

**Outpatient Counseling
Behavioral Services**

137 Hospital Drive
Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548
850-833-7400

- Children & Family Services
- Psychiatric Medicine
850-833-7599

299 W. Railroad Avenue
Crestview, FL 32536
850-689-7810

- Children & Family Services
- Psychiatric Medicine
850-689-7810

Family Support Services

205 Shell Avenue
Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548
850-226-8840

Family Care Unit

137 Hospital Drive
Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548
850-833-7500 Extension 266

299 W. Railroad Avenue
Crestview, FL 32536
850-689-7810

Case Management

205 Shell Avenue
Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548
850-226-8840

2007 James Lee Boulevard
Crestview, FL 32536
850-689-7827

**Driving Schools / Educational
Services**

137 Hospital Drive
Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548
850-833-7474

351 N. Ferdon Boulevard
Crestview, FL 32536
850-689-7938

Administration

137 Hospital Drive
Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548
850-833-7512

Soundside Wellness Consultants

- Employee Assistance Program
205 Shell Avenue
Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548
850-226-8585
850-833-9200 (After 5:00 PM)

351 N. Ferdon Boulevard
Crestview, FL 32536
850-689-7844
850-833-9200 (After 5:00 PM)

Crisis Hotline

- Monday-Friday 8:00AM to 5:00PM
- Ft. Walton – 850-244-9191
- Crestview – 850-682-0101

Sexual Trauma Team (STT)

- 850-376-5386
- 24 / 7 / 365 Days a Year

September 10, 2014

Dr. Lynn Keefe
1001 W. College Blvd
Niceville, FL 32578

Dear Dr. Keefe,

Bridgeway Center, Inc. (BCI) is in support of your endeavor to petition the County for later start times for high school students. As the community behavioral health provider in Okaloosa County we see students who exhibit behavioral problems due to sleep deprivation. Anyone who has had teen aged children knows that they tend to stay up late and sleep later than younger children.

Teenagers are at the most risk for sleep deprivation. Chronic sleep deprivation can lead to inability to be alert, pay attention, solve problems, cope with stress and retain information. Young people who do not get enough sleep night after night carry a significant risk for drowsy driving; emotional and behavioral problems such as irritability and depression; poor impulse control and violence; health complaints; tobacco and alcohol use; impaired cognitive function and decision-making; and lower overall performance in everything from academics to athletics.

There have been numerous studies and research completed on this subject which support later school start times. A three-year research study was conducted by the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement, University of Minnesota which examined the impact of later high school start times. This study, which included in excess of 9,000 students in eight public high schools in three states, revealed that schools that started at 8:30am or later allowed the students to receive at least eight hours of sleep a night. The study also revealed the number of car accidents for teen drivers was reduced by approximately 70% with just a one hour shift in the start time. Additionally, parents reported less conflict and fewer confrontations with their children.

These statistics are from one study which has proven accuracy. Bridgeway Center, Inc. fully supports the adjustment of a later start time for Okaloosa County's high schools to engage the minds, health, and safety of the children who may one day be the decision makers in our own communities.

Sincerely,



Bonnie Rushton
Human Resources Officer/VP Safety, Regulatory, Quality
Administrator on Call