



Sleep Information for Parents/Carers of Children with SEND

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Who are The Sleep Charity

About Us

- Multi award-winning charity established in 2012
- Formerly 'The Children's Sleep Charity'
- Published research papers around supporting children with SEND to improve sleep
- Sleep Council – Expert Advisory Board
- Deliver the sleep service in North Yorkshire



**The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service**

Our Activities



Support to families using an evidence based, behavioural approach



Provision of healthier sleep information through training, workshops & seminars



Research into sleep



Campaigning to increase awareness about the importance of sleep



Provision of healthy sleep info for adults

So Why Is Sleep Important?

- Sleep is vital for health and well being
- Whilst we sleep our bodies and minds are being replenished
- Children who regularly get an adequate amount of sleep have improved attention, behavior, memory and overall mental and physical health

Prevalence Of Sleep Issues In Children



**of those with SEND
will have a sleep issue**

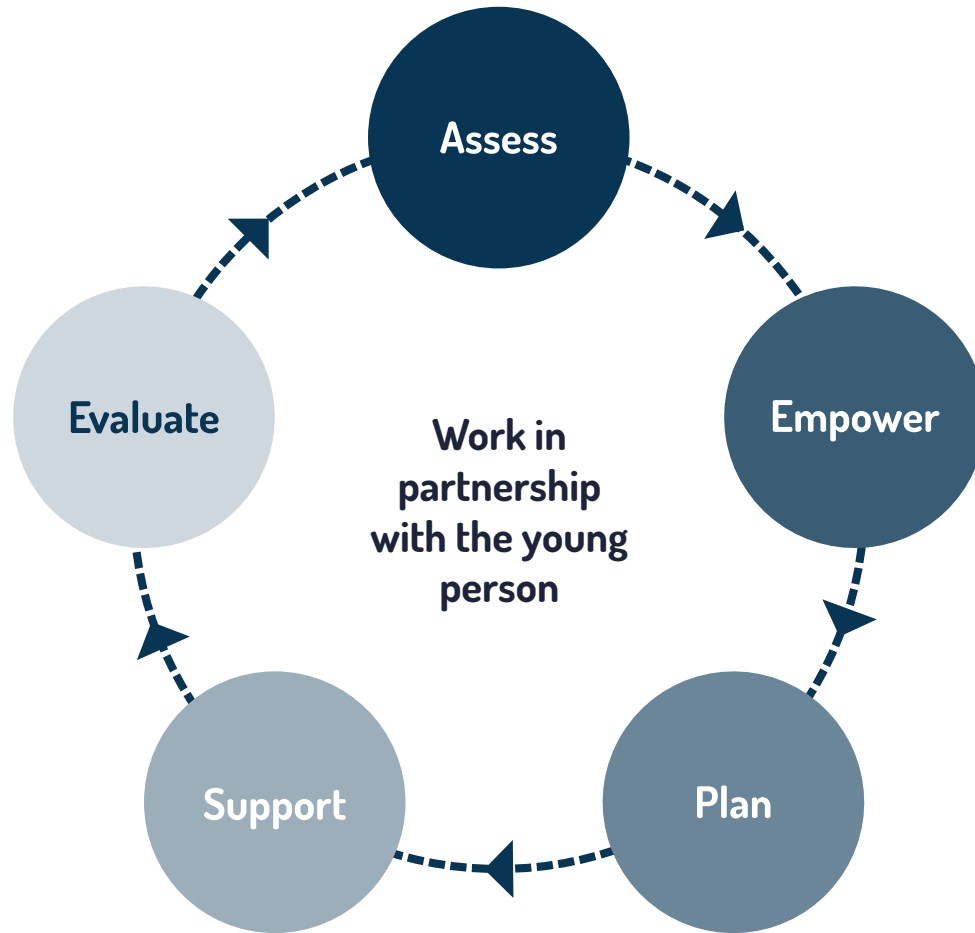


**of adult population
affected by sleep issues**

- Sleep issues impact on the whole family – parent/carers/siblings
- You are not alone!

