

SLEEP DEPRIVATION IN THE MODERN WORLD

By Serra Abak

Introduction

In the recent years, sleep deprivation has become a serious problems for many adults, who are struggling to bring a work-life balance to their life.

Starting from college, adults are getting less and less sleep over the years, and problems related to sleeping, such as snoring and falling asleep behind the wheel, have been on the rise.

It's important to recognize that sleep deprivation has become a serious issue in the modern world.

Three Questions

1. Why do we need sleep?
2. Are we sleeping enough?
3. Why are we not sleeping?
 - Work
 - Caffeine
 - Technology



[Source](#)

Why do we need sleep?

- Recent studies have discovered that during sleep, the brain performs a job similar to a garbage man.
- The toxic waste from cells that is accumulated in the brain throughout the day could cause cells to disintegrate and harm our brain.
- During sleep, when we are functioning the least, the brain is bathed in cerebrospinal fluid, which removes the toxic waste to the liver, where it can be removed from the body.
- Without sleep, the brain is never cleared of this toxic waste and leads to degeneration of the brain. In the short term, we experience exhaustion. In the longer term, it may lead to illnesses such as Alzheimer's.

(Business Insider)

Are we sleeping enough?

Adults Reporting Selected Sleep Behaviors in 12 States by Characteristics Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, United States, 2009

Age (years)	Unintentionally fell asleep during day at least once in the past month	Nodded off or fell asleep while driving in the past month
18 to <25	43.7%	4.5%
25 to <35	36.1%	7.2%
35 to <45	34.0%	5.7%
45 to <55	35.3%	3.9%
55 to <65	36.5%	3.1%
≥65	44.6%	2.0%
Race/Ethnicity		
White non-Hispanic	33.4%	3.2%
Black non-Hispanic	52.4%	6.5%
Hispanic	41.9%	6.3%
Other non-Hispanic	41.0%	7.2%
Sex		
Male	38.4%	5.8%
Female	37.3%	3.5%

Source

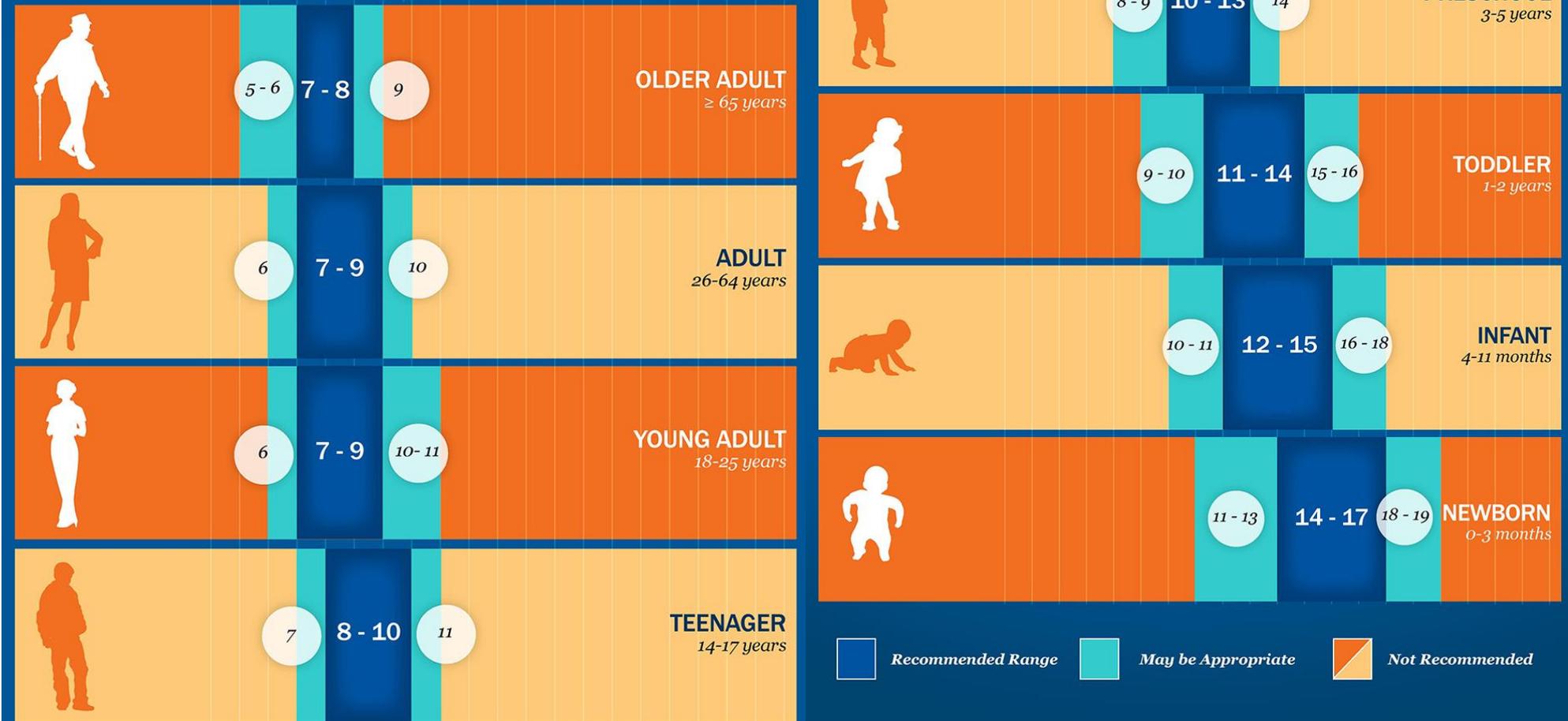
Fifty-nine percent of Americans get seven or more hours of sleep at night, while 40% get less than seven hours.

