

RASNC

Regional Adolescent
Sleep Needs Coalition

Achieving Optimal Sleep Health: Strategies for Adolescents During COVID-19

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Distance learning influences on adolescent sleep patterns

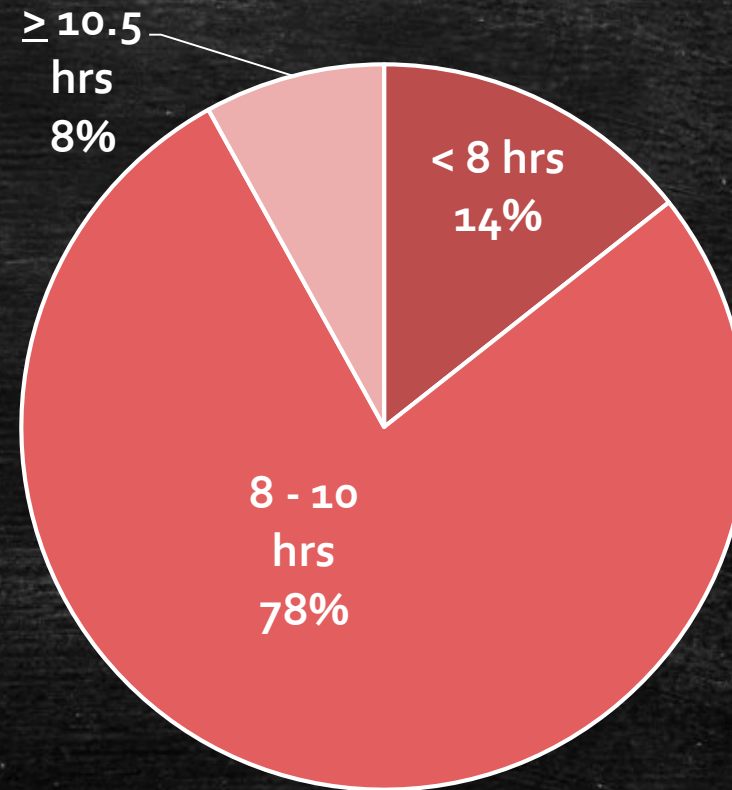


- Freedom from early alarms
- Variable virtual start-times on school days
- Less structured and inconsistent academic schedules
- Restrictions and/or changes in social, physical, and extra-curricular activities
- Social/emotional adjustments
- Newfound stressors and/or even stress relief
- Changes in meal-timing and dietary choices
- Increased dependence on technology for social engagement, entertainment, and academics



RASNC Pilot Study - Summer 2020

- Convenience sample of 131 parents/guardians on behalf of 177 teens
- Majority of adolescents (86%) met the recommended 8-10 hours during the stay-at-home orders (average 8.9 hrs)
- 81% more rested; 15% about the same
- Strengths and limitations of study noted



Make sleep a priority!

- Sleep is as critical to health as diet and exercise
- Empower adolescents to make informed choices about their sleep
- Teens need 8-10 hrs/night
- Children ages 6-13 need between 9-11 hrs
- Adults need between 7-9 hrs

<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/articles/how-much-sleep-do-we-really-need>



Consistent sleep-wake schedule

- Establish and keep a consistent sleep-wake schedule, *even in the absence of a regular school schedule*
- Anchor the wake-up time around the earliest requisite start time
- Avoid excessive over-sleeping on non-school, late-start days, weekends
- Establish a daytime rhythm/routine

Practice good sleep hygiene

- Keep the bedroom environment as cool, dark and quiet as possible
- Elimination of light (especially blue-light sources) in the bedroom allows for the natural production of melatonin
- Noise-free environment will enhance the depth of sleep
 - Some people may prefer white noise
- Practice good “stimulus control”
 - Build strong associations between bed and sleep
 - Keep stimulation (schoolwork, social media, gaming) out of bed



Unplug at night!

