

Sleep, Steps, Social

This year at KGV we have encouraged students to look after their own wellbeing by improving their habits around sleep, physical activity, screen time and social connectivity: sleep, steps, and social. Our student data shows that all three of these areas are strong determinants of student wellbeing.

Sleep Based on the quantifiable metrics from our wellbeing survey, there is a steady increase in student wellbeing for each additional hour of sleep they report getting on average above 7-8 hours (the KGV average). Equally, there is a steady decline in student wellbeing for every hour of sleep that students get below our average.

Around 25% of our younger students cite 'family routines' as the main reason why they don't get sufficient sleep. This could include frequent late dinners, or habits that prevent students from beginning their bed time routines until later in the evening.

Sleep hygiene habits that students have learned this year include leaving their smartphone outside their room at night, having a 'sleep alarm' to cue the beginning of bed time routines, and replacing scrolling with reading a book before bed.

During puberty, teens experience a biological shift in their circadian rhythms. Their bodies naturally want to stay up later and sleep in later. You may want to agree on a reasonable summer "wake-up window" (e.g., by 09:00 AM) that honours their biology but keeps them connected to the daytime world.

Steps KGV students are an active demographic. On average they cover 10,000 steps a day just by attending school. When it comes to wellbeing, our most successful students are active most days of the week and take part in physical activities that are likely to get their heart rate up. This corresponds with World Health Organisation recommendations for both consistent light activity and frequent higher intensity activity for physical and mental health.

The challenge outside of term time comes when our students no longer need to commute to school and move around during the school day which drastically reduces their activity levels. Our wellbeing data shows a sharp decline in wellbeing when students are inactive.

To mitigate this in the summer months consider creating routines that require your children to get out of bed and move in daylight early in the day. This exposure to sunlight early in the day also helps regulate their circadian rhythm which will make sleeping at night easier too. Physical activity doesn't need to be organised sport, it can be something as simple as helping parents with a trip to the supermarket or running errands.

Social Being at school gives our students the opportunity to interact and connect with others without the distraction of a smart phone. Our wellbeing data shows that each additional hour of daily average screen time is associated with progressively lower wellbeing in all areas. You may wish to consider routines at home that involve leaving smart phones in a collective communal space and controlling wifi access to devices in the evening.

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