The Intervention

A Behavioural Approach To Sleep



Common Issues Reported

- Inappropriate or no routine
- Delayed sleep phase
- Melatonin production?
- Inappropriate napping
- Not tired
- Parental capacity to make change
- Anxiety
- Medical needs
- Sensory issues
- Environmental issues
- Hunger/thirst
- And many more

Specific Sleep Problems In ASD

- Disturbance of sleep-wake cycle – irregular patterns, early waking
- Abnormal melatonin regulation
- Sensory processing disorders
- Food sensitivities
- Fear, lack of control, difficulty unwinding
- Social needs
- Co-existing medical problem, eg epilepsy



Ways Of Supporting

All families are different and therefore we use a variety of approaches.

thesleepcharity.org.uk

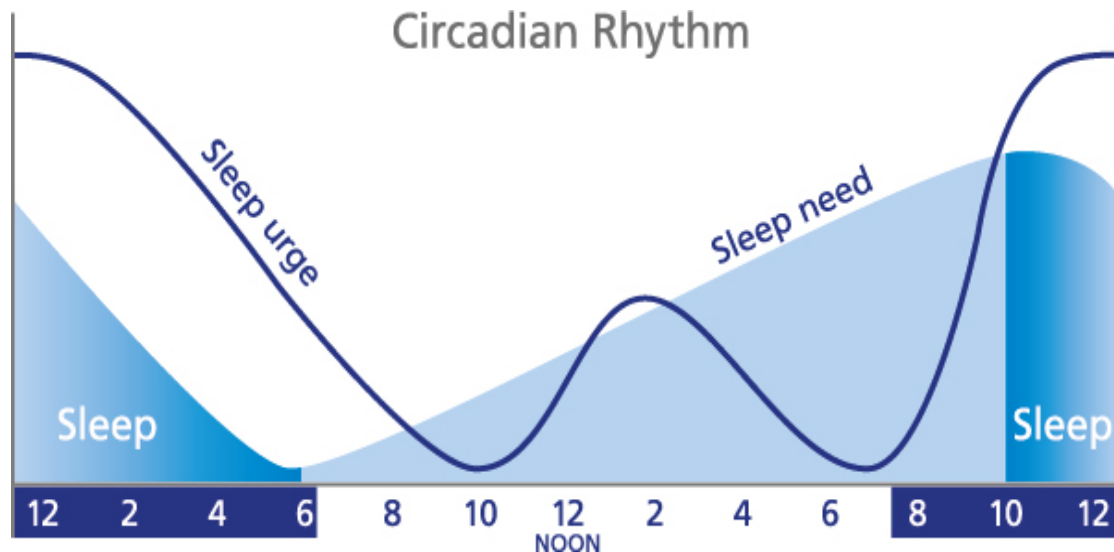
Important Factors For Success

- Need to want to make change
- Must devote **2 weeks** as a minimum to delivering the strategies
- Be prepared that it may get worse before it gets better
- A positive approach
- Must be **consistent**