- Set electronic curfews
- Keep phones and devices outside the bedroom
- Use an alarm clock instead of an alarm on a cell phone
- Adjust display to turn down blue light
 - “Nocturne” [Macs] or justgetflux.com [PCs]
- Orange-colored glasses with Spectrum Control Technology® can filter blue light



Wind down before sleep

- Select activities to help the brain and the body to wind down before sleep
 - Music
 - Meditation
 - Yoga
 - Prayers
 - Reading an old-fashioned book (but nothing too stimulating!)
 - Warm shower or bath several hours before bedtime
 - Aromatherapy (if there is not a problem with allergies)

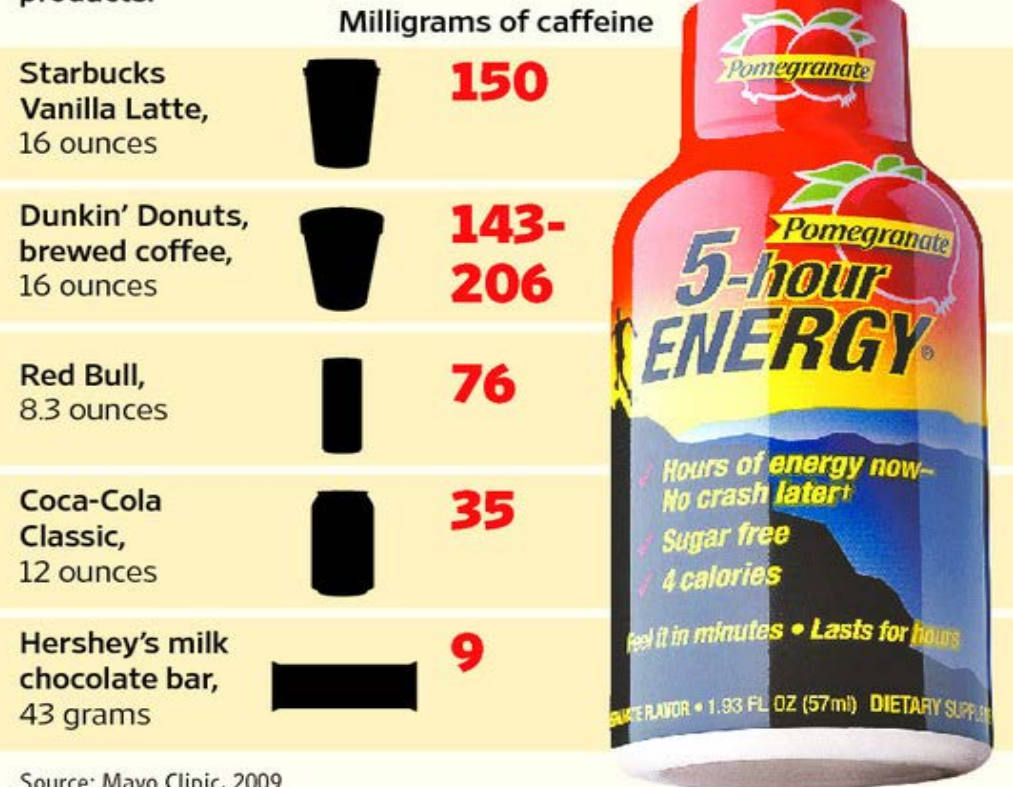


Limit caffeinated products

- Use caffeinated beverages or foods judiciously during the daytime
 - Coffee, tea, chocolate, sodas
- Avoid energy drinks
- Avoid nicotine

Content Comparison

5-Hour Energy drink contains about 207 milligrams of caffeine, according to an October 2010 analysis by independent testing group ConsumerLab.com. A comparison of other caffeinated products:



Prepare and Consult as Needed

What if...?

If the sadness/irritability or anxiety is pervasive (most of the day/most days of the week) and persistent (2 full weeks for sadness/irritability and several months for anxiety), consider reaching out to a school counselor to discuss your concerns and whether a referral to a mental health professional is indicated



Thank you !