



Peer
Education
Project



Mental Health
Foundation



Sleep:

Finding our confidence with sleep



A guide for staff
supporting young people

Supporting yourself and colleagues with improving your sleep health	5
Resources to support yourself and colleagues	5
Mental Health Foundation resources	5
Education Support resources.....	5
Other resources	6
Support services for adults	7
Supporting young people with improving their sleep health	8
Classroom-based activities	8
Resources for young people	9
Support services for young people	10
Supporting staff and pupils within school	11
Resources	11
Fundraising for mental health awareness	12



Sleep is integral to all aspects of our lives. We sleep every day, spending about a third of our lives asleep! Yet sleep is often one of the first things we compromise on when things become busy or overwhelming.

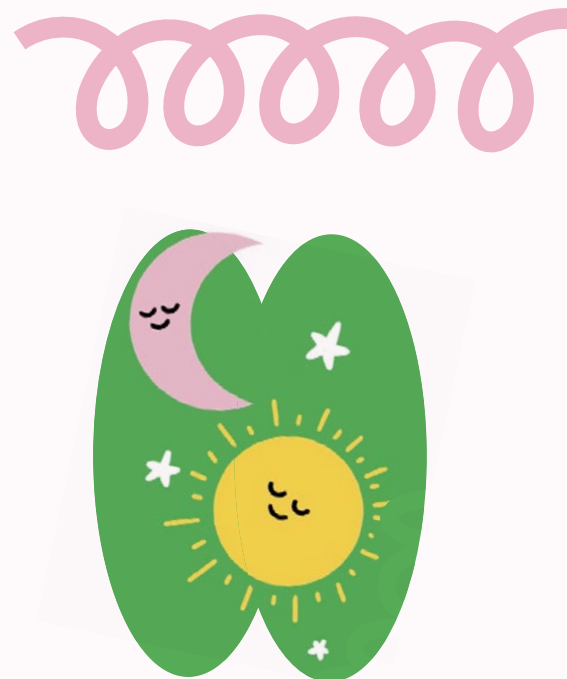
Sleep plays a vital role in our ability to cope with the world around us. It affects our learning, behaviour, ability to regulate our emotions, and our interactions with others.

The Mental Health Foundation's [study](#) on sleep found 48% of adults and 66% of teenagers agreed that poor sleep has a negative effect on their mental health. The report also found that 38% of teenagers who are studying or working said that they had been too tired to do schoolwork or study, and 43% had been too tired to concentrate in class or when studying.

Therefore, it is important to understand what good sleep is and how to develop good sleep health.

Sleep is said to be of good quality if:

- The time it takes to fall asleep is less than 30 minutes.
- Wakefulness once asleep is under 30 minutes.
- We achieve an age adequate total sleep length.
- The sleep efficiency – or percentage of time in bed spent asleep – is more than 85%.



The Five Principles of Sleep

Professor Colin Espie, an expert in Sleep Medicine, recommends that we should:

1. Value our sleep

It is something vital to our lives, and we need to take sleep seriously.

2. Prioritise our sleep

We need to put sleep first when making choices about what we want to do.

3. Personalise our sleep

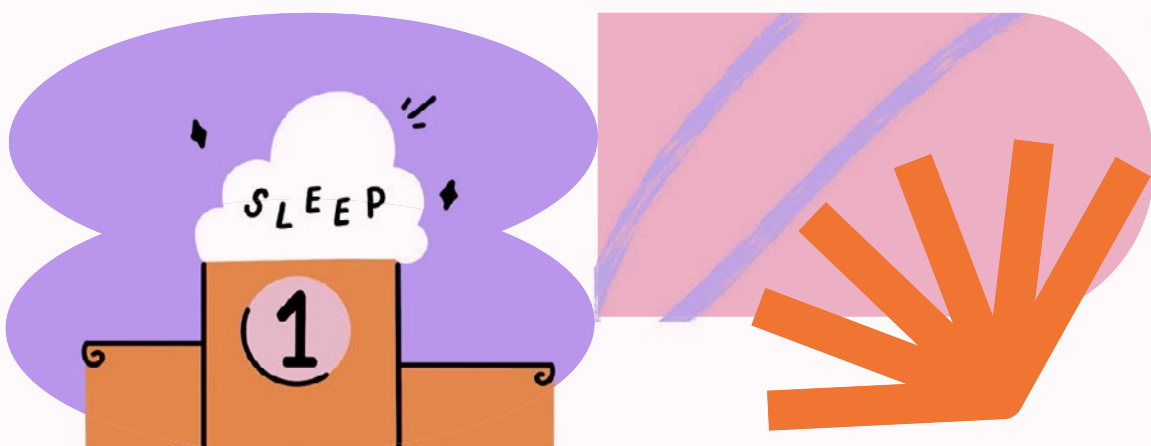
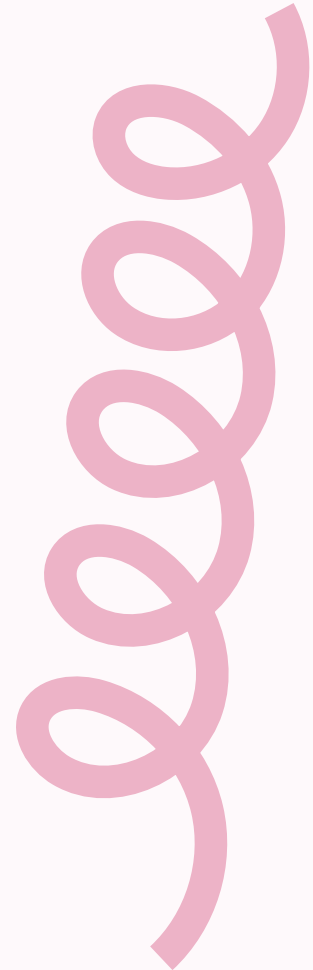
We need to find the 'sleep window' that works best for us i.e. when and how long you sleep.

