

## Emotional well-being for young people: Sleep and relaxation

Sleep is extremely important to both our physical and mental health. You may have found that your sleep pattern has changed recently with the change in your routine. This is to be expected, but make sure that you give yourself the best chance to sleep well.

### How your sleep may have changed:

**Not enough sleep:** if you are under 18 then you should aim to get around 8 – 10 hours of sleep a night. If you are getting less than this then you may not be giving your body and mind enough time to relax and recover from the activities of the day.

You may find that you are not as tired as you normally are. If you are no longer going to school, revising for exams, taking part in sports clubs and extra-curricular activities or even getting out as much then you may simply not need as much sleep as before. But be aware that even if you are not doing as much as you usually do in the day, strong feelings such as anxiety, worry and frustration can be very tiring to us too and good sleep will help with this.

**Too much sleep:** You may be finding that you are spending too much time asleep. Too much sleep can be just as bad for us as too little sleep. Try not to stay in bed past your natural wake up time. Get into a routine of getting up and doing something and not getting back into bed and going back to sleep if you have already had about 10 hours of sleep.

Have a look at the following good sleep tips:

**Listen to your body:** When you feel yourself getting tired in the evening then start to get ready for bed. If you fight past this time then it may take many more hours before you feel ready for sleep again

**Make your bedroom as relaxing as you can:** Try to do activities and work outside of your bedroom so that your bedroom becomes only the place that you relax and sleep.

**Make it dark:** Too much light makes it hard to sleep, make your room dark and cosy, keep light sources dim and distant.

**Choose your evening activities wisely:** Be honest with yourself and do not do things that will wind you up or stress you out before you want to sleep, don't play frustrating games or message people that will irritate you or listen to energetic music.

**Take time:** If you can't get to sleep right away that's ok, – don't give up! Push away any negative thoughts and concentrate on relaxing and happy times you have had or that you are looking forward to in the future. Lying down and relaxing, even without sleeping, is still beneficial so don't get frustrated with yourself, be patient.

If you would like to talk to the Swansea Mind Young Person Worker:

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