Those figures are largely unchanged from Gallup polls in the 1990s and 2000s, but Americans, on average, slept much more in the 1940s. Americans currently average 6.8 hours of sleep at night, down more than an hour from 1942.

(Gallup)

RECOMMENDED SLEEP

HOURS OF SLEEP



Source

However...

We know that we're not getting enough sleep.

Almost 80% of Americans agree that a lack of sleep causes problems like difficulty concentrating and increased stress.

In fact, 6 in 10 Americans crave sleep more than sex.

(BetterSleep.org)

If we're aware of this problem, **why are we not sleeping?**

Why are we not sleeping?

Work

- The latest data shows that the average time worked per week has increased by almost 20 minutes in a year.
- Figures from the Office for National Statistics show average hours worked by all employees, full- and part-time, rose from 31.7 in the second quarter of 2012 to 32 in the second quarter of 2013
- Full-time workers' hours rose from 37.2 to 37.5 over the same period, and those for part-timers rose from 15.8 to 15.9.

(DailyMail)

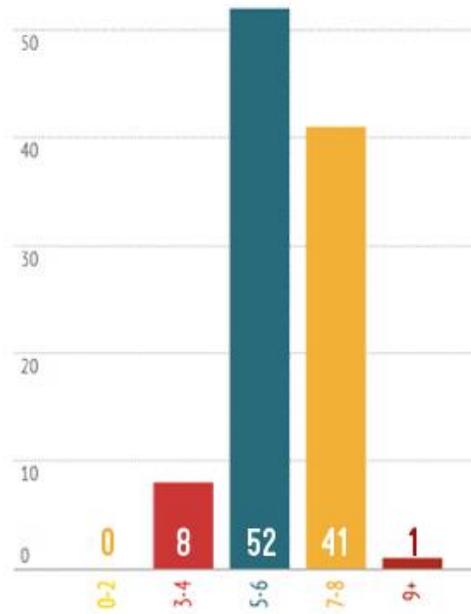
People are working longer hours and bringing work to home. There is pressure from companies to work overtime.



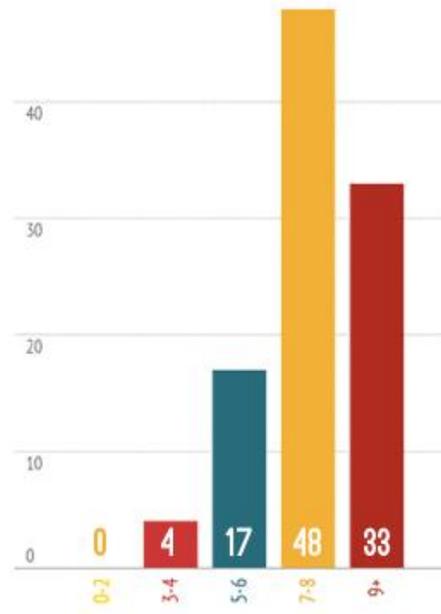
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STUDENT SLEEP STATISTICS

