

FAST FACTS

- Circadian rhythm shifts during puberty make it hard for most teens to fall asleep until 11 p.m.).
- Waking a 16-year-old at 6:30 a.m. is the **equivalent of waking a 40-year-old at 4:30 a.m.**
- **Teens need an average of 8-10 hours** of sleep per night
- The average public high school in VT starts at 8:06 a.m. (NCES)
- The American Academy of Pediatrics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and American Medical Association all recommend that middle and high schools start **class no earlier than 8:30 a.m.** to allow students to get healthy sleep
- **75% of Vermont high schools start before 8:30 a.m.** (NCES)
- 75.4% of U.S. high school students get fewer than 8 hours of sleep on school nights, and 43% (nearly half) get 6 or fewer hours (CDC)
- 20-30% of high school students and 6% of middle school students fall asleep in school each day.
- In a study of 29,635 students from 362 schools across Canada, students from schools that started later in the morning slept longer and were less likely to be tired than students from schools that started early.
- A report published by The Brookings Institution associated **a significant increase in test scores** with later middle and high school start times, with benefits roughly twice as great in disadvantaged students
- The Brookings report also estimated that later high school start times create a **lifetime earnings gain of \$17,500** per student with a school system cost of \$0.00 to \$1,950 per student, a **benefit-to-cost ratio of 9:1** or better
- A major, multi-state study conducted by researchers at the University of Minnesota and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention linked later high school start times to significant **decreases in teen substance abuse, depression, and consumption of caffeinated drinks.**
- When Jackson Hole High School in Wyoming shifted its start time to 8:55 a.m., the number of **car crashes involving teenage drivers dropped by 70%.**
- Switching middle school start times by 30 minutes or more to after 8 a.m. in Wake County, NC was associated with **increased math and reading test scores**, with **disadvantaged students benefiting most.**
- An estimated 27% of all drowsy-driving-related car crashes involve 16-19 year old drivers. ([AAA Foundation, 2018](#)).
- **Student athletes are big beneficiaries** of healthy school start times. According to scientific research, well-rested student athletes perform better at their sport and are injured less often
- Numerous studies show that financially disadvantaged children are already more likely to suffer sleep loss, have more obstacles getting to school for early bell times, and if they

arrive late may go without their school-provided breakfast. And because girls enter puberty sooner than boys, and African American girls enter puberty soon than their white peers, they are especially hurt by the status quo.

- Studies have shown that when start times are moved later, **kids with the lowest scores show the biggest increases.**
- For each hour less of sleep among adolescents studied in the Fairfax County, Va., Youth Survey, **feelings of being sad or hopeless increased by 38%** and the odds of seriously considering suicide increased 42%. It was also associated with **58% greater odds of attempted suicide.**
- Early school hours are contributing factors to the number one and number two causes of death among young people – car accidents and suicide.
- Repeated studies show that **more teens attend school – and on time** – with later start times, regardless of their parents work schedules.
- A recent study found that after start times were moved to 8:30 a.m. or later, the average **graduation rate increased from 79 percent to 88 percent.**
- A one-hour delay in start times produces the same academic benefit as being in a class with one-third fewer students or with a teacher whose performance is one standard deviation higher.
- Early start times were not always the case. According to the National Center for Health Research, **in the 1950s and 1960s, most schools started between 8:30 and 9 a.m.**