

Live Safe! Work Smart!

Health and safety e-news for Ontario teachers



DID YOU KNOW

- ...adolescents require **8.5** or more hours of sleep each night
- ...approximately **48%** of adolescent students have less than 8 hours of weeknight sleep
- ...**24%** of adolescent students reported lower grades due to sleepiness
- ...**18%** of adolescent students reported involvement in fewer extracurricular activities because of sleepiness
- ...**60%-70%** of adolescent students indicated that they were very often sleepy between 8:00-10:00 A.M.
- ...**6%** of adolescents may have an unrecognized sleep disorder

(Source: SLEEPINESS AND THE HEALTH AND PERFORMANCE OF ADOLESCENT STUDENTS, A Workshop funded by The Institute of Population and Public Health, The Canadian Institutes of Health Research, November 10, 2002)

Sleepy Students

BY TISH AMICO, Education Consultant for the Ministry of Labour

Welcome back! I hope your summer was both restful and enjoyable, and that you've returned energized and excited about the upcoming year!

As we head into the fall, the days start getting shorter, and students start getting back into a routine of school and part time jobs. Teachers in the classroom may start to see an increased "sleepiness" on the part of their students. This may be even more pronounced in those students who are participating in experiential learning programs, particularly in those Co-op placements that require students to come to work much earlier in the morning.

A number of researchers, supported by a grant from Health Canada, conducted a survey of 3400 Ontario high school students and they found inadequate sleep is associated with decreased academic achievement, impaired performance, behavioural problems, **accidents**, and it impacts on the quality of life.
(Source: SLEEPINESS AND THE HEALTH AND PERFORMANCE OF ADOLESCENT STUDENTS)

What does this mean for those teachers of students who are involved in experiential programs like Co-op and Technological Education programs? It may mean that we must encourage our students to focus even more on the task at hand, to not use cell phones or other electronic devices on the job that may distract them, and to ensure that they ask questions if they are unsure about how to do a complex task. Working part-time over 15-20 hours per week has also been shown to be associated with decreased sleep time. In the Ontario survey, of the 50 % who worked at a job, 38-42% worked more than 15 hours a week. (Source: SLEEPINESS AND THE HEALTH AND PERFORMANCE OF ADOLESCENT STUDENTS)

Being tired from not getting enough sleep, can affect your students' thinking and reaction time – and they can make mistakes. **Some mistakes at work can result in serious injury or death.** A good night's sleep is important for workplace safety as well as academic reasons. The American National Sleep Foundation has helpful tips for staying alert on the job and for sleeping. Check out their web site at www.sleepfoundation.org and talk to your students about the importance of sleep.



BRIGHT IDEA

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT BRIGHT LIGHTS CAN INTERRUPT OUR SLEEP PATTERN. SUGGEST THAT STUDENTS TURN OFF THEIR CELL PHONE AT NIGHT. THIS ENSURES THEY WON'T BE BOTHERED BY A BRIGHT SCREEN AND THEY WON'T BE TALKING ON THE PHONE LATE AT NIGHT. IT MAY HELP THEM GET UP ON TIME FOR SCHOOL!

TISH'S TIPS

DON'T FORGET TO GIVE YOUR STUDENTS PASSPORT TO SAFETY NUMBERS FOR THEM TO TAKE THE TEST BEFORE THEY START THEIR CO-OP PLACEMENTS. IF YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN THE NUMBERS, MISPLACED THEM, OR NEED NEW ONES- NO PROBLEM. JUST CONTACT www.passporttosafety.com AND YOUR PINS WILL BE SENT TO YOU.

HAVE A GREAT START TO THE SCHOOL YEAR.

We welcome your questions, comments and suggestions for future newsletters at info@livesafeworksmart.net

Links

www.sleepfoundation.org

www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/atwork/youngworkers.php

www.passporttosafety.com

Disclaimer: This newsletter has been prepared to help the workplace parties understand some of their obligations under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) and regulations. It is not legal advice. It is not intended to replace the OHSA or the regulations. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE SEE THE [FULL DISCLAIMER](#)