Weekly Mental Health Tips:

Good Mental Health:

Good mental health is a state of wellbeing where you feel able to work and study, feel connected to others, be involved in activities in your community and ‘bounce back’ when life’s changes and challenges come along. Each week a tip for keeping good mental health will be highlighted, todays tip:

Sleep your SUPER POWER!

Quality sleep is like a mental health superpower. When you get enough sleep it’s easier to manage your emotions, you have more patience and you deal with stressful situations better. Also, you reduce your risk of mental health challenges in the future! Yet, it’s so common to struggle to sleep. That’s because your sleep can be impacted by many things – from the food you eat to feeling worried or anxious and even using your phone before bed. So… how much is enough? If you’re aged between 12-17 then 8-10 hours sleep is ideal, while 18-25 year olds should try to get 7-9 hours. Here’s how those zzz’s can improve your headspace:

 • give you more energy

• improve your memory, attention and concentration

• make you less likely to crave unhealthy snacks

• help you better deal with stressful situations.

Tips for improving your sleep.

• At least an hour before bed, switch from video games, YouTube and social media to TV or watching a movie.

• Lower the brightness on your phone and computer screens at night. Some have features where you can automatically dim and change the colour of your screens to help you prepare for rest.

 • If you find it hard to wind down, try a mindfulness exercise like one from the Smiling Mind app.

•Try to sleep the same amount every night. An extra hour, every now and then, is fine – but any more can confuse your body clock.

• If you need to get up during the night, try to avoid turning on bright lights and hop back into bed quickly.

• Avoid caffeine at least six hours before you go to bed.

• If you can, avoid napping during the day.

• A minimum of 30mins of active exercise helps the zzzzz’s to come more easily.

• Be consistent with your sleep routine, especially during stages 3 or 4 of Covid Restrictions. Go to bed at your usual school night time and wake up at your usual school day time.

 “For years, whenever I was feeling low and stressed I would stay up really late. It really affected my mental health. I read about the link between quality sleep and mood so I decided to try to improve my routine. I began with small changes – aiming to be in bed before 11pm. And from about 9pm I would watch Netflix or read, instead of browsing the internet or chatting with friends online. Slowly my routine changed and now I really notice the positive benefits of quality sleep – I feel a lot brighter, optimistic, and energetic when I sleep well. And I’m more productive! It can take a while to find something that works and things can get thrown out of whack. So it’s important to be patient and flexible. Try different things and be kind to yourself.” May Lyn, hY NRG member (headspace Youth National Reference Group)

When you’re feeling low or stressed it’s important to put healthy habits in place that build your emotional strength – to prepare yourself for riding life’s ups and downs. Getting a good night’s sleep is one of these healthy habits, but it’s not the only one**. (Tips from Headspace)**

If you are struggling with your sleep pattern, come and speak to your school nurse or the well-being team.

