind and relax your body. Meditate or pray.

Avoid computer/TV/phone/screen time 30 minutes before going to bed and turning out the light.

If your homework is taking too long, consider leaving your phone in another room or turning if off so that you are not interrupted by texts. People work more efficiently when they are not constantly interrupted. This will give you more time to sleep.

Associate your bed with sleeping. Do not do homework, play video games, or use your phone in bed.

Avoid caffeine, or do not drink any past noon. Caffeine stays in your body for 24 hours, which means that even a morning coffee or energy drink can inhibit falling asleep at night.

If you cannot wake up in time for school, gradually move your bedtime earlier, by 15 minutes every few nights, until you sleep long enough that you wake up feeling refreshed.

If you just can’t readjust your schedule to fall asleep earlier, check with your doctor if short term melatonin is fine for you.

Sleeping in too long on weekends can throw your weekday schedule off and make Monday mornings dreadful. If you do sleep in on weekends to catch up on sleep, try not to sleep more than a couple of hours past your week day wake up time.

Tired teens:

Are involved in more car crashes

Perform less well in school

Have difficulty paying attention and focusing in class and on homework

Suffer from more depression and mental health issues

Are more likely to become obese

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