4. Trust our sleep

It is a natural process, and our sleep will get itself into a good pattern.

5. Protect our sleep

We can do this by avoiding or preventing things that upset it.



This guide provides tips and resources on how to support yourself, your colleagues, and your pupils with improving sleep health.

Supporting yourself and colleagues with improving your sleep health

Resources to support yourself and colleagues

Mental Health Foundation resources

Our vision at the [Mental Health Foundation](#) is for a world with good mental health for all. With prevention at the heart of what we do, we aim to find and address the sources of mental health problems so that people and communities can thrive.

[Tips on looking after your mental health](#)

Read these tips on how to look after your mental health.

[Tips on how to support mental health at work](#)

Read these tips on how to look after your mental health at work.

[Tips on how to manage and reduce stress](#)

Read these tips on how to manage and reduce stress.

[A guide on the different types of rest](#)

Read this guide on reconsidering what rest means to you and how you can find ways to rest depending on your body's needs.

[Tips on how to sleep better](#)

Read these tips on how to sleep better - looking at improving the quality of your sleep, what causes sleep disorders and possible solutions, top tips from a sleep doctor, and a sleep diary template to help you keep track of your sleep.

Education Support resources

[Education Support](#) is the only UK charity dedicated to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of teachers and education staff in schools, colleges, and universities.

If you need support, speak to a qualified counsellor using Education Support's 24-hour helpline.

Call: **08000 562 561** (free)

[Tips on getting a good night's sleep](#)

Read these nine tips for a good night's sleep.

[A webinar on how to look after our sleep](#)

Watch this webinar, featuring The Sleep Charity, on how sleep deprivation impacts health and wellbeing, and practical strategies to improve your sleep.

[Breathing exercises for easing stress](#)

Try these breathing exercises to maintain your composure in times of stress, anger, and frustration.



Other resources

[A TED talk on why we sleep](#)

Listen to this TED talk on why we sleep and how it is linked to mental health.



[A guide on understanding sleep problems](#)

Read this guide from Mind on different sleep problems, and what you can do and where you can go for support.

[A meditation to help sleep](#)

Try this free, 10-minute meditation from Headspace to calm your mind before bedtime.



Support services for adults

Samaritans

Samaritans are open 24/7 for anyone who needs to talk.

Call: **116 123** (free)

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Post: Freepost SAMARITANS LETTERS

The Samaritans Self-Help app is a tool to track how you're feeling and receive tips on things you can do to look after yourself.

Samaritans also have a Welsh Language Line on **0808 164 0123** (7pm–11pm every day).

Hub of Hope

Hub of Hope is a UK-wide mental health service database, allowing you to search for local, national, peer, community, charity, private and NHS mental health support. You can filter results to find specific kinds of support.

Mind

Mind offers advice, support and information to people experiencing mental health difficulties and their family and friends.

InfoLine: **0300 123 3393**

Lines are open Monday to Friday
9am to 6pm (except bank holidays).

Email info@mind.org.uk

Side by Side

Side by Side, hosted by Mind, is an online community where you can listen, share and be heard. The online community is moderated to keep the community safe and supportive.

The Sleep Charity

The Sleep Charity provides advice, education and support around sleep. They offer a helpline to support anyone struggling with their sleep.

Call: **03303 530 541**

Lines are open (excluding bank holidays):
7 - 9pm, Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.
9-11am, Monday and Wednesday.



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Supporting young people with improving their sleep health

Classroom-based activities

[A lesson plan on how to improve sleep](#)

Use this sleep lesson plan by Public Health England to explore the benefits of good quality sleep and learn strategies for better sleep.

[Lesson activities on sleep](#)

Use these sleep-based activities, written by The Sleep Council, to explore good sleep health with your pupils.

