



# Cellphone use disrupts sleep wellness

## How does cellphone use before bed mess with students' sleep cycle?

**Isaac Leon**  
Copy Editor

‘18

Before calling it a night and going to bed, Allen Oddo ends his day with some long-awaited relaxation time on a screen. He collapses on his couch, and takes out his cellphone. On his phone, he checks his social media, watches a few videos and listens to his music. Nightly routines similar to Oddo's could be the reason people wake up so tired in the morning.

"As a high school student, I tend to procrastinate due to my phone," said Oddo, senior. "My nightly routine consists of completing my homework, brushing my teeth, and using my phone until I fall asleep."

During a nightly slumber, the human body goes through states of sleep known as sleep cycles. The first state in a sleep cycle is light sleep, followed by deep sleep, and then a dream state referred to as REM-sleep. A full cycle lasts around ninety

minutes, and is usually repeated several times throughout the night.

"I use my smartphone to listen to music and to keep in touch with my

friends," said Victoria Villela, junior. "I probably spend about four hours a day total on my phone."

According to the Division of Sleep Medicine at Harvard Medical School, the two main types of sleep are rapid-eye-movement (REM) sleep and non-rapid-eye-movement (NREM) sleep (healthysleep.med.harvard.edu). Sleep patterns can be affected by many factors, one of which is blue light. Blue light is emitted from smart phones, and produces a higher amount of energy than other



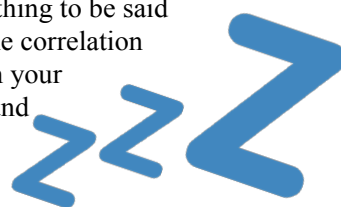
Senior Allen Oddo spends time scrolling through Facebook before going to sleep. *Isaac Leon/PHOTO ILLUSTRATION*

light sources. Exposing yourself to blue light before bed also affects the levels of melatonin that your body produces.

"In terms of light and our brains, there is a spectrum of wavelengths that impacts the human circadian system," said David Earnest, as reported by Texas A&M Research (research.tamu.edu). "Blue light is the most sensitive side of the spectrum."

Technology usage before sleeping is not the only factor to not getting enough sleep, but it is a major component of it. Although it may be hard to break the habit, not staring into a screen before bed may just help you wake up more refreshed than ever before.

"I have noticed a change in my sleeping patterns since I've gotten my phone," said Oddo. "I think there is something to be said about the correlation between your screen and your sleep."



*Student Features*

## What is Sleep Paralysis/ Exploding Head Syndrome

**Karina Castanon**  
News Editor

‘18

Sleep paralysis is a sleeping disorder that is often misunderstood. By definition, it is a condition in which an individual loses the ability to move or speak temporarily after waking up or falling asleep.

In extreme cases, people have experienced hallucinations of dark figures lingering in their room while being conscious but unable to move or speak adding to the terror of this disorder (WebMD). Historically, sleep paralysis was a sign that there was an evil spirit in the presence of the affected.

"In my experience with sleep paralysis it was really dark, I felt like something was pushing my eyes down. I tried to lift my arm but I felt like someone was holding me down," said Bella Amar, senior.

The main cause of this disorder is not accurate for everyone who experiences sleep paralysis because it can come from

so many different things including lack of sleep, some medication, substance abuse, and irregular sleep schedules. The list goes on and on. Most researchers concluded that the common cause is that the body is not moving smoothly through the stages of sleep. The person experiencing sleep paralysis may have trouble drifting into a deep sleep that leads into the rapid eye movement (REM) stage.

"It is intended to keep the body motionless during sleep/dreams, so the body does not move," said Mr. Pitner, psychology teacher. "Some do not experience it regularly, leading to sleepwalking; some have conscious awareness before the paralysis wears off which can be terrifying."

Unfortunately, studies have shown that students are at a greater risk than most people to experience sleep paralysis in their lifetime. It could be from the stress of school and all the other commitments a student has to deal with on a day to day basis but only 8% of the general population experiences it (A'ndrea Elyse Messer-Penn State).

"It affects all, but students have a different

impression of what it means," said Pitner. "I know adolescent brains are not fully developed which can cause more variation in the sleep/wake cycle."

There is a broad spectrum of sleep disorders including conditions as rare as Exploding Head Syndrome, which symptoms include the false awareness of loud sounds that are not physically real. Both sleep paralysis and exploding head syndrome symptoms include the perception of things that are not there. Sleep paralysis is visual while exploding head syndrome is auditory.

Being diagnosed with either of these sleep disorders does not necessarily mean that there is no possibility of treatment. Treatment options include supportive care, improving self-care, and seeing a specialist if symptoms worsen or do not seem to get better.