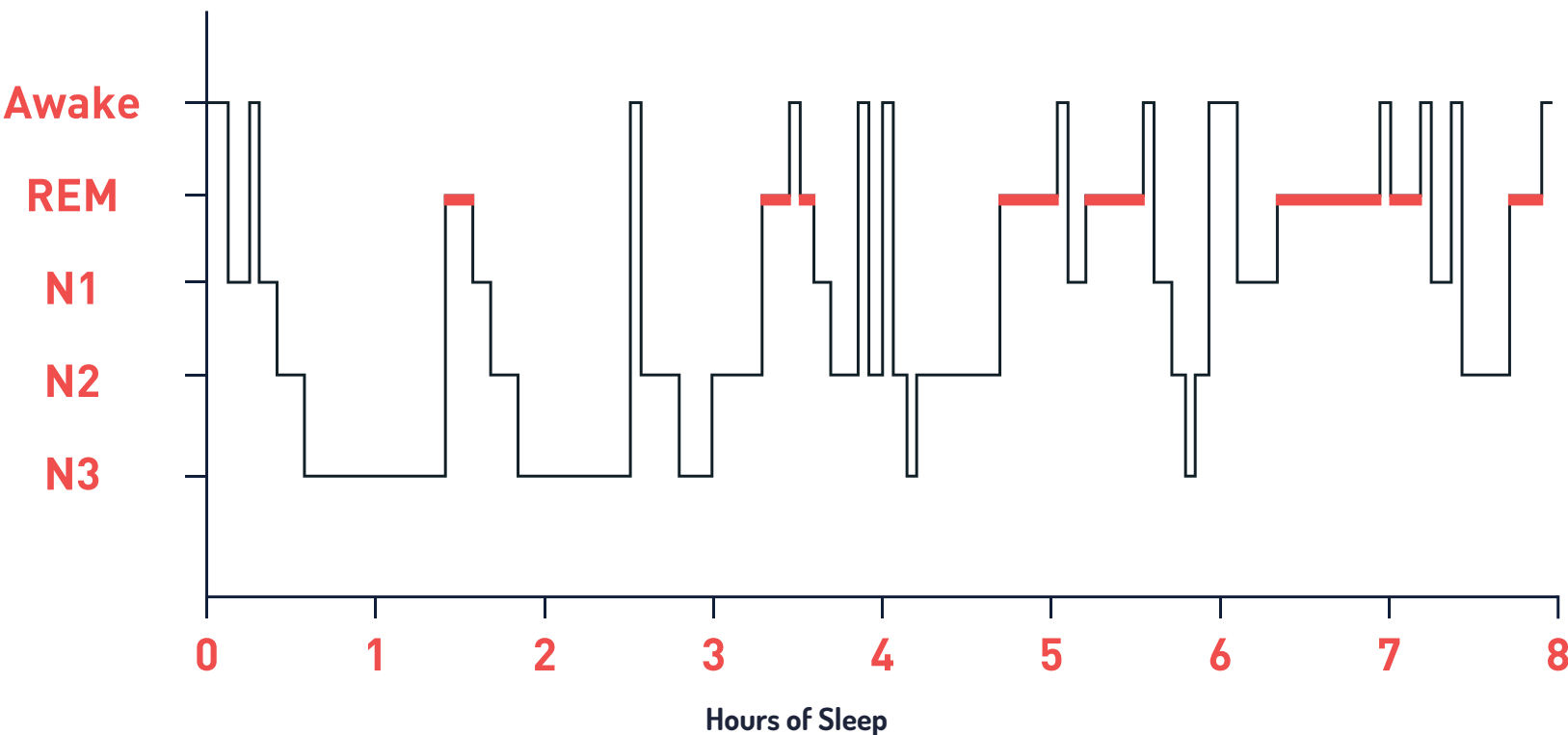
Sleep Education

Sleep Drive

- Sleep/wake homeostasis creates a drive that balances sleep and wakefulness
- Builds during the day
- In the day we are using the battery and at night we need to recharge it



Sleep Stages

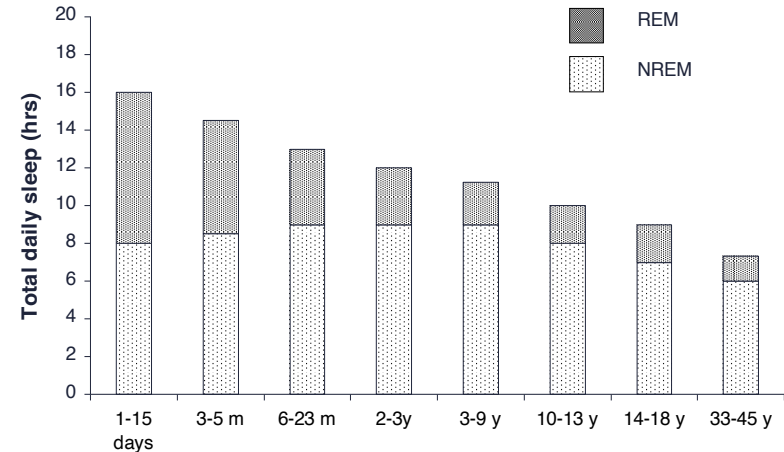


Sleep Stages

- **Stage 1** – light stage of sleep from which we can be easily roused. You may experience twitching or jerks
- **Stage 2** – still quite light sleep but the body is preparing for deep sleep, heart rate slow
- **Stage 3** – deep or slow wave sleep, more difficult rouse from. You may feel disorientated if woken from this stage. It is the most restorative sleep of all stages. Decreased body temperature and blood pressure
- **REM (Rapid eye movement)** – this is where we dream and it is vital for mental and emotional development

