

STRENGTHENING OKLAHOMA FAMILIES

Family and Consumer Science News

Sleepless in Oklahoma: lack of sleep takes toll on teens

School, homework, sports practice, part-time job, socializing with friends and family time – are there enough hours in the day? Some teens sacrifice sleep so they can accomplish everything on their to-do lists.

Not getting enough shut-eye is an issue for teens, resulting in lower academic performance, health issues and safety risks, said Emily Abel, assistant professor in OSU'S Department of Human Development and Family Science.

“It’s hard enough for teens to get enough sleep with all of their activities and school work, plus many teens have jobs,” Abel said. “Unfortunately, sleep is typically the first thing sacrificed to accomplish all that needs to be done.”

Some schools are pushing for delayed start times for high schools because research suggests teens who start school later get more sleep, have fewer absences and have better academic outcomes. The National Sleep Foundation recommends 8-10 hours of sleep for teens and 9-11 hours for children aged 6-13. Not getting enough sleep hinders concentration, which can affect school performance. When sleep-deprived teens drive to school, work and other activities, their lack of sleep becomes a safety issue for them and others on the road.

“On weekends, parents may find their teens sleeping late because they’re trying to catch up on the sleep they didn’t get during the week. Parents need to realize their teens aren’t being lazy, they’re simply tired,” she said. “This can be a big issue with families who are co-parenting because the teens are trying to manage different routines at each parent’s house.”

To help promote good sleep, Abel recommends dimming the lights in the evening because people are exposed to bright lights all day. It’s important to be intentional about preparing for sleep. Develop a routine and stick to it because consistency is key.

“Students shouldn’t do homework in bed. Allocate a place in the home that is a dedicated homework space,” she said. “Also, a television in a teen’s bedroom isn’t a good idea.”

Matt Brosi, OSU Extension family science specialist, said that while technology has many benefits, it can impact sleep quality.

“The brain is often being hyper-stimulated by the constant exposure to technology,” he said. “Chronic gaming, binging videos and internet surfing leaves the brain deprived of needed rest time. This type of constant exposure can lead to increased mental health issues including anxiety and depression. Research indicates there have been spikes in these areas due to the increased use of technology following the pandemic.”

Parents need to set limits regarding screen time for teens. Setting boundaries can help reduce dependency on devices and improve mental health.

“Technology affects sleep in that it interferes with the production of melatonin, which makes it harder to fall asleep,” Brosi said. “Avoiding electronic devices at least an hour before bedtime can help remedy that. Alternatives could be to read a book or practice relaxation techniques.”

He also suggests engaging in physical activities. Regular exercise can counteract the sedentary lifestyle that often goes hand-in-hand with excessive screen time.



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Mandy Gross, mother of two teenage girls, said her family relies on schedules. A weekly calendar helps the family of four keep track of everyone's activities, including school, work, meal planning and chores.

"Knowing what's coming up each week and scheduling things is very beneficial for time management for all of us," Gross said. "Planning meals around everyone's activities helps, too. We plan quick meals on busy nights, so the girls have time to finish homework before it gets too late."

Her oldest daughter, Oakley, is a senior who, in addition to her high school classes and serving as an officer in her local FFA chapter, also juggles concurrent enrollment at OSU, a part-time job of 20 to 30 hours per week and socializing with her friends.

"Oakley is very good at scheduling her time and plans homework assignments and studying around her work schedule," Gross said. "Fortunately, she doesn't have to be at school until 9 a.m., so if she's up a little later finishing homework she can sleep in a bit."

Turning off electronics at a set time each night helps Gross' eighth-grader, Keeley, settle into a nighttime routine. Electronics are turned off an hour before bed, giving Keely time to read and relax before bedtime.

"Our family is busy and both girls have a lot going on, so for us, it all comes back to scheduling and planning ahead to ensure we all have time to get plenty of rest," she said.



Dewey County OHCE news

County Fall association report - The fall association meeting was hosted by Camargo on November 3rd. County president, Alayna Huber, presided over the meeting. Eight Fun Times members, four SCH members, seven Camargo members, and one guest were present.

After the business meeting, Lesa Rauh, Custer County FCS educator gave an interesting presentation on crepes. Everyone enjoyed making sweet and savory crepes to eat during the social hour.

County Achievement Program

December 15, 2024 ~ 2:00 P.M.