"I just wait for it to pass over, it's mind over matter," said Bella Amar, senior. "Try to force and convince your mind to wake up."

## Are pajamas appropriate at school?

**Monika Patel**  
Reporter

‘19

During the week of homecoming, students had pajama day as one of their theme days. On this day, students were allowed to wear their pajamas to school. However, even though homecoming is now over, some students still come to school wearing pajamas.

"I wear pajamas to school because I like to be different," said Salvador Salas-Godinez, freshman. "I don't want to be like other kids. I'd rather be weird than normal."

While some students like to wear pajamas, other students do not like the idea of wearing pajamas to school. Guadalupe Serrano, freshman, believes that students wear pajamas because it is the easiest thing to do in the morning.

"Some students might wear pajamas to school because they may be tired and don't feel like dressing up or waking up early to dress up," said Serrano. "Students may have so much homework one night and so they stay up late to finish it. Then they're so tired the next morning that they don't feel like dressing up and just wear pajamas."

The overload of homework at night makes students stay up late to finish it and then too tired the next morning to wake up early the next morning to dress decently for school. Overtiredness leads students to just wear their pajamas to school.

"They're comfy," said Spanish teacher Mrs. Amy Avery. "Students want to be comfortable."

Students should come to school being comfortable. If they are not comfortable, then they are less likely to concentrate in class. However, are pajamas an appropriate attire to wear to school almost every day?

"I think it is," said Godinez. "I think you should have a choice to wear whatever you want."

"You should look professional going to school," said Serrano. "School is preparing you for your future job or college so if you are going to go to school in your pajamas it's not going to look professional. If you go to your job in your pajamas, you're going to get fired."

High school is the place that gets students ready for college and their potential career. It is the professional foundation of students' future. If students act and behave in school as if they would at college or their future job, then it seems sensible to dress accordingly. But do teachers and administrators not take students seriously if they see them walking around in pajamas?

"As long as they are staying awake they can be comfortable, but just stay awake during class and we're okay," said Mrs. Avery.

## ~ Student ~ Sleepwalking

**Magnus Swanson**  
Reporter

‘20

Have you ever sleepwalked? Well, nearly one in three Americans may experience sleepwalking during their lives. Sleepwalking is the act of getting up and walking while asleep. One may appear to be partially awake and partially asleep while sleepwalking. Sleepwalkers also appear to have open eyes although they look glazed according to the Huffington Post.

Many students at Guilford have experienced sleepwalking.

"One time I woke up and started taking a shower," said Ryan Haak, sophomore. While sleepwalking, a person can do complex tasks because there is a lot of brain activity like when the person is awake. In this case, the brain activity looks like the person is sleeping, but they can still do a complex task such as showering.

"I don't remember it but my mom told me, and apparently it was 3 in the morning," said Ryan Haak, sophomore. So in that state of mind, he could perform a complex task while sleepwalking.

"I sleep walk a few times a month. One time I was sleeping downstairs watching T.V, and I walked over to the refrigerator while talking to myself, and I don't remember any of it," said Michael Ryan, sophomore. So both propose the fact that although sleepwalking is looked upon as walking around drowsily, it can also be much more.

So what causes sleepwalking? Well one reason is that around 80% of sleepwalkers sleepwalk due to their family heritage. So if one of your parents or siblings has sleepwalked, you have an extremely high chance of sleepwalking too. Insufficient sleep can also endorse how common you sleepwalk according to healthcentral.com.

So if you encounter someone sleepwalking in your house what should you do? Well, you should not wake up a sleepwalker, you should guide them. They can become very agitated and may not react in a good way.





## Students' Crazy Dreams

"I always have the same dream about 7th grade football championships. In the dream, my team, Eisenhower played against Harlem Middle School; it was a good game because both of teams were tough. Overall it was a good game, but we ended up losing by a touchdown. This dream always occurs once in a while in my dream, but I wish the outcome was different."

Evan McNeely  
Senior



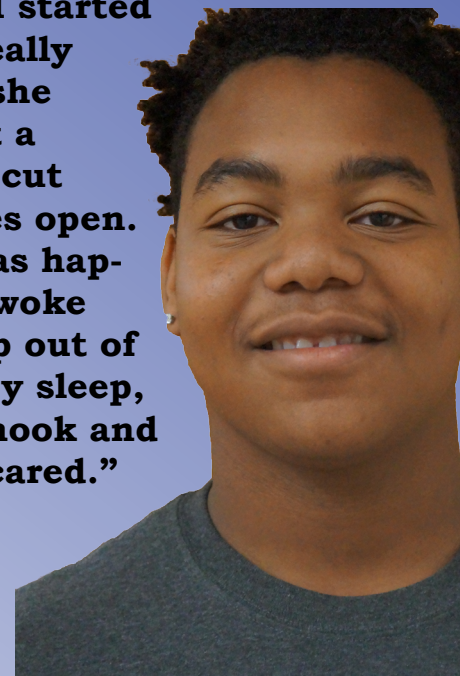
"I had a dream that I was getting ready for school, like any other ordinary day, but as I was about to wash my face I looked into the bathroom mirror and saw a reflection of my aunt who passed away five years ago. I think that dream resembled our relationship when she was alive. She was my favorite aunt, and I was her favorite niece. This dream told me I was a reflection of her."

