

**Text C: Letter to the Editor**

Here are two letters on the topic of sleep deprivation among Hong Kong secondary school students. They are letters to the editor.

**Letters to the Editor****Snoozing Students Losing**

I am outraged by the number of students who often fall asleep in class and how some teachers and parents seem to tolerate it. I just started working as a Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) in a secondary school here, and in the 20 years that I have taught in my home country, I have never encountered behaviour more ridiculous than students sleeping in class.

How can so many students be so sleep deprived? I confronted a few of them recently and found out that they stay up until 3 or 4 in the morning. They confessed to spending hours chatting with their friends online, surfing the Internet or playing games on the computer. It was certainly not because of being overwhelmed by school work.

Students being children, I can understand how they can get caught up in activities that they enjoy. What I find unacceptable is how the adults – teachers and parents – condone such behaviour. A local colleague explained to me that she only had the time and energy to teach the students who were awake. If that is a common attitude among teachers, it means that in every lesson, a good number of students are missing out on learning.

The parents too, are apathetic to this problem. Students have told me that their parents never stop them from staying up late on school nights. Some students keep their parents in the dark by hiding behind locked bedroom doors, but any responsible parent should take an active interest in what their children are doing at home.

It takes a village to raise a child. If knowing adults don't take responsibility, then what chance do our children have to develop into healthy, educated beings? I strongly suggest that teachers make a better effort to educate all students – yes, even those who sleep in class – and that parents take their responsibility to care for their children more seriously.

**Tanya Green**  
**Native-speaking English Teacher (NET)**