**SPG GUIDE TO SLEEP IN SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN AND BEYOND:**

**Why is sleep important?**

Sleep is necessary for proper growth and development, a healthy immune system, attention and learning, better moods, and even for decreasing the risk of being overweight.

**What to expect:**

Hopefully, your child has developed good sleep habits, but homework, activities, friends, part-time jobs, and the need to wake up early for school may present some challenges to good sleep.

**How much sleep does my child need?**

Every child is an individual, and sleep needs may vary slightly, but here is a general guideline to sleep requirements by age.

3-5 Years 10-13 hours

6-12 years 9-12 hours

13-18 years 8-10 hours

**What you can do:**

**Do:**

Continue the good sleep habits you and your child have been practicing.

Follow a consistent bedtime routine. This helps children fall asleep quickly and easily. Teenagers may want to “catch up” on sleep on the weekends, but try to keep the schedule consistent.

Encourage regular exercise, but not too close to bedtime, if possible.

Help your child with time-management. As they get older, they may have a lot of different responsibilities that threaten sleep time. Remember that sleep is important, and shouldn’t be sacrificed!

Encourage your child to use the bed only for sleeping. If they like to study or “hang out” in their bedroom, have them study at a desk or listen to music/text friends while sitting in a space other than the bed.

**Don’t:**

Don’t allow sleep schedules to vary by more than an hour or two, even on weekends. Teenagers can try to go to sleep a little earlier on Friday and Saturday nights (since they don’t have homework due the next day). But, sleeping until noon on Sunday will only make it harder to fall asleep at an appropriate time at night.

Don’t have a TV in the bedroom. TV and other electronics should be avoided for at least an hour before bedtime. Electronics (including cell phones) should be turned off or kept out of the bedroom completely at bedtime. (It is not easy to convince teenagers to surrender their phones, but parents can be an example, by also leaving their phones at a “family charging station” away from bedrooms.)

Don’t consume caffeine after 1pm. For more sensitive children and teens, this may include chocolate.