Juanikita Urdaneta  
Junior



"I had a dream that I was in the hospital recovering from knee surgery, and I had got up to go to the bathroom. I checked to see if the hallway was clear. As I was walking down the hallway I saw some lady following me, she started speeding up as I was speeding up. Then I started limping really fast, and she pulled out a knife and cut my sutures open. As that was happening, I woke up out of my sleep, shook and scared."

Devin Hill  
Freshman



Information provided by Kai'Terra Ross

Experiment

# Which sleeping method works best?

Ryley Kuhn  
Reporter

Catching Z's is an ever elusive prospect for high schoolers, which is to be expected given the burden of homework, classwork, and somehow maintaining a social life. The stresses intrinsic to the existence of every student of every high school go well beyond the classroom, and so often raggedly impact sleep. We all sleep, and as I write this in the throes of my caffeine-crazed, sleep deprived, 500 hour energy drink fueled antics, I can effectively state for a fact that it gets pretty difficult; so, sit down and read the slightly comedic print. It is time to learn a thing or two about getting those eight hours of sleep without sacrificing opportunity cost for a twelve minute nap in lunch hour. (Note, each method was given two days of experimentation)

**Method Number One:** 60 minute wind-down

This one helped dramatically when used in tandem with method three, and quite

simply, you take an active effort to ease into sleep mode, or otherwise chill, if you will. Many experts recommend tea, incense, soft music, and anything to lower that blood-pressure and get you to calm down. Of course, it takes a little time, maybe time you don't have, but if you can dedicate about an hour to simply relaxing, it's noticeably effective. Just take an hour to remove yourself from your worldly problems, and reach a Zen-style peace of mind. For instance, slip on some pajamas, forget the fact that 189 assignments are due by second hour, and listen to some soft music, like Chopin.

**Final Verdict:** Helped a lot, best used alongside another technique, slept like an armadillo. Note, it takes a couple days to ease into, but it works like a charm. The thing that really distinguishes this technique from the others is the noticeable effect it has on the morning after; in short, it really helped, I awoke feeling refreshed and ready for the oncoming storm. I recommend this for people who struggle getting out of bed in the morning without swiftly rolling off the bed and hitting their head on the nightstand.

**Method Number Two:** The ever-famous counting sheep

Given that you live on planet earth, odds are, at one point or another you've heard reference of "Counting sheep" as a method used to put oneself to sleep. You start off by imagining an endless single-file line of sheep, somehow jumping over a fence one by one. It's very self-explanatory; you just count them as they jump over the fence. Basically, it's supposed to get so boring, you eventually start dozing off to spare yourself the monotony. The technique was first inception in a Spanish medical treatise from the early twelfth century, and has been referred to so often that it's now a common English colloquialism.

**Final verdict:** Gets the job done, especially when used with method one. It's worth noting that it doesn't quite work for everyone, but it worked just fine for me. When I was researching the whole "Counting Sheep" technique, I came across an interesting factoid that detailed using more mental energy to personalize the scenario evidently improves your odds of those sheep knocking you out. For instance, I put the fence on a plateau of frozen lakes and gave the sheep different

colors, following no particular pattern. So, maybe when you imagine your infinitely expansive line of sheep, you can put them on a beach, or maybe a volcano. Admittedly, I was skeptical about this method when I first tried it, but after an extra day's experimental period, it got the job done.

**Method Number Three:** Deep breathing

In the spirit of saving best for last, I present to you the most effective technique I personally experimented with. It's also the most practical for a large demographic. The name doesn't quite say it all; here's how it's done. Firstly, you breathe deeply, to the count of four, hold your breath for eight seconds, and then exhale slowly. Count how many times you repeat the cycle, and you should be off to dreamland before you know it. Of course, it's easy to slip up the first couple times, but once you get the hang of it, it comes very naturally.

**Final Verdict:** Best method in my personal experimentation, slept like a well-fed sloth. I didn't quite keep track, but I estimate it took less than ten minutes for me to actually get to sleep, very smooth transition. No noticeable impact on waking up in the morning, but it worked tremendously.

By: Brianna Grimborg

