

A BITE OF HEALTH



As an APPLE school, we strive to build health school communities focusing on improving students' eating, physical activity, and mental health habits.

Dream Team

This month, students are learning about the importance of sleep and dreaming through a monthly campaign called Dream Team! Here is a summary of the learnings, and how you can support your child's health.

What is REM sleep?

Rapid Eye Movement, or REM sleep, is the stage of sleep when most dreams occur. On an average night, about 25% of sleep is REM sleep, and the other 75% is called non-REM sleep.

Why get REM sleep?

REM sleep is important because it improves memory and problem-solving skills.¹ REM sleep also helps with emotional regulation which is vital for mental health.¹ Some researchers believe that dreams can clear the mind of worries, anticipations, or fantasies, which creates the mental space necessary for emotional demands of the following day.²

How much sleep do you need?

Get enough sleep each night! Children aged 5-13 years should get 9-11 hours of sleep each night, and children aged 14-17 should get 8-10 hours.³ When you don't sleep, REM is the first sleep to go. But with plenty of sleep, you will dream every night and experience the health benefits of REM sleep.



Dream Tracking Activity

Ask your child to write in a dream journal each morning after waking up to encourage more REM sleep. This can include as many or few details as they can remember. If your child would rather draw a picture of the dream they remembered best from the night before or just write a couple details, that is totally acceptable too. Join in by journaling your own dreams!

Reference:

¹ <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/programs/ps-7344-full-manual.pdf>

² Griffin, J., & Ivan, T. (2004). Why we dream: The Definitive Answer. Human Givens Publishing

³ https://csepguidelines.ca/wp-content/themes/csep2017/pdf/Canadian24HourMovementGuidelines2016_2.pdf

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