



**Today is World Mental Health Day.** In our ongoing effort to make the FSS and our community a better place for our students and their families, we encourage you to consider these three “S’s” to support your student’s mental health.

- SLEEP** – Sleep is essential for optimal health of children and teens. Create a bedtime routine and follow these daily sleep recommendations:
  - 6–12 years                      9 – 12 hours each day
  - 13- 18 years                      8-10 hours each day\*
- SCREENS** - including smartphones, tablets, gaming consoles, TVs, and computers. On average, children ages 8-12 spend 4-6 hours a day watching or using screens, and teens spend up to 9 hours. While screens can entertain, teach, and keep children occupied, too much use may lead to problems, including poor sleep. Monitoring and limiting screen time is challenging. Utilize these tips to help reduce your child’s screen time:\*

  - For ages 6 and older, encourage healthy habits and limit activities that include screens.
  - Turn off all screens during family meals and outings.
  - Learn about and use parental controls.
  - Avoid using screens as pacifiers, babysitters, or to stop tantrums.
  - Turn off screens and remove them from bedrooms 30-60 minutes before bedtime OR use parental controls to shut your child’s device down at a certain time.

- SUNLIGHT** – Sunlight helps boost a chemical in your brain called serotonin which helps you feel more energetic, calm, positive, and focused. Try these tips for getting more sunlight in your and your child’s day:
  - Head to the park or local playground.
  - Eat snacks or dinner outside.
  - Go for an after school or after dinner walk.
  - Sit inside near a window with bright sunlight.
  - Don’t forget sunscreen if outside for more than 10 – 15 minutes

\*American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Children and Adolescent Psychiatry