

YouThink is a group of young people working in partnership with Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) – Division of Mental Health, Children, Youth and Women's Health Service (CYWHS). Our vision is to improve services for young people with mental health issues.

<http://www.wch.sa.gov.au/services/az/divisions/mentalhealth/index.html>



Headroom is about working with young people to increase knowledge about mental health. An important part of the project is to get young people interested and involved in project activities to make sure the project makes sense to young people. The Headroom project is managed by the CYWHS and funded by Health Promotion Branch, Department of Health.

www.headroom.net.au

The CYWHS would like to thank the SA Divisions of General Practice and the SA Department of Health – Mental Health Unit for providing funding for the delivery of this program.

<http://www.cywhs.sa.gov.au/Default.aspx?p=98>
www.gpsa.org.au

<http://www.dh.sa.gov.au/mental-health-unit/default.asp>

The young people involved in the development of this handout recommend you read the BMJ article by Ann McPherson "Adolescence in Primary Care" (BMJ2005;330;465-467) as they agree with all the suggestions and comments.

HEADSTART

Young people working with GPs to get
Back-on-Track

Get back-on-track with good sleep habits

- A guide for young people written with young people

Updated May 2010

<http://www.headstart-gp.com.au/>



Government of South Australia

Children, Youth and Women's Health Service

Some things to think about if you are having trouble with sleep

Many young people do not get enough sleep.

You are not alone! Lack of sleep can make it harder to cope with everyday life.

There are things you can do to help you sleep.

Have a routine

- ❑ Go to bed at the same time each night and get up at the same time each morning – even at weekends!
- ❑ Set an alarm to help you wake up at the same time each day until your body adjusts. Placing the alarm out of reach will encourage you to get up.
- ❑ Open curtains or blinds to let light in.
- ❑ Don't sleep during the day as this will disrupt your sleep routine.
- ❑ Do things in the same order each night before going to bed. e.g. bath, brush teeth, read. This gives you the signal it's time for sleep.

Have a good sleep environment

- ❑ Have a comfortable bed and room temperature
- ❑ Keep your room quiet and darkened
- ❑ Turn off your mobile phone so you are not disturbed
- ❑ Try to use your bed only for sleep, so that you don't link it with other things such as playing electronic games, studying, watching TV, or talking on the phone.



Relax before bed

Relax and unwind at least an hour before bed.

- ❑ Try different things to find what works for you, such as reading, listening to quiet music, meditating, aromatherapy, hot water bottle.
- ❑ Avoid stimulating activities such as electronic games, computers, phone conversations or texting, studying, arguments.
- ❑ Be active during the day, but avoid exercise 3-4 hours before bed.
- ❑ Decrease daytime/night time commitments if necessary – if work, sporting, social and academic commitments have become overwhelming try to decrease the load.
- ❑ Don't overdo it!

Meals and snacks

A light snack before bed may help with sleep, but a heavy meal close to bedtime makes it harder to sleep.

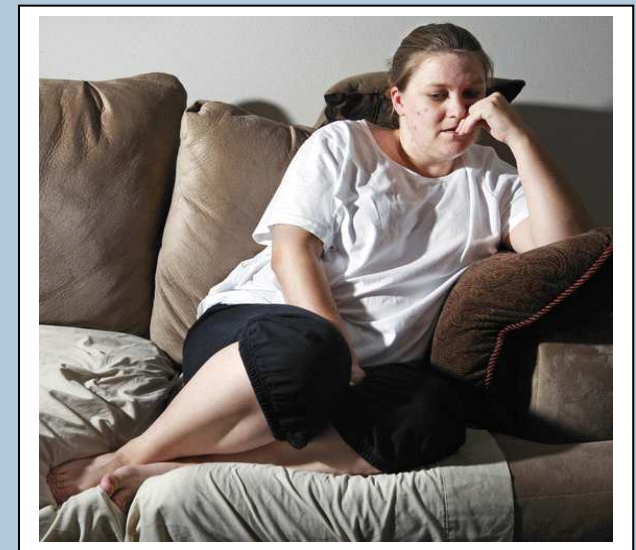
Avoid stimulants

Avoid stimulants 4-6 hours before bedtime, including:

- ❑ Caffeine (coffee, tea, cola, chocolate drinks)
- ❑ Cigarettes
- ❑ Medications such as appetite suppressants and nasal decongestants.
- ❑ Alcohol. It is a depressant and may assist with falling asleep, but will cause waking later in night.

Don't try too hard to fall asleep

Worrying about not sleeping will keep you awake! Enjoy relaxing in bed and thinking of something pleasant. If you are still awake after about 20 minutes, get up and go to another room. Do something relaxing until you feel sleepier.



Avoid worrying or problem solving in bed

Keep bed a place for relaxing. If worries keep coming to you while trying to sleep:

- ❑ Make a 'worry time' for yourself that is well ahead of bedtime.
- ❑ Make a plan to deal with your worries
- ❑ Keep pen and paper near your bed, you can then write down any worries that come to you and deal with them the next day.
- ❑ Ask your doctor for help with mindfulness or meditation strategies to deal with troubling thoughts.

Remember, everyone is different.

Don't compare yourself with people who sleep really well, they will be able to do many of the things we are advising against without any effect on their sleep.

For further information, contact the Department of Health (ph 8226 7123 or Fax 8226 7102) for an "Insomnia Management" pamphlet, or:

- The Second Story www.cyh.com/tss
- The Headroom website at www.headroom.net.au