

Wake up, american education system!

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The whole point of school is learning, right? We stay up late to make sure our homework is done or to put finishing touches on various projects we may have, but students also have to remember to take care of our social needs so we don't always get to bed at reasonable hours of the night, but we still have to wake up at 6 am every morning to get ready for school.

Most of us try to figure out which homework we can do really fast before school starts so when it's 1: 30 am we already have it set to where we can just say, " Okay, I can do this tomorrow morning." That way we can be prepared to wake up and jet off to school when that obnoxious alarm clock goes off in the morning. Our mental health is already on the fritz with trying to keep up with all of our classes, but adding the pressures of work and our social lives onto it just makes it –and us- all that closer to completely fizzling out. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics starting schools later in the day would be very beneficial to teenagers' mental and physical health. (Park) I know it may be crazy to think about, but sleep deprivation can cause various mental health problems.

In 2005 there was a poll taken that confirmed that most people who have anxiety or depression got less than six hours of sleep each night. (Peri) Unfortunately, that is significantly less than the 9 ? hours that teenagers require. But mental sicknesses such as depression and anxiety aren't the only things that are caused by sleep deprivation. (Peri) Like I said, school is for learning and becoming educated on various subjects, but if we are going to bed late at night and waking up early in the morning it can take a toll on our learning. According to WebMD, sleep deprivation has an effect on our cognitive thinking process which is how we perceive and remember things. If

sleep deprivation messes with our cognitive processes then we won't be able to concentrate during the school day.

Not only that, but we won't be able to remember what we've barely been able to absorb. (Peri) School starting later in the day for teenagers is a good idea because not only will it improve our moods, but it would also probably improve our grades and our performances on tests. A lot of those things could be fixed by allowing schools to start later, but what about our physical health? Childhood obesity is on the rise and lack of sleep can be a contribution to that. (Peri) Michelle Obama already put "healthier foods" in our schools, but maybe we should be thinking about how lack of sleep can affect our weight. There are these things called amino acids in our bodies called peptides.

Peptides are something we have in our body naturally and lack of sleep tends to affect some of those peptides. Ghrelin is a peptide that tells our body "Hey! You're hungry! Get some food please." We have another peptide in our body called Leptin and it says to our body, "Whoa, wait a second. You're not actually hungry." With a lack of sleep our bodies make them unbalanced and causes us to have more Ghrelin than Leptin and it makes us want to eat more and more even though our bodies don't require it.

(Peri) Some health problems that come along with obesity are things like Heart Disease and Stroke. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Peri) Oddly enough those are also some repercussions of not getting enough sleep. How are educators going to have students if we continue to get worse and worse? Our mental health is declining, our physical health is declining

and our grades are declining. People put a lot of pressure on kids; especially high school students, but they don't seem to understand we can only do so much. We are losing sleep and because of that we are slowly losing our sanity. Doctors told the American school system time and time again that middle and high schools, in order to benefit student's health, should start later in the day.

When will they learn that this could be the answer to a lot of our problems?

When will they wake up? We as students need the school system to understand what we are going through and why they should take into consideration what we feel. We as students realize that education is important, but mental and physical health is more important than any education we'll ever receive. We as Americans need to realize there is a problem and we need to DO SOMETHING about it. In the last few years we have gotten better, but America is still at number eighteen on the world rankings for education. America, at least the America I know, wants to be the best at everything. Well, nobody likes eighteenth place.

If we want to be number one and be the leaders that we expect ourselves to be, then we need to figure out how to fix these problems that we have. I'm not saying that starting schools later will cause a chorus of Hallelujahs and be the answer to every problem with the education system in America, but it will be a start, and the least I can do is start the ball rolling in the right direction. It's time for us to wake up. CDC. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 11 Dec.

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