

Unattainable hours of sleep

Business



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Are there times where no matter how much you sleep, you're still as tired as ever? Are there times when you realize that it became harder to stay awake in the lectures? Or, have you ever felt that your performance in school is getting worse even though nothing wrong happened to you? Well, my friend, the problem you now have is like many other students: you are most likely sleep-deprived. According to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, sleep deprivation is a condition that occurs when you don't have enough sleep. We all know the similar consequences of not having enough sleep or not sleeping, so let's ask ourselves – Why are we sleep-deprived? What's taking our precious hours of sleep away from us? Our daily lives are filled with school, extracurricular, sports, band competitions, social service projects, part-time jobs, AP exam preparation, IB exam preparation, and on top of that there's homework. With all these burdens, it's hard not to blame school for some of our sleep deprivation issues.

But how exactly do school become a factor to our lack of sleep? If this issue applies to you, or if you are interested in it, follow along. If you are a high school student, your school most likely have a call time that ranges from 7:00 AM to 8:00 AM. It is probably not surprising that many would argue that their school starts too early, causing them to sleep less and to come to school half-awake, half-asleep. You might ask yourself: does pushing the call time back actually increase the hours of sleep in students? In a pediatric research study titled “ Impact of Delaying School Start Time on Adolescent Sleep, Mood, and Behavior”, data were taken from the students over the effectiveness of pushing back the morning call time of schools, which demonstrated that “ mean school night sleep duration increased by 45

minutes, and average bedtime advanced by 18 minutes... the percentage of students getting less than 7 hours of sleep decreased by 79.4%, and those reporting at least 8 hours of sleep increased from 16.

4% to 54.7%.” (Owens). Just by delaying the call time by thirty minutes, on average many more students were able to get more than eight hours of sleep, which is the standard amount of sleep for teenagers which we have long forgotten. In addition to the extended duration of sleep, students also went to bed earlier than before, which is rather unexpected but reasonable. Also, from the same study, the result was found that “ Students reported significantly more satisfaction with sleep and experienced improved motivation.

Daytime sleepiness, fatigue, and depressed mood were all reduced” (Owens). The amount of sleep may matter, but generally we look for the result of it, and this clearly shows how delaying the school call time helped contribute to reduction of students’ malperformance in schools. Now, if you see that your school starts relatively early, you can argue against it now since you know a study that demonstrated an increase in adequacy after its call time have been delayed. Nevertheless, if early call time in schools is the only issue at hand, then we would probably still have a chance to sleep a bit better, as long as we bring ourselves to bed early. But all of us knows why many of us would probably still report that he gets less than 6.5 hours of sleep on school nights (Dawson) – and that is mostly due to our heavy homework assignments (both connotative and denotative) and the immense pressure to have high performance.

According to Craig Canapari, a sleep therapist and director of the Yale Pediatric Sleep Center, “ kids are getting out of school between 2-3 PM. Many students do extracurriculars for a few hours after school and cannot start homework until after dinner (say 6: 30 PM)” (Canapari), and I know many of you are already nodding along with me now – since that’s so many of us. Canapari then shares a patient he has who has issue falling asleep early, and whose “ Advanced Placement classes had 1-2 hours of assigned homework per night and he [patient] was not routinely finishing homework until 11 PM or 12 AM” (Canapari). Although I’d say that spending one to two hours of assigned homework per night on AP courses is already pretty good, I’m sure that for many of us, even if those AP courses only takes one to two hours, we will still be finishing homework at around midnight because so many of us takes around four, five, or even all AP courses in one year, which means that many at the very least has to work nonstop for four hours in addition to dinner, shower, house chores, laundry, etc. And just imagine what it’s like for those with all AP courses! And those with IB courses, which are even harder than the AP courses! There is no doubt that school is only becoming harder as years go by and the average hours of sleep falling down as if by natural tendency.

And then there’s the main argument on the cause of student lack of performance and sleep – the use of cell phones. These days, many people argue that cell phone usage is massively consuming time away from teenagers and adolescents, causing them to become sleep-deprived from late web surfing. But is that always true? Although it might be true that we, like Carolyn Walworth, “ After an evening with four or five hours of

homework, [Walworth] turns to her cell phone for relief. She texts or talks to friends and surfs the Web” (Richter). But the question is, why does she need relief? Is it not because of all those overwhelming assignments that caused her to “ collapses in tears... overwhelmed by unrelenting school demands.

She is desperately tired and longs for sleep. But she knows she must move through it, because more assignments... await her” (Richter). How then, could anyone criticize the teenagers for their use of cell phones when all that we are trying to do is to liberate ourselves sometimes from the excruciating responsibilities and to give ourselves a break? In addition, it might seem relieving to just drop those AP courses and extracurriculars, but of course we are never going to do that, because like what Yuan, a clinical associate professor of pediatrics, said, “ ‘ With academic demands and extracurricular activities, the kids are going nonstop until they fall asleep exhausted at night... And if you ask kids to remove an activity, they would rather not. They would rather give up sleep than an activity.’ “(Richter).

How could we drop any of our activities when it’s so competitive in our schools, and none of the students are dropping their courses? Ultimately, this cycle of intense work and early call times still contributed greatly to sleep deprivation among students, regardless of whether cell phone and media usage contributes to it or not. The pediatric study on the effect of delayed call time resulted in students going to bed early, which is reasonable because with more sleep, students are more productive and attentive in class, leading to better efficiency in finishing homework. The earlier you finish your homework, the earlier you could go to bed. This, as we all can see, is a good cycle that would greatly provide a better school experience as <https://assignbuster.com/unattainable-hours-of-sleep/>

well as better school performance. I hope that after all of these factors that I have shared with you, maybe you can slowly see the faults within the schools and their failure from the promise to “ provide the best learning environment for students”.

I only want all of us to realize – and to acknowledge – that we are not always the one at fault, or are the schools never responsible for our lack of sleep and the malperformance afterwards.