



IMMANUEL COLLEGE

PARENT RESOURCES

Is Screen Time Robbing Your Child of Sleep and Success?

Screens are everywhere these days - from classrooms to bedrooms - and while they can offer educational benefits and entertainment, too much screen exposure may be interfering with one of the most essential needs for growing minds: sleep.

THE HIDDEN COST OF SCREEN TIME

We often hear about the physical health concerns tied to too much screen time, but its impact on sleep is just as critical. Poor sleep caused by excessive device use doesn't just result in groggy mornings; it can lead to difficulty concentrating, emotional ups and downs, and behaviour that mirrors conditions like ADHD.

SIGNS YOUR CHILD MIGHT BE SLEEP-DEPRIVED

Does any of this sound familiar?

- **Lack of focus at school?** A tired brain struggles to stay attentive. Your child may seem spaced out, need frequent redirection, or find it hard to follow along in class.
- **Struggling with memory or motivation?** Poor sleep impairs working memory and executive function, making it hard to follow instructions or stay engaged.
- **Restless or constantly moving?** Kids who aren't getting enough rest may fidget, pace, or bounce in their seat—not out of hyperactivity, but from sheer exhaustion.
- **Forgetful and scattered?** Sleep is essential for memory storage. Without it, your child might lose track of homework or forget simple tasks.
- **Emotional roller-coasters?** Tired kids often have a shorter fuse. They may react dramatically to small problems, have frequent outbursts, or struggle to regulate their emotions.

If these behaviours are showing up regularly, screen-related sleep disruption might be part of the puzzle.

HOW SCREENS SABOTAGE SLEEP

There are several ways screens interfere with your child's ability to get quality rest:

- **Blue light exposure:** Devices emit blue light that suppresses melatonin, the hormone that signals it's time to sleep.
- **Stimulating content:** Whether it's a fast-paced game or dramatic video, stimulating content keeps the brain active and alert.
- **Emotional arousal:** Social media and online interactions can trigger intense emotions—excitement, anxiety, or fear of missing out—that make it harder to wind down.
- **Sleep displacement:** Time spent scrolling or gaming is often time taken directly from sleep.
- **Mental associations:** Using screens in bed can confuse the brain, linking the bedroom with alertness instead of rest.



IMMANUEL COLLEGE

PARENT RESOURCES

Is Screen Time Robbing Your Child of Sleep and Success?

FIVE STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT BETTER SLEEP

Thankfully, small changes can make a big difference. Here's how to help your child reclaim their rest:

1. **Introduce a "tech curfew":** Turn off devices at least an hour before bedtime to give the brain time to relax and promote melatonin production.
2. **Make bedrooms screen-free zones:** Keep electronics out of sleep spaces to strengthen the mental link between the bedroom and rest.
3. **Stick to a consistent sleep schedule:** Going to bed and waking up at the same time daily—even on weekends—helps regulate internal rhythms.
4. **Create a soothing wind-down routine:** Encourage activities like reading, gentle stretches, or quiet music to cue the body for sleep.
5. **Support overall sleep hygiene:** Nutritious food, physical activity, and cutting back on sugar or caffeine near bedtime can all support better sleep.

LOOKING BEYOND SLEEP

While reducing screen use and improving sleep habits can go a long way, they're not a silver bullet. If your child continues to face challenges, consider consulting a healthcare professional to explore other potential causes and interventions.

A good night's sleep is more than just rest—it's the foundation for learning, emotional regulation, and overall wellbeing. With mindful screen habits and consistent routines, you can help your child wake up refreshed and ready to shine.