

## MESSAGE HOME TO PARENTS



### Is your child or teen getting enough sleep?

Research shows that insufficient sleep is associated with major physical and cognitive impairment, such as difficulties focusing, irritability and frustration, as well as problems modulating impulses and emotions.<sup>1</sup>

### How do you know how much sleep is enough?

Dr. Carl Hunt, director of the National Center on Sleep Disorders Research, stated that most children and teens need at least 9 hours of sleep each night.<sup>2</sup> Sleep disorders and sleep deprivation often are not recognized in children, and symptoms related to sleep deprivation may erroneously be attributed to hyperactivity, behavior disorders, or to boredom. Adequate sleep is associated with good health and performance, as well as fewer accidents, a critical issue for adolescents.

### What can parents do?

1. Set regular bedtime and wake-up hours, even for teens, during the school week.
2. Encourage exposure to natural outdoor light during the day (natural light helps to regulate biological sleep-wake cycles).
3. Avoid rigorous play or activity before bedtime.
4. Provide a cool, dark, quiet place to sleep.

---

1 Dr. Claude Lenfant, director, National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute. Press release, February 27, 2001.

2 Dr. Carl E. Hunt, director, National Center on Sleep Disorders Research, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. Press release, February 27, 2001.