

Tired teens at school: nothing to sleep on

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Dear Teachers, Ever so often you see them with arms folded on their desks, head down, tired eyed, or yawning: students who have not had eight hours of sleep. You may shrug it off or ignore it, but you know that method will just add to the list of reasons why they're failing the class, or why they lack confidence in finishing even the most easiest worksheets that you could possibly give them. When you continue your lesson, you're letting this act continue.

On behalf of many of my sleep-deprived peers, do not let this act of us missing work and failing to catch up or to fall behind in class continue. Our actions before we head to bed at a certain time, yes, that is our fault but do not add to the list of mistakes we are making in our lives. In most cases, communication is key. Before they leave the class, talk to them, or schedule a meeting with them on your free period or if it is a reoccurring problem, speak to them some time during the week. Wake them up in fact after 10 to 20 minutes, or if the lesson is very important.

Start the conversation, not with a demand that they stay awake, but rather with a question about whether or not we are feeling well, if we need a drink or need to stand up for a bit, then allow them to (teachhub). With this method, both the student and the teacher can benefit. The possibly grumpy student will be woken up, not with hostile words, that will encourage them to possibly erupt in class but with a voice of concern. We know that our sleeping habits are a problem. Do not be discouraged, it is worth the try to also talk to us about our habits after class ends, during the end of the day or at lunch.

The discussion may work for a day, or every so often, or again we may shrug it off but the thought that you are not mad at us, and are willing to help, that stays in our mind. There was a time when a teacher of mine, sat with me at the end of class to talk about my sleeping habits, lateness, my schedule, and to plan for a different daily schedule. Not only did she point out where I have been messing up, but she gave me the truth on what I needed to do in terms of school work, and we prioritized my classes. She pointed out the hazardous effects of my cellphone, because truth is phones emit a light, called blue light, that blocks our body's natural production of melatonin, which is a hormone that our brain produces to help it fall asleep (kiplinger). Upon learning that fact, I became more cautious with using my phone before bed. It was through a collaborative effort that we came up with a schedule that gave me my much needed hours of sleep.

I remember her saying that realistically, it will take time before I reach that eight-hour sleep, but every night, I did attempt to sleep around thirty minutes earlier than I did the other night, as she suggested. This act of showing genuine concern and aid, not only helps the student get their much needed sleep, but strengthens the connection between you and the student. The issue at times is not just sleepy students, most times, it is the late students, who as a matter of a fact, are also the ones who are sleep deprived. Many students complain about the start time of their first period class. The ideal time for most would be at 9 in the morning. The later time benefits the long commuters and the ones who woke up late.

We won't need to wake up before sunrise, or rush to go to school only to still be late. Truly it makes us feel guilty, we may act like we're so used to being
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late or that it's a funny thing to be late but know that we see the issue.

According research, the typical adolescent's natural time to fall asleep may be 11 p. m. or later, and that they receive at least 9? hours of sleep (sleep foundation).

In the research, when students were given time to sleep between 10 p. m. to 8 a. m., they found that regardless of age, the children all naturally slept about 9? of the 10 hours.

Keep in mind the fact that these children woke up at 8 a. m. For our school, waking up at 8am, meant you most likely missed your first period class.

When some students from the research were asked to adjust to an 8: 25 a. m. school starting time, the results were ridiculous.

Their sleep times did not change, instead they woke up earlier, none of the students were able to make the proper adjustments to the new schedule; none of the students were sleeping even 8 1/4 hours on those school nights (sleep foundation). It would even be easier to solve lateness if students were told that school started at 9 a. m., you would be asking us to sleep at 10 or 11 instead of asking us to sleep at 8 or 9 at night. Teens, we mess up! Still we're imperfect beings who fall under the trap of sticking our heads in front of a screen. Upon the development of technological advancements came the upbringing of TV series, Netflix, Youtube, Hulu, Snapchat and Messaging. It can be difficult to go against such a habit; the entertainment is our source of serotonin. We put our sleep on the line, thinking that we can catch up another day. Therefore, we nap in school, in your class.

It's difficult, our body gave up on us, we ask ourselves what can we do? And so we sleep. The idea of having areas in school where we could nap, is a method derived from a business practice. At Google's Mountain View, California, home base, employees can take advantage of campus-wide nap pods, which are futuristic-looking lounge chairs that play soothing sounds so workers can nap quickly if they needed to and in Huffington Post's New York City headquarters has a nap room because even they consider workday naps to be an important productivity enhancement (sleep). Our school can not afford nap pods, but you can designate a room where students can go to sleep, perhaps a room that substitutes usually use because it is usually empty. Substitutes could even be the ones to watch over the room, or any free teacher or faculty could take turns in watching the room.

Students could be timed for 20 minutes or less and then be sent back to class. They could be asked to sign in a sleeping log so teachers could keep track of which students were let in or which students have a recurring issue with sleep. We know that our school work is important, but we've made the mistake already or sleeping late that night. Most of us will not be energized to suddenly be a participating member in the class. Continually, we will walk the halls and in our next class, affecting our performance and the teacher in that next class as well.

We know that we've messed up our sleeping schedule, that we slept again in your class, came late for the third time this week but do not react with hostility, communicate with us. As my teacher says, the day goes on, there is no making up, the sleep has already been lost, it is time to move forward, plan ahead for getting more sleep and to prevent or accommodate for when

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this happens again. Many us may not say it, or do not even realize it, but we need your help. Yours truly, One Tired Teen