

School Hours and Sleep Deprivation: A Public Health Epidemic



- U.S. children board school buses as early as 5:15 a.m.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools start no earlier than 8:30 a.m.
- Only 15% of U.S. high schools meet this important health recommendation.
- Many high schools start before 8:00 a.m.

You can create a minimum start time for schools in the United States. **Protect child health, well-being, safety, and performance, and allow parents to do what is best for our children.**

Shifting middle and high schools to later in the morning is **cost effective**. Brookings Institution economists estimate a **benefit-to-cost ratio of at least nine-to-one** and report that improved performance is equivalent to **two extra months in school**. Lifetime earnings increase. Many school divisions have made the change at no cost. Some have saved money on transportation and others have found low-cost options to implement this positive change.

Students with later morning start times **GAIN** sleep. Adequate sleep **improves learning, memory, mood, and performance in school**, athletics and other extracurricular activities. Adolescents in districts with later high school start times have **fewer teen car crashes** (driving drowsy is like driving drunk).

Districts with later high school start times have **less depression** and a decreased need for medications to treat depression. Attendance improves, and **more students graduate**.

Some of the many organizations that support later middle and high school start times:

American Academy of Pediatrics	American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
Centers for Disease Control (CDC)	Education Commission of the States
Massachusetts Medical Society	American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
Minnesota Medical Association	Ohio Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Virginia PTA	Florida High School Athletic Association
Maryland State Medical Society	Medical Society of Northern Virginia

Start School Later, Inc is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization of health professionals, sleep scientists, educators, parents, and students working to ensure that schools set hours compatible with health, safety, equity, and learning. Visit our website at www.StartSchoolLater.net or email us at contact@StartSchoolLater.net

