

Science agrees, let teens sleep!

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If you are anything like most most teenagers then you know the pain of falling asleep late and then being forced to wake up early for an eight or sometimes even seven o'clock school start time. Many teens can relate to not being able to fall asleep early and so getting very little sleep before school. But a later start time would fix this very important problem. Across the nation there is a new call to action for schools to start later this movement began a long time ago but is only just now picking up steam. there are now many scientific studies to prove that teenager are hard wired to fall asleep late and wake up later. After realizing this, many schools have decided to try a later start time.

This is wonderful because it helps the student and the school by reducing tardiness, a problem that schools all around America are trying to fight. So what exactly is it that I'm proposing? Well it's simple really, I believe that schools should start later. To facilitate a new healthier way of education, one where most teens are not sleep deprived and the number of tarsiers plummets. The idea for starting school later is based off the idea that teenager's are designed to stay up later and, in turn, wake up later., leading to less tardies and higher rates of home work turn in.

Some opponents of this idea may say say that by starting school later students with sports or extracurricular activities will be at school far to late. This is only partly true, by starting school later the idea is that students are still able to participate in the same activities that they would with a normal school day the only difference is that they would run later, which is not such a big deal if school is starting later. Others who object to this plan may say that they are already up to late doing homework and think that now they

would have to stay up to late to finish it. However these people are mistaken. With a later start and end time students will get home later so they could stay up later to do there home work but now the option of waking up early before school starts to finish their work is much more feasible, leaving a student with options on how and when they would like to do their work. later school start times have been proven to help teenagers immensely through a number of ways all leading to a healthier, more alert, and more school focused teen.

The first study that we will look at was done after the Minneapolis Public School District changed their school start time from 7: 15 am to 8: 40 am, the study was conducted by University of Minnesota professor Dr. Kyla Wahlestrom, this study showed that after the later start time was put into place students on average gained at least five hours of sleep per week (sleep foundation 1) This was a very important revelation because most experts agree that adolescents require about eight and a half to nine and a half hours of sleep per night. And when students do not get this amount of sleep they are more prone to depression, low attendance rates, and a lack of daytime alertness. All of these factors improved immensely after the start time was pushed back (Sleep Foundation 2). Many sleep scientists also argue that early high school start times conflict with teens' shifting sleep patterns.

Beginning in puberty, " adolescents are programmed to fall asleep later, many cannot fall asleep until past eleven o'clock" by messing with this sleep cycle we put our students and children in a grater risk of depression to automobile accidents. (Aubrey 1). These sources prove that not only is it a good idea to start school later but by not doing so we are actually

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endangering our children everyday. It is very important for students in today's world be as alert and awake as possible so that they do not fall behind but also so that they remain safe when on there way to school by trying to mess with the way adolescents are programmed to sleep no one wins it only causes arguments about not wanting to wake up, a greater risk of depression, increased truancy and tardies, and last but most certainly not least a greater danger for car accidents. If you are anything like me then I think that you can agree we do not want our students or children to be exposed to these risks. In order to protect our students and children we must move the start time of school back.

With schools starting as early as seven o'clock it is imperative that we reform our school hours to accommodate the bulk of the students throughout America not just the select few who have no problem going to sleep late and waking up early. The rest of the country must follow the examples of the school districts that have changed their school's hours only to find positive results. Works Cited " School Start Time and Sleep." National Sleep Foundation. National Sleep Foundation, 2014.

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