

Four day school week and success

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Staying up late and waking up late gives the impression that teenagers are lazy and undisciplined. These late nights are not always a matter of choice. Teens have increasingly busier schedules, constantly use electronic devices, and have a natural circadian rhythm that result in bad sleeping patterns.

This directly impacts how students perform in school. A four day school week would be beneficial to students because it would allow them to spread out their schedule, enabling them to better manage their time and increase their amount of sleep. One way to improve student performance is to implement a four day school week in all schools in the United States. Teenagers do not just attend school; most teenagers have activities, jobs, or sports after school. By the time students finish all of their after-school responsibilities and homework assignments, it can be close to midnight.

The following morning teenage students have to start the routine at 6: 00 a. m., averaging only six hours of sleep. The average teenager needs eight hours of sleep every night and lack of sleep can wear on the body. Dr.

Allison Baker, a psychiatrist at the Child Mind Institute, says about homework and teens, “ It’s a major contributing factor to sleep deprivation which is unique to adolescence” (Get Informed). A four day school week would allow students to rearrange their after-school schedule so that they have less demands on their evening hours, providing more time for sleep. Also, in today’s electronic age, computers, smart phones, television, and video games occupy most teens’ attention during evening hours. Homework assignments now typically require a computer to be completed. Since teens usually do their homework at the end of the day, this places them in front of

an electronic screen prior to going to bed. These devices affect hormone levels that interfere with sleep.

Margarita L. Dubocovich says, “Hormones, television watching, Web surfing, and other factors might explain why adolescents delay sleep in the evening.” (Sleepy Teens). A four day school week would give students more daytime hours to complete their homework. In addition, teens have a circadian rhythm pattern that keeps them from going to bed and makes them stay up later.

Conversely, adults biologically have a different sleeping pattern. The national sleep foundation states, “Circadian rhythm causes them to naturally feel alert later at night, making it difficult for them to fall asleep before 11 p. m.” (Sleep Drive). Therefore, a four day school week can enable students to sleep more often according to their natural circadian rhythm, allowing them to catch up on missed sleep.

Having the extra day off gives students the rest they need while improving their education. On the other hand, some people argue that a four-day school week leads to decreased academic performance, because students are in school for less time. In her article Mary Brown discusses concerns of decreased attendance and lower test scores. (Brown). There is, however, little data that suggests that a four-day school week inhibits student performance.

When discussing a Colorado study on the results of a four-day school week, Dr. Mark Anderson and Mary Beth Walker write, “Our results generally indicate a positive relationship between the four-day school week and <https://assignbuster.com/four-day-school-week-and-success/>

academic achievement.” (MIT Press). Therefore, there is not enough evidence to conclusively show whether academic performance is affected by fewer days in school. In fact, early studies suggest that students’ test scores and academic achievement may improve in a four-day week system. Consequently, giving students more time to sleep will increase their academic performance.

Electronic devices and a jammed schedule are leading causes of why teens are not getting enough sleep. These two things add to the problem of teens’ circadian rhythms. More school systems should therefore adopt the four-day school week. A four-day school week will be in the best interest for all students across the United States.