

# Teens Sleeping Too Much, Or Not Enough? Parents Can Help

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Within three days of starting high school this year, my ninth-grader could not get into bed before 11 p.m. or wake up by 6 a.m. He complained he couldn't fall asleep but felt foggy during the school day and had to reread lessons a few times at night to finish his homework. And forget morning activities on the weekends — he was in bed.

We're not the only family struggling to get restful shut-eye.

“What parents are sharing with us is that the ‘normal life’ of a typical American high schooler is interfering with sleep,” says [Sarah Clark](#), co-director of C.S. Mott Children's Hospital [National Poll on Children's Health](#) at the University of Michigan.

In the [poll](#) of 2,000 parents from various ethnic groups and backgrounds that Clark and her team published this month, 1 in 6 parents say their teen experiences frequent sleep problems — “having trouble falling asleep or staying asleep 3 or more nights per week.”

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Unfortunately, even their bodies work against them, says [Mary Carskadon](#), a longtime sleep researcher and professor of psychiatry and human behavior at Brown University. As children grow into the middle and teen years, they are naturally inclined to [go to bed later](#) and sleep later in the morning. But an early school start time doesn't allow it.