

The 2am Scroll: A Sleep Reset for the New Term

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Why your child is shattered this week, and a simple way to fix it

If your child has come back to school exhausted, you're not imagining it, and you're not alone. Summer holidays quietly shift teenagers' body clocks, and it takes more than one early night to fix. Here's why it happens, and a simple routine to reset it.

Why they're so tired right now

Without school in the morning, bedtimes drift later and later over the summer, often without anyone noticing until it's term time again. By the time September arrives, many teenagers' body clocks have shifted by an hour or more. That doesn't reset itself overnight, which is why the first week or two back can feel like a fog of tiredness, low mood and poor focus, for pupils and parents alike.

The late-night traps keeping them up

Autoplay

One video rolls straight into the next, with no natural stopping point.

Group chats

Notifications ping long after parents have gone to bed themselves.

Endless feeds

TikTok and similar apps are built to keep scrolling feel like "just five more minutes."

The soft landing: a simple reset

Trying to fix bedtime overnight rarely works. A gradual shift is easier for everyone to stick to.

- 1 Pick a **target bedtime** for school nights, and work out how far off it you currently are.
- 2 Move bedtime **20 minutes earlier every few nights**, rather than all at once.
- 3 Agree a time phones **leave the bedroom**, ideally 30 to 60 minutes before lights out.
- 4 Expect it to take **one to two weeks**, not one night, to properly settle.