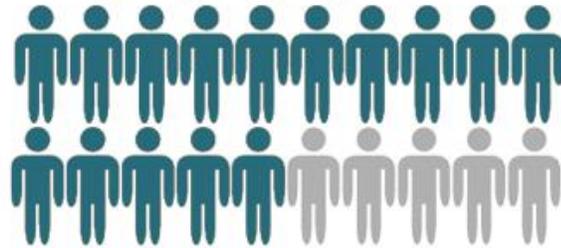
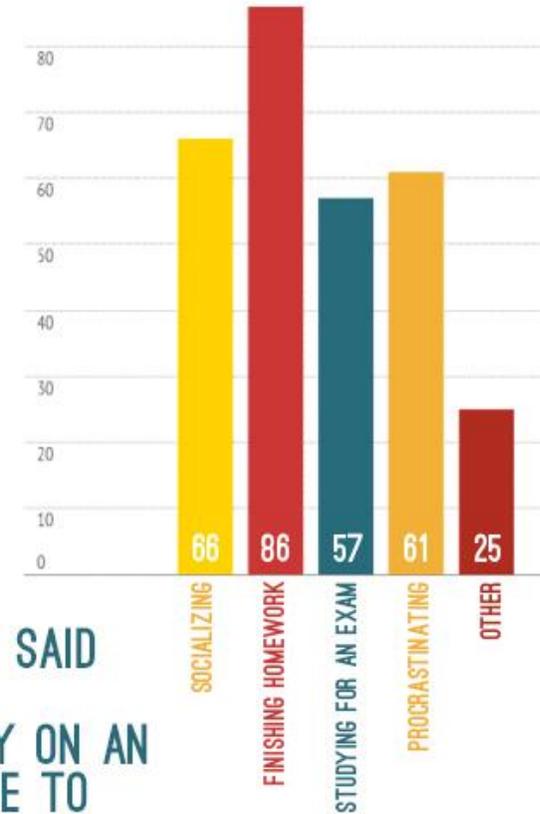
HOURS USUALLY SLEPT ON
WEEKNIGHTS



HOURS USUALLY SLEPT ON
WEEKENDS



REASONS FOR GIVING UP SLEEP



73 OUT OF 102 STUDENTS SAID
THAT THEY FELT THEY
PERFORMED INADEQUATELY ON AN
ASSIGNMENT OR EXAM DUE TO
LACK OF SLEEP

[Source](#)

Why are we not sleeping?

Caffeine

Caffeine, a substance found in coffee that is known to cause insomnia, has been rising sharply in consumption in America. Sleep deprived individuals depend on caffeine to keep them alert, which in turn inhibits their sleep at night.

1. At least 68 million Americans drink three cups of coffee every single day.
2. Some 30 million Americans drink five or more cups of coffee every single day.
3. Over 21 million Americans drink six or more cups of coffee every day.

The effects of caffeine on a person's system can usually be felt within minutes of consuming it. Its peak effectiveness typically takes around 30 minutes, and the substance requires three to six hours to leave the body. This is one reason it's often recommended that a person stop drinking caffeinated beverages in the afternoon, so the body has time to flush it out of the system before trying to fall asleep at night.

(HealthResearchFunction.org)

Why are we not sleeping?

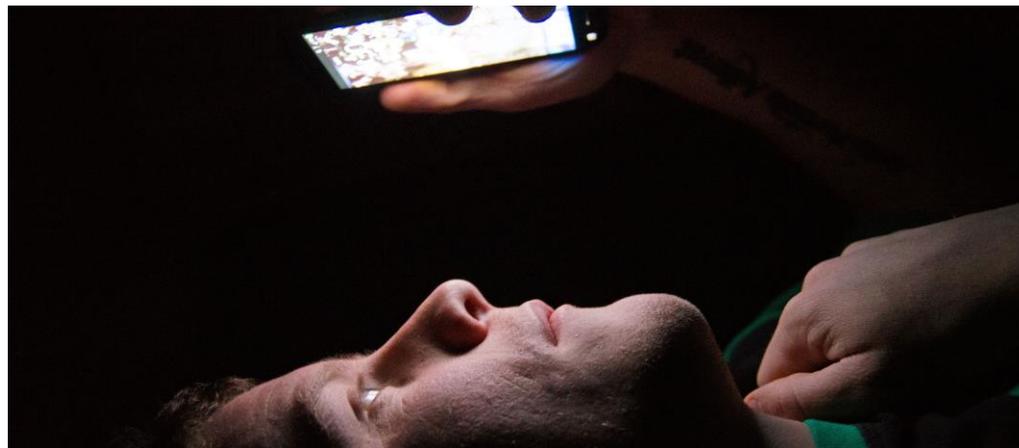
Technology

Technology is a big factor in the problems of adults that have trouble falling asleep.

The light that screens emit from the device delay the release of melatonin, a hormone in your body that is controlled by the hypothalamus that induces drowsiness and sleep, by passing through your retina.

In addition to the light, many activities done on the internet, such as playing video games and checking e-mail, add stress to your body. As a result to this stress, cortisol, a hormone secreted by the adrenal glands, is released into the body. This hormone is known as the “fight-or-flight” hormone and inhibits the ability to sleep.

(WebMD)



[Source](#)

Conclusion

Sleep deprivation has become a serious issue in today's world, with exhaustion leading to lower productivity and poor health. Both companies and people have to step back and think, what are we becoming so tired for?

It has been proved numerous times that sleep deprivation decreases productivity, which will start inhibiting our progress in society and technology in the near future.

If we **start now**, we can save the hours lost working, but not really improving and living life, but not enjoying life.

If we start to **work** smart and **shorter** hours, **drink less** coffee, and **stop** checking our **texts** at bed time, we can start feeling normal again.

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