[A lesson plan on sleep habits](#)

Use this lesson plan by the British Council to lead pupils in a discussion about different sleeping habits, reflecting on their own experiences.

[A video on sleep](#)

Use this video as part of a lesson or activity to support discussions on sleep.



Resources for young people

[MHF Tips for Young People on Sleep](#)

Share these top tip postcards, written by the Mental Health Foundation, to support young people to improve their sleep health.

[A video on good sleep](#)

Share this short video explaining good sleep habits for kids and teens.

[The Teen Sleep Hub E-book](#)

Share this eBook by The Teen Sleep Hub to empower your pupils to feel more confident in making the right changes to their sleep.



Support services for young people

The Mix

The Mix offers online information as well as helpline support to under-25s about anything that's troubling them.

Email: via their [online contact form](#)

Call: **0808 808 4994** (free)

Telephone services available 4pm – 11pm everyday.

Text: **THEMIX to 85258**

The text service is free, 24/7 crisis support across the UK.

One-to-one chat: Free [1-2-1 webchat service](#)

The webchat is available 4pm – 11pm, Monday to Saturday.

Childline

A support service for anyone under 19 in need of support.

Call: **08001111** (free)

Telephone services available 24-hours a day, every day.

Young people can [sign up](#) for a free Childline locker (real name or email address not needed) to use Childline's free [1-2-1 counsellor chat](#) and email support service.

Shout

A support text service, available 24-hours a day, every day.

Text: **SHOUT to 85258**



Supporting staff and pupils within school

Resources

[Article on improving mental health awareness at school](#)

Read this article on why mental health awareness is important in your school and ways to build it in to school life.

[Advice on developing empathy-based classrooms](#)

Watch this short video describing how to have an empathy-based classroom.

[Training on mental and emotional health in schools](#)

Sign up to this free CPD certified online course helping school staff recognise and respond to signs of poor mental health and support their own and other's emotional health, increasing mental wellbeing in schools.



Fundraising for mental health awareness

Hold a 'Wear it Green Day' for Mental Health Foundation

The green ribbon is the international symbol of mental health awareness.

Whether you go all out in head to toe green or show your solidarity with one of our [green ribbon pin badges](#).

Holding a 'Wear it Green' day is a great way to get the whole school involved and talking about mental health.

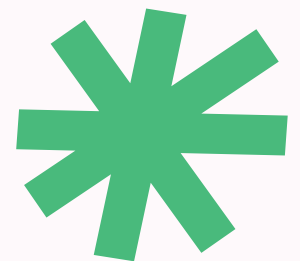
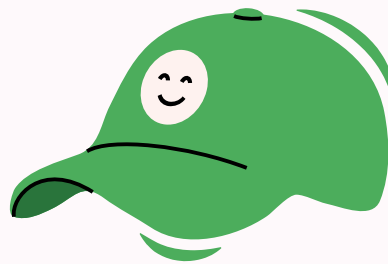
Download our [Wear it Green Day Fundraising Pack](#) and our [Wellbeing and Schools Fundraising Pack](#).

We'd love to hear about your Wear it Green Day!

Get in touch with the team to let us know your plans: events@mentalhealth.org.uk

We can also send collection tins and fundraising materials.

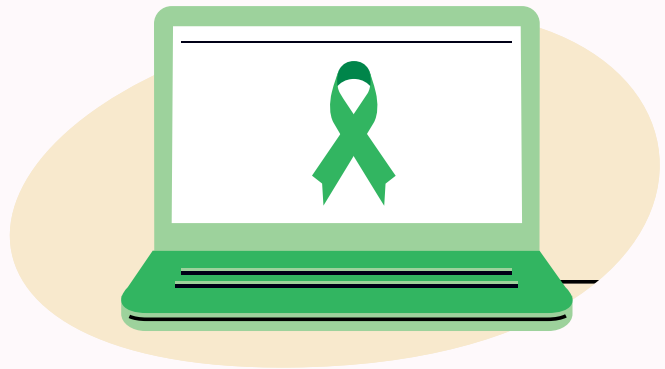
Wear It* Green Day



How to send the money to the Mental Health Foundation:

You can go to the Mental Health Foundation's [online donation page](#) or

Send a cheque payable to Mental Health Foundation to: **Mental Health Foundation, Studio 2, 197 Long Lane, London SE1 4PD**



If you'd like us to send you a paying in slip, please email events@mentalhealth.org.uk and this can be organised for you.

When sending us your donations, make sure you always bank the money yourself! Never send cash through the post, as it could get lost or stolen.

Thank you so much for your support!





[mentalhealth.org.uk](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

 [Mental Health Foundation](https://www.facebook.com/MentalHealthFoundation)

 [mentalhealthfoundation](https://www.instagram.com/mentalhealthfoundation)

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