Developmental Changes

- The younger you are, the more time spent in REM sleep...
- Babies spend around 50% of time in REM sleep



Circadian Rhythm



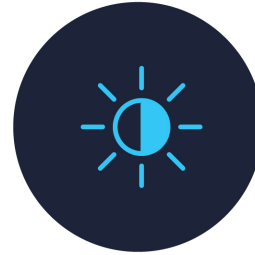
Night Owl/Lark



Importance of
Routine



Set Wake
Up/Bedtime



The Role Of Darkness
and Melatonin



The Role of Light
– Light Boxes

Light/Dark And Melatonin

- Light and dark are strong cues in telling the body when it's time to wake up or go to sleep.
- Light is a common sleep 'robber' because it suppresses melatonin (the hormone that helps regulate the body's circadian rhythm and helps you drift off)
- Melatonin is a natural occurring hormone produced by the pineal gland in the brain
- Administering can produce shifts in circadian rhythms especially if light is absent

Melatonin Uses

- Jet lag, shift workers
- Circadian rhythm disorders (e.g. delayed sleep phase)

In children evidence base is still being established

- Autism
- Children with severe visual impairment
- Children with ADHD and delayed sleep phase

Further Considerations

Impact On Childs' Health And Wellbeing

- Irritability
- Increased stress
- Forgetfulness
- Difficulties with learning – poor concentration
- Decreased motivation
- Hyperactivity
- Challenging daytime behaviour

Impact Of Sleep Deprivation

- Siblings
- Links to post natal depression
- Parents relationship
- Learning
- Holidays
- Driving/operating machinery
- Extended family members
- And the list goes on ...



Need To Consider

- Is now the right time?
- Restless legs syndrome (RLS)
- Restricted diets
- Sensory processing issues
- Screen reliance
- Medication/diagnosis
- Rhythmic Movement Disorder
- Enuresis
- Sleep disorders - OSA
- Supporting understanding – visual timetables/social stories

Evidence Base

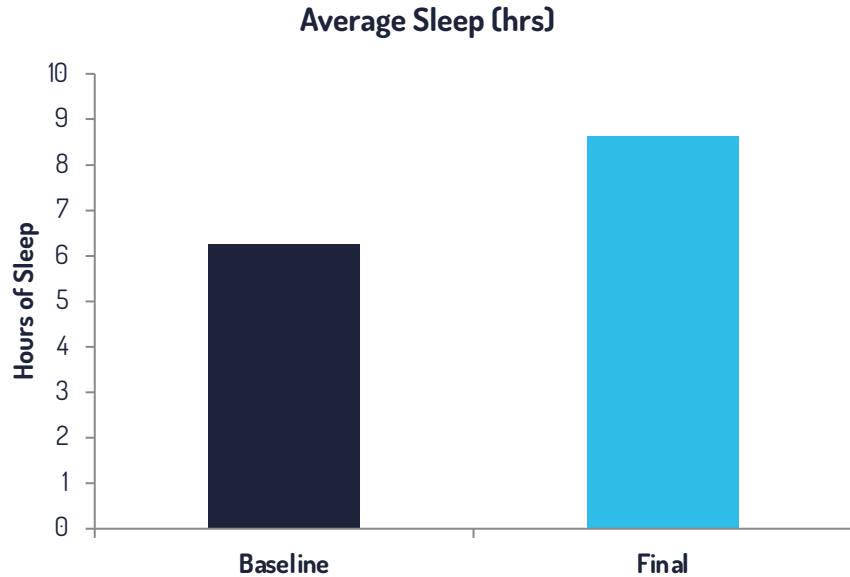
Case Example

- 9 yr old with ADHD
- Falling asleep between midnight and 2am
- Averaging 4 hours sleep
- Taking melatonin
- Child and siblings late for school
- Mum temping as 3 meetings with teachers in last 2 weeks due to behaviour
- No-one else will look after him

