

(6/26/24 District Administrator's Corner Article)

An adolescent (grades 5-12) needs 9-13 hours of rest to function productively. No wonder we hear parents say that kids are sleeping in. I recently read an article that states there are 7 kinds of rest that every person needs: Physical, Mental, Emotional, Social, Sensory, Creative, and Spiritual. Many of these ideas can be found when researching the topic of rest and in a book written by physician Dr. Saundra Dalton-Smith (<https://ideas.ted.com/the-7-types-of-rest-that-every-person-needs/>).

Our school calendar inadvertently embraces rest for our students. The actual phrase “summer off” is most beneficial for our students. The 7 tenets of rest by Dalton-Smith greatly benefit the students of River Valley by allowing them to restore and prepare for progress in the fall.

**Physical rest** is the type of rest that most think of—sleeping and napping. However, active physical rest can include purposeful yoga or stretching. I can imagine that many students enjoy an extra hour of physical rest whenever possible.

The second type of rest is **mental rest**. Some call this rest a “mental break.” Cell devices and watches now program time to remind us for mental rest. Research speaks to improved productivity if you pause and breathe and rest during the day. The good news is we don't have to travel to Bora Bora (or maybe Bear Valley) on vacation to fix this. Scheduled short breaks throughout the day can remind you to slow down. Kids need reminders to take a break, take a breath, and rethink.

The third type of rest we need is **sensory rest**. Bright lights, computer screens, background noise and multiple conversations (happening often when phones are overused) can cause senses to feel overwhelmed. Going outside with no technology in hand and taking intentional moments of sensory deprivation can begin to undo the over-stimulation of the electronic world for young adults and children.

**Creative rest** is another type of taking a break. This type of rest is especially important for anyone who must solve problems (which is what we ask of our students hourly during the school year). Creative rest reawakens the awe and wonder inside us. This makes me think of car rides with my grandparents. Imagine if during a car ride we noticed trees and counted the fence posts (even if it's on the way to a ball game). This produces creative rest. It also includes enjoying the arts.

**Emotional and social rest** are directly connected to our interactions with others. Students spend so much time trying to impress others, it becomes tiring. They may need to take a break from friends and cut back on performing for everyone. And, if they hope for social rest, they may need to surround themselves with a positive and supportive family. Being a kid can be exhausting (just ask them).

The final type of rest is **spiritual rest** in which a student finds their purpose and belonging. Ways a student can gain this is to meditate, volunteer, or be inspired. Again, this could happen while reading a book, riding an ATV, playing softball, or going to the pool...but it may take time to recognize it.

Summer can be very productive for everyone. In actuality, rest is way more than getting sleep, with great benefits outweighing the time needed. With summer activities buzzing, family vacations planned, and knowing how time flies, take time to pause and rest when you can.

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