**Streaming instead of dreaming: Using phones and tablets before bed stops kids from sleeping and can lead to health issues**

* **Children aged six to 13 need around nine to 11 hours of sleep a night**
* **Phone use affects sleep quantity and quality, and makes them more tired**
* **Poor sleep can lead to short and long term health consequences including obesity, reduced immunity and poor mental health**

With the average age to receive your first mobile phone now just 10, portable media devices are becoming more and more present in children's lives.

But having a mobile phone by a child's bed may have detrimental effects.

A new study suggests that bedtime phone use is causing children to sleep less and be excessively tired the next day, which could have serious repercussions to their health.

**HOW MUCH SLEEP?**

The amount of sleep you need varies based on your age:

0-3 months: 14-17

4-11 months: 12-15 hours

1-2 years: 11-14 hours

Preschoolers (3-5): 10-13 hours

School age children (6-13): 9-11 hours

Teenagers (14-17): 8-10 hours

Younger adults (18-25): 7-9 hours

Adults (26-64): Remains 7-9 hours

Older adults (65+): 7-8 hours

Children aged six to 13 need around 9-11 hours of sleep.

Dr Ben Carter, who led the study, told MailOnline: 'Sleep is crucial for the development of healthy children and adults.

'The effects of poor sleep can lead to short and long term health consequences including (but not exclusive to): obesity; reduced immunity; and poor mental health.'

The researchers from King's College London reviewed medical literature in the hopes of understanding the effects of smartphone use at bedtime.

They looked at 20 studies that involved 125,198 children, with an average age of 14.

The studies consistently showed an association between bedtime media device use and shorter sleeps, poor sleep quality and excessive daytime sleepiness.

In contrast with this, children who had access to, but didn't use media devices at night, were found to have much better sleep quality.

Dr Carter said: 'Parents need empowerment from healthcare workers, teachers and policy workers in an integrated approach to tackle this problem.

'As a community we should be removing devices 90 minutes prior to bedtime.'

A study published in May found that around two thirds (65%) of children experience difficulty falling asleep or suffer from sleep problems such as sleep talking or walking, which can further diminish sleep quality.

Four out of 10 have a TV or tablet in their bedroom and almost a quarter (23%) of children do not have a bedtime story, said the study.

Last month, one company launched a [**Back-To-School Sleep Calculator**](https://www.web-blinds.com/resources/back-to-school-sleep-calculator/) to help determine the best bed time for their children by entering their age and the the typical times they go to bed and wake up.

+2

**HOW LONG SHOULD YOU LET YOUR KIDS GO ONLINE FOR?**

A new study reveals the more kids are plugged-in, the less likely they are to finish their homework.

Researchers found children who spend two to four hours a day using digital devices have 23 percent lower odds of always or usually completing school work - and the odds decrease with every additional two hours.

Today's children spend an enormous amount of time with digital media – especially those living in the US.

Kids ages eight to 18 spend about 44.5 hours per week in front of a screen, which includes smartphones, tablets, computers and televisions.

And a report from Common Sense Media found that some teens are exposed to as much as nine hours using media - which is only recreational.

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-3882746/Streaming-instead-dreaming-Using-phones-bed-stops-kids-sleeping-lead-health-issues.html#ixzz4WDcUjVty>   
Follow us: [@MailOnline on Twitter](http://ec.tynt.com/b/rw?id=bBOTTqvd0r3Pooab7jrHcU&u=MailOnline) | [DailyMail on Facebook](http://ec.tynt.com/b/rf?id=bBOTTqvd0r3Pooab7jrHcU&u=DailyMail" \t "_blank)