Make plans to attend the annual county achievement program on December 15th beginning at 2:00 P.M. This is always a fun event, and a chance for everyone to spend a relaxing afternoon with friends.

SCH will host the meeting and provide refreshments. Entertainment will be provided by Fun Times OHCE. They will provide an entertainment number or game. Camargo OHCE is in charge of registration - will provide a devotion and/or mixer.

Individual and group awards will be presented for the 2024 year. The 2025 county officers will be installed.

Each person is invited to bring a "gift from the home" for the gift exchange. No need to buy a gift. Find, or make something in your home that you no longer need, but someone else will enjoy.



I want to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone for the prayers, cards, plants, food, and other expressions of sympathy during my mom's recent passing. The caring concern was a great comfort to me and my family! Thanks ~ Jean Bailey & family

Less sugar, more exercise can reduce the risks of type 2 diabetes

Type 2 diabetes is a dangerous disease that can lead to a myriad of serious health problems if not well-managed. Some modifiable risk factors, can be changed to help reduce the risk of developing the disease.

Lauren Amaya, Oklahoma State University Extension diabetes specialist, said the two greatest modifiable risk factors for type 2 diabetes are too much fat around the abdomen and the lack of physical activity. If left untreated, elevated blood glucose levels can contribute to the risk of other chronic diseases such as heart disease, hypertension and obesity.

“These two risk factors contribute to insulin resistance, which occurs when the body’s cells stop responding to insulin the way they should,” she said. “Insulin is the hormone that helps move sugar from the blood into cells for energy.”

Consuming too much glucose leads to central adiposity, which is belly fat. Excess fat in the mid-section can result in insulin resistance, which means the body’s cells don’t respond to insulin properly and blood sugar remains high.

Amaya said when cells resist insulin, the body reacts by making more insulin in an attempt to lower blood sugar.

“What happens over time is the pancreas can’t keep up and the blood glucose level keeps rising, which can lead to type 2 diabetes,” she said. “Some signs of type 2 diabetes include blurry vision, slow-healing wounds, frequent urination, constant thirst and poor circulation. Unfortunately, some people live with type 2 diabetes without realizing they have it.”

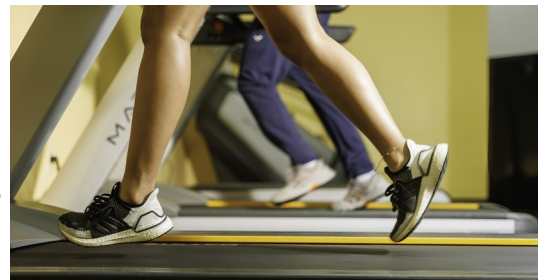
Amaya said in addition to not following a high-fiber, well-balanced diet, lack of physical activity plays a significant role in developing insulin resistance.

“Muscles use glucose for energy, especially when exercising. When people don’t exercise, there’s less glucose uptake in muscle cells, which leads to higher blood glucose levels,” she said. “Less physical activity also means more fat storage and ectopic fat. Ectopic fat is the fat that builds up in places where it shouldn’t normally be stored, including in the muscles, heart, liver and pancreas.”

Lack of physical activity also leads to inflammation and loss of muscle mass. Increasing physical activity can help counteract these negative impacts. When developing a plan for physical activity, aim for moderate-intensity aerobic exercise for 30 minutes five times per week or vigorous-intensity activities for 25 minutes four times per week. Also, incorporate muscle-strengthening and flexibility/balance activities.

Amaya said regular physical activity helps the body’s naturally produced insulin work better, reduces belly fat, lowers the risk of chronic diseases, improves mood and mental health, and increases muscle mass and strength, all of which help a person live a healthier life.

“There are some factors in our health that we don’t have any control over; however, lowering body fat and living an active lifestyle are within our control,” she said. “Making some dietary changes and being more active can make a big difference in a person’s quality of life.”





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Dewey County OHCE CALENDAR

November Lesson: Ladies' Mechanics

November	SCH meeting
12 November	Camargo meeting
14 November	End of year reports due in county extension office
20	

December Lesson: Christmas activity

December 10	SCH meeting
December 12	Camargo meeting
December 15	County Achievement Program

Fun Times OHCE meets each Tue. & Fri. mornings at 9:00 at the Seiling Senior Center



Family & Consumer Sciences helps communities, families, youth and individuals address issues of health, wealth and well-being through research-based Extension education and programs that are proven to work.

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