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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Study Shows People Losing Sleep Over the Economy

Roanoke Area Sleep Expert Offers Sleep Tips

SALEM, VA (March 4, 2009) -- People in the Roanoke Valley may be experiencing another loss attributed to the state of the U.S. economy – *their sleep*. A National Sleep Foundation (NSF) survey released on Monday, to coincide with National Sleep Awareness Week, shows that people are literally losing sleep over financial concerns.

The NSF's 2009 "Sleep in America" poll revealed that nearly one-third of the population is losing sleep over the state of the U.S. economy and the impact it has on their personal finances and employment.

According to area sleep expert Raquel Rothe, CRT-NPS, owner of Sleep EZ Diagnostic Center, Inc. (<http://www.sleeppezcenter.com>) in Salem, Virginia, an insufficient amount of sleep can negatively impact individuals' physical and mental well-being, as well as their safety.

"The results of the survey are not surprising, given our current economic environment and the immense financial pressures people are experiencing. High-stress situations and prolonged anxiety can significantly compromise an individual's ability to get the sleep he or she requires," Ms. Rothe said.

The "Sleep in America" poll is conducted each year and provides trend data on the sleep habits of Americans. The number of people reporting sleep problems has increased by 13% since 2001. In the past eight years, the number of Americans who sleep less than six hours a night jumped from 13% to 20%.

The 2009 poll finds that more than one-half of adults – potentially 110 million licensed drivers – have driven when drowsy at least once in the past year. Nearly one-third of drivers polled say that they have nodded off or fallen asleep while driving a vehicle.

“People underestimate the importance of getting a good night’s sleep. Sleep deprivation can have pervasive effects on individuals and the people around them, Ms. Rothe explained. “It’s essential for people to monitor their sleep habits – particularly during volatile times such as what we are experiencing with our economy,” she added.

The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) reports that the amount of sleep each person needs depends on many factors, including age. Babies typically need about 16 hours a day and teens should get around 9 hours of sleep each night. Most adults require 7 to 8 hours a night, although some people may need as few as 5 hours or as many as 10 hours of sleep each day.

The amount of sleep a person needs increases if he or she has been deprived of sleep in previous days, according to the NINDS. People tend to sleep more lightly and for shorter time spans as they get older, although they generally need about the same amount of sleep as they needed in early adulthood.

“Healthy eating habits and a regular exercise program facilitate healthy sleep habits,” Ms. Rothe explained. For better sleep, she advises individuals to follow a consistent schedule where they go to sleep and wake up at approximately the same time each day. In addition, getting in a relaxed state before getting in bed will go a long way towards a healthy night’s sleep.

“Yet, if someone is experiencing difficulty going to sleep night after night or consistently feels fatigued during the day, it is time to see a doctor. A person’s quality of life depends on it. And, if you are missing out on sleep, you are missing out on life,” Ms. Rothe emphasized. There are more than 80 documented sleep disorders and most can be treated under a doctor’s care.

For more information, contact:

- Raquel Rothe of Sleep EZ Diagnostic Center at 540-375-7735 (www.sleeppezcenter.com)
- National Sleep Foundation at 202-347-3471 (www.sleepfoundation.org)
- National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke at 301-496-5751 (<http://www.ninds.nih.gov>).

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