Case Example

- 15 yr old in residential home
- Averaging 4-5 hours sleep
- Impacting on other children in home
- Very challenging behaviour
- At risk to himself and others
- Waking night staff had been employed

Total Sleep Time

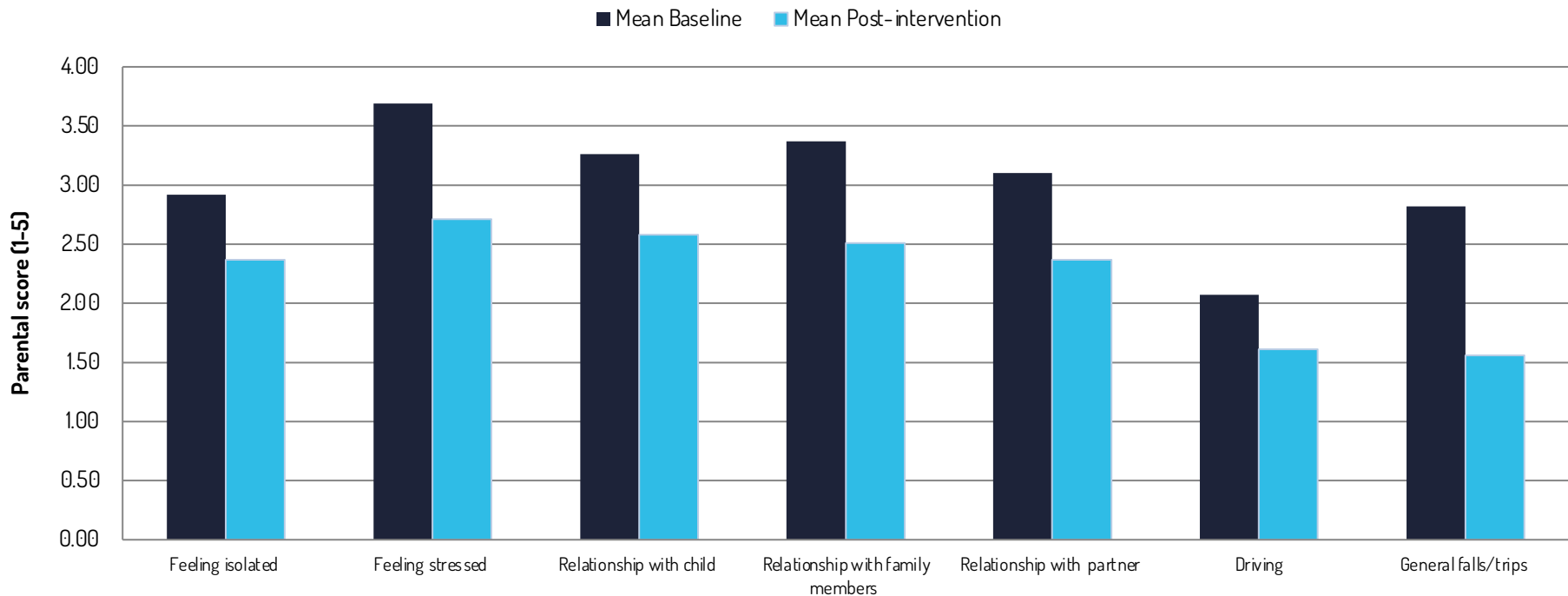


MENDS study: Appleton et al 2011

Melatonin vs placebo – treatment arm gained 15 mins more sleep per night

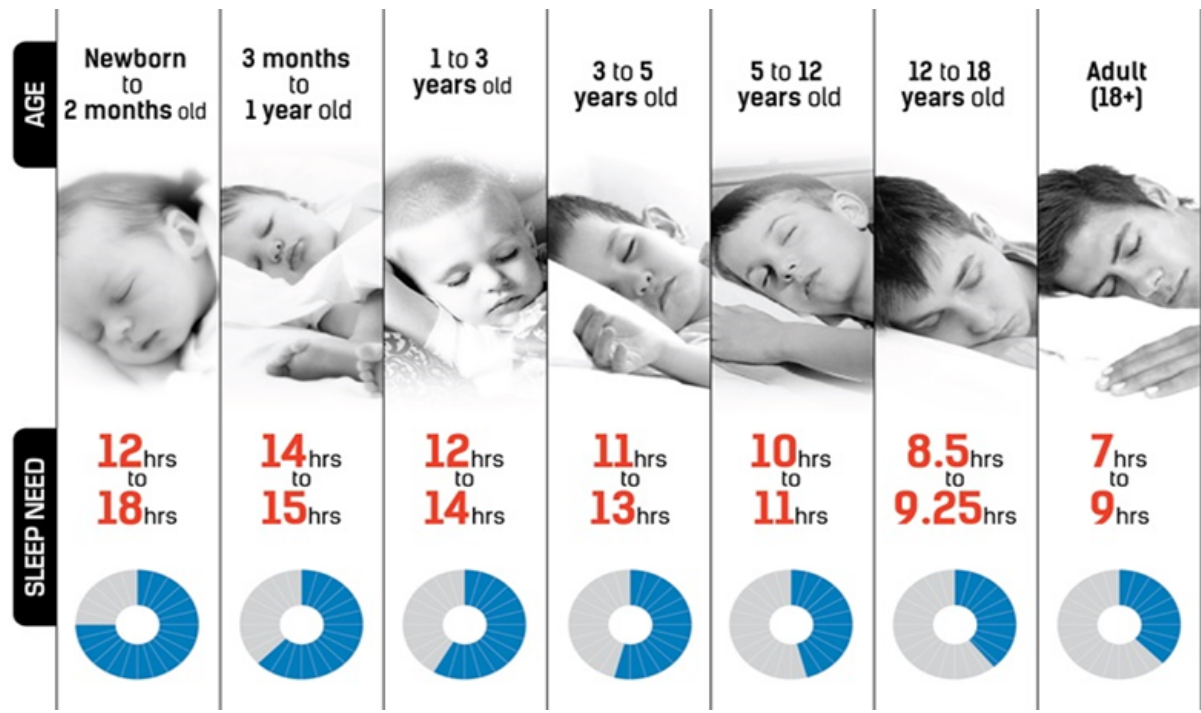
Children gained on average an extra 2.4 hours sleep a night = nearly 2 nights extra sleep a week!

Impact On Parent Wellbeing



Sleep Hygiene Strategies

Average Sleep Needs



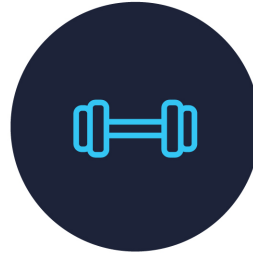
Sleep Associations

- A parent
- A toy
- Dummy
- Drink of milk
- TV on
- Watching a lullaby show
- Light on

Helpful Advice



Consider what may be causing the sleep issues before adopting strategies



Exercise/movement during the day



Regular hours for bedtime and wake up time



Plan a routine - wind down time in the hour before bed



Consider temperature, lighting, noise, colour and the bed in the bedroom



Avoid screens an hour before bed

The Golden Hour

- Dim lights
- Offer supper
- TV off / no more screen time
- Hand eye activities – colouring, jigsaws
- Bath time
- Story
- Bed



The background of the entire image is a silhouette of a person sitting and reading a book. The person is positioned on the right side of the frame, facing left. The background is a warm, orange-hued sunset or sunrise sky with soft clouds. The person's silhouette is dark against the lighter sky. The text is overlaid on the lower left portion of the image.

“Nobody liked me, no one wanted to play with me because I was a butterfly locked in a box with broken wings. But now someone has opened the box and my wings are mended.”

Other Resources



Teen
Sleep
Hub

EBOOK DOWNLOADS

45,000+

SUBSCRIBERS

2,400+

SITE VISITS

18,000+

VIDEO VIEWS

19,000+



SCHOOLS TOOLKIT

Poster series, video series, advice leaflet, social graphics

Thank you for listening

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