

# Understanding and Dealing with Insomnia of Your Child

## Adequate Sleep is Necessary

- To maintain physical and mental well-being
- To better retain what is learned by consolidating memory

## What Causes Insomnia?

- Lack of adenosine which promotes sleep drive
- Stress, emotional distress, illness, poor sleep environment, poor lifestyle habits and substance use can cause insomnia

### 4 Types of Insomnia

(Reference: World Health Organization)

- 1 Difficulty in sleep onset
- 2 Difficulty in maintenance of sleep
- 3 Early morning awakening
- 4 Unrefreshed after sleep

### Does Your Child Get Enough Sleep?

Age 6-12 :  
need 9-12 hours of sleep each day

Age 13-18 :  
need 8-10 hours of sleep each day



## Dealing with Insomnia

“During the COVID-19 pandemic, my child has irregular sleep schedules, complaining about insomnia at night.”

### Parenting Tip

Help your child maintain a regular sleep routine by sleeping and getting up at similar time every day, including weekends and holidays.

“My child complained about racing thoughts at bedtime.”

### Parenting Tip

Teach your child to avoid engaging in exciting or stressful activities before sleep. Instead, do some relaxing activities one hour before sleep, such as listening to soft music or stretching.





“My child could not sleep well at night, so I let him/her wake up late and take long naps .”

**Parenting Tip**

Have 30 minutes to 1 hour sunlight exposure with your child in early morning so as to use daylight to regulate the sleep-wake cycle. Avoid taking long naps. Keep bedroom dark for sleep.



“Insomnia can actually help my child to save time for studying during the exam period.”

**Parenting Tip**

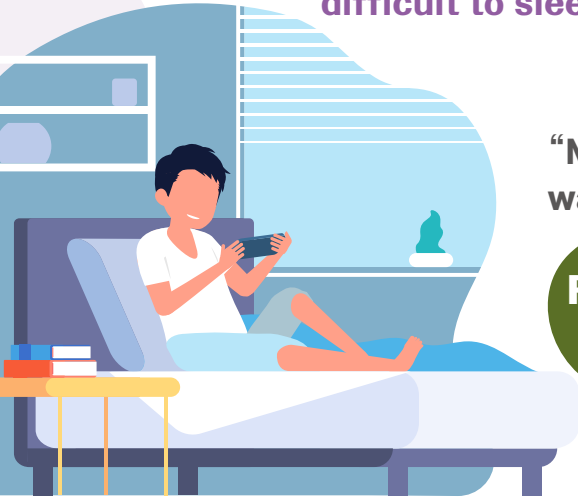
It is important to have adequate sleep to reduce forgetfulness. Avoid studying in bed, otherwise the brain may associate the bed with awakening, making it difficult to sleep.



“My child said he/she was not sleepy, so I let him/her watch TV programmes and play mobile games in bed.”

**Parenting Tip**

Avoid exposure to electronic screen products one hour before bedtime. Switch off mobile phone and computer in the bedroom.



“My child cannot sleep well. Can I help give him/her coffee, tea or energy drinks to boost his/her energy?”

**Parenting Tip**

Caffeine in coffee, tea, and energy drinks can affect the body up to 6 to 8 hours. Avoid caffeine intake after mid-day to avoid interfering with sleep.



“My child went to bed at 10:30 p.m. after enjoying a big meal. He/she kept waking up throughout the night.”

**Parenting Tip**

Teach your child to eat a moderate amount and finish dinner at least 3 hours before bedtime.

