

Add one thing to your event and it may help:

- Improve the likelihood that participants remember what they are taught
- Improve relationships among participants
- Reduce feelings of stress and homesickness
- Reduce overeating at mealtimes
- Reduce everyone's chances of getting sick or injured
- Improve everyone's mood and reduce disciplinary problems
- Improve leaders abilities to solve problems independently
- Make the event more fun

Sleep, it does 4-Hers good!

Getting enough sleep is one of the most important things you can do for yourself, your chaperones, your counselors, your participants, and your event.

Sleep is crucial to event success



Sleep Requirements

AGE	SLEEP NEEDED
6-9	10-11 hours
9-18	9-10 hours
Adults	7-9 hours

PROBLEM

There are too many fun activities we want to have.

SOLUTION

Activities are only as fun as participants excitement level. If they are tired, they may not learn as much and may cause problems. Prioritize what needs to be included in the schedule.

The teen counselors want to have some time without the youth to socialize.

While participants are on site, they must be the priority. Building relationships and supervising them is the job of the teen counselors. Build in a day before and/or after the event for teens to prepare/debrief from their experience. Make these rules known when hiring staff.

Participants are not tired.

If the evening activities include caffeine and high energy options, then participants may have a hard time calming down. Keep the last hour before bed calm. Put high energy activities, like hikes, dances, and crazy skits right after dinner.

Event can only be held in the evenings.

Working with volunteers does limit when 4-H meetings can be held, but keeping the quality of the experience in mind is just as important. If planning 4-H events late into the evening (later than 8:00 pm) try to schedule them on weekend nights so that children can sleep in the next day. Most youth members should have a bedtime around 9:00 pm.

Steps to ensure adequate sleep for 4-Hers:

- ☐ Set up group agreements at the start of overnight events with consequences for breaking quiet times.
- ☐ Arrange sleeping so that youth rotate head/feet positions, thus making face to face conversations more difficult.
- ☐ Do not allow “screens” (such as tablets or phones) in rooms before bed.
- ☐ Set a bedtime for everyone and keep it the same each night.
- ☐ Provide thirty minutes of decompression time before lights out. Use this time for personal reflection and journaling.
- ☐ Schedule high energy activities earlier in the evening. Slow things down as time progresses (e.g., end with quiet campfire songs, not a dance).
- ☐ Schedule counselor meetings and downtime during activities that can be chaperoned in the evening, not after youth bedtime.
- ☐ Schedule time in the morning for getting ready. Alternate bathroom schedules.
- ☐ Provide “barefoot” time in the afternoon for those needing to rest. Prepare activities for participants not needing to rest that can be done quietly (such as cards for solitaire or kid magazines).
- ☐ Make sure counselors are in sleeping area when youth are there.
- ☐ Eliminate caffeine from menus, especially after lunch (such as hot cocoa, cola or chocolate candy).
- ☐ Provide a high-protein breakfast. Breakfasts high in carbohydrates (fruits and grains) burn off quickly and leave youth feeling sluggish. Rev them up in the morning, so they can slow down in the evening.
- ☐ Provide a light evening snack. Overly full or empty stomachs make falling asleep more difficult.
- ☐ 4-H Club and project meetings should end by 8:00 pm. Events that will go longer should be planned for weekend nights when youth can sleep in the next day.
- ☐ When preparing schedules for overnight events, start with 10 hours allocated for sleep, 30 minutes for before bed decompression, and 30 minutes for waking up and getting dressed.

