

Gator Gazette

FEBRUARY 2019 Mt. Horeb School PTO Newsletter



From the Principal, Mr. Cook.....

Dear Mt. Horeb Parents,

As we are all well aware, social media, devices, and the digital world are very much a part of our existence and that of our children. As parents, each of us may have a different stance on how our kids use devices, social media, and the like. Each child has a different social world, academic world, different tendencies, and varying aptitudes. Social media naturally affects everyone differently and has widely known benefits in many categories. I've included excerpts from an article from the Child Mind Institute that I believe is worthy of thought as we all continue to navigate the waters of our children's interactions with social media, cell phones, and video games.

Increased time on social media has had dramatic effects on teen behavior, including fewer risky social activities and more mental health symptoms. "Displacement" may account for these effects. If social media replaces negative activities or isolation, it can be positive. If it replaces face-to-face interaction or exercise, it can be negative.

The good:

- *12th-graders in 2015 were going out less often than 8th-graders did in 2009.*
- *Drinking, illicit drug use, and car accidents are down.*
- *Ninth-graders now are 40% less sexually active and the teen birth rate is down 67 percent since 1991.*
- *Less than an hour of gaming a day may have positive mental health effects.*

The bad:

- *Eighth-graders who spend 10 or more hours a week on social media are 56% more likely to report being unhappy than those who spend less time.*
- *Heavy users of social media increase their risk of depression by 27 percent.*
- *YouTube is widely viewed by teens as a positive force, but teens report Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram increase feelings of anxiety.*

Girls are disproportionately affected by the negative aspects of social media.

- *More than twice as many girls as boys said they had been cyberbullied in the last year (22% vs. 10%).*
- *Boys' depression increased by 21% between 2012 and 2015, and girls' increased by 50%.*

There may be a hidden casualty of the constant social media onslaught: sleep.

- *Teens who spent three or more hours a day on electronic devices were 28% more likely to get less than seven hours of sleep, and teens who visited social media sites every day were 19% more likely not to get adequate sleep.*

Lack of sleep can negatively affect teens' mood, ability to think, to react, to regulate their emotions, to learn and to get along with adults. It's a vicious cycle—lack of sleep affects mood, and depression can lead to lack of sleep. And multiple studies have found that severe sleep debt is linked to suicidal ideation.

- *Teens who don't sleep enough are more than twice as likely to report higher levels of depressive symptoms (31% vs 12%).*
- *Teens who sleep less than seven hours a night are also 68% more likely to have at least one risk factor for suicide.*

<https://childmind.org/report/2017-childrens-mental-health-report/smartphones-social-media/>

A Note from the School Nurse.....

Does your child have trouble falling or staying asleep at night? You are not alone. Establishing bed time habits help promote a good night's sleep, and are often referred to as good "sleep hygiene." Sleep has a direct effect on our attention and behavior. Children, who don't get enough sleep, may be mistaken for having ADHD. Many of the symptoms are the same-kids running low on sleep are less able to concentrate, more easily distracted, and are more hyperactive and impulsive. Preschoolers generally need between 10-13 hours of sleep per night, and school-age children need between 9-11 hours of sleep per night.

Here are the consistent habits that sleep specialists and doctors agree on:

- **Stick to the same bedtime and wake time every day, even on weekends.** Staying up late during the weekend and then trying to catch up on sleep by sleeping in can throw off a child's sleep schedule for several days.
- **Beds are for sleeping.** Avoid using the bed to play video games, watch television, computer, etc. Avoid these devices within 2 hours of bedtime.
- **Quiet, calm, and relaxing activities.** Before bedtime is a great time to relax by listening to soft, calming music or reading a story. It is best to keep video games, televisions, phones, computers out of the bedroom.
- **How to relax.** Help your child relax by taking deep and slow breaths or thinking of positive, calm images like being on a beach.
- **Bedtime routine.** A predictable series of events should lead up to bedtime. This can include laying out clothes and packing a snack for the next day, shower, brushing teeth, and reading a story from a book (not a screen).

Snoring can also affect sleep. While children may snore during a cold or illness, loud snoring that persists for months or years is not normal and should be reported to your pediatrician. Persistent loud snoring interrupts sleep and may affect a child's behavior.

Please take a look at these two links for more information on the importance of sleep:

www.parents.com/health/healthy-happy-kids/the-7-reasons-your-kid-needs-sleep/

www.choc.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Sleep-Hygiene-Children-Handout.pdf

Doris Zanchelli RN, CSN

AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

Soccer, On the Court Basketball and Gotta Dance begin this week! Thank you to all the families who are participating!

SCHOOL APPAREL

Mt. Horeb PTO still has Gator hats and blankets available to purchase. Please contact Mt. Horeb PTO at mthorebpto@gmail.com if you are interested in purchasing. New School Apparel will be available soon! Stay tuned!



The Gator Design can be ordered in Short Sleeve, Long Sleeve & Hoodie in Sport Grey, Kelly Green and Light Pink. Also offered in Short Sleeve Green & Hot Pink Tie Dye.

Ordering Instructions:

- Order online! EPIAPPAREL.COM Click on Mt. Horeb School. If you prefer to pay by cash or check please print order form and return to school with payment.
- All items will be shipped to the school and distributed the week of March 11th.
- Orders due February 15th.

ICE CREAM DAY

The next ice cream days will be held on Tuesday, February 5th and February 19th. The cost of ice cream is \$1.00. Snack cards may also be used to pay for ice cream. Snack cards can be purchased for \$5.00 on ice cream day from our volunteers. Cindy Noh will be provided a list of people who purchased online. If paying by check, please make it payable to "Mt. Horeb PTO."

BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION

Continue to send in your box tops. They are a great way for our school to earn "free money."

DISPLAY CASE

The PTO would like to thank everyone on this committee for continuing to WOW us with your displays.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Authors Day will be held on Thursday, January 31st
 - Family Reading Night will be held on Friday, February 22nd
 - Save the Date: Parents Night Out – March 2nd
- International Day will be held on Thursday, March 21st

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS. WITHOUT YOU WE WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO RUN THESE PROGRAMS WITH SUCH SUCCESS!

