



HEALTH BITES

Healthy Workers
Healthy Futures
Initiative



Healthy Group Training Organisations, Healthy Host Businesses, Healthy Apprentices

Sleep Tips for Apprentices and Trainees

"Early to bed and, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise" - Benjamin Franklin

Young adults typically need about 7-9 hours of sleep per night

Some factors that prevent apprentices from getting enough sleep:

- » **Shifting of the biological clock.**
Sleep requirements stabilise in early adult life, around the age of 20. Before then teenagers' biology works to make them go to bed later.
- » **Early work or trade school start times.**
Most days will start as early as 7 a.m., which means apprentices must get up as early as 5 a.m. to get ready and make it to work in a timely manner.
- » **Having a busy social life.**
Most young adults partake in after work activities such as clubs, sports, other jobs, or are running a household. Socialising also continues through phone and computer use, which can keep them up even later. Of course weekends - most young people stay up too late and sleep in, which upsets the natural sleep wake rhythm.
- » **High use of electronics.**
Most young adults are keen users of social media and gaming. It becomes an addiction keeping them up later.
- » **Taking sleep for granted.**
Many people do not realise how important sleep is. Instead, they may think of it as a waste of time. Time spent in bed asleep is time well spent. There are many very important things that the brain needs to do while asleep. These include forming memories and going through the day's events

Not getting enough sleep affects:

- » **Mood.**
Not getting enough sleep can cause young adults to be irritable and moody all day.
- » **Behavior.**
Young adults who are not getting enough sleep are more prone to risk-taking behaviors such as drinking alcohol and driving recklessly.
- » **Work Performance.**
A decline in performance such as slower reaction times, failure to respond to changes, and the inability to concentrate and make reasonable judgments
- » **Thinking.**
Sleep deprivation can result in attention problems, memory problems, lead to bad decision-making, slow down reaction time and stunt creativity.
- » **Trade school Performance.**
Apprentices who are sleep deprived are more likely to do poorly in trade school, fall asleep during class, have multiple absences or be consistently tardy.
- » **Driving.**
Apprentices are the most prone to fall asleep while behind the wheel. This can be highly dangerous, especially combined with other negative effects such as slower reaction times and being easily distracted.

The information in this newsletter should not be used as an alternative to professional care. If you have a particular problem, see a doctor or other health professional.

The following sleep health tips are recommended by the National Sleep Foundation

Do this:

- » **Go to bed at the same time** each night and rise at the same time each morning, even on weekends.
- » **Create a sleep-friendly physical environment.** Make sure your bedroom is a quiet, dark, and relaxing environment, which is neither too hot or too cold.
- » **The bed should only be used for sleeping.** Try not do other activities, such as reading, watching TV, or listening to music.
- » **Remove all technology.** TVs, Smartphones computers, and other “gadgets” from the bedroom.
- » **If you are not asleep after 20 minutes, then get out of the bed.** Find something else to do that will make you feel relaxed. If you can, do this in another room. Your bedroom should be where you go to sleep. It is not a place to go when you are bored. Once you feel sleepy again, go back to bed.

Try to:

- » **Incorporate exercise into your daily routine.** It may help you fall asleep more easily and sleep more deeply.
- » **Take a break and go outside for some time every day, especially in the morning.** Getting sun exposure helps your body keep its internal clock on track.
- » **Eat meals regularly, and avoid going to bed on an empty stomach.** However, do not eat a full meal an hour before bed, and try to opt for a light snack instead.

Avoid:

- » **Caffeine.** Avoid consuming caffeine (i.e. cola, coffee, tea, energy drinks or chocolate) in the late afternoon or evening.
- » **Alcohol.** Alcohol is not only bad for your overall health, but it also disrupts sleep. You may have night awakenings.
- » **Smoking.** Smoking also disrupts sleep. It is best for your health not to smoke at all, but try to not smoke for at least an hour before bedtime if you do.
- » **Sleeping pills.** Do not use sleeping pills or other over-the-counter sleep aids. They can potentially be dangerous and you may depend on them once your sleep problems return.

