

# Sleep and Better Health Summit

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# Why Sleep Is Important

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- Assists students with concentration in the classroom and with classwork/homework assignments
- Allows students to stay focused on tasks
- Assists the brain and other body functioning
- Assists with emotional regulation
- Improves a students overall academic performance



# Why Sleep is Important

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- “The National Sleep Foundation (<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/teens-and-sleep>) and the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (<https://sleepeducation.org/docs/default-document-library/sleep-recharges/teens/pdf>) recommend that teenagers sleep between 8 and 10 hours a night to maintain good health.”
- Importance of Sleep for Teenagers (<https://quatar-weill.cornell.edu/institute-for-population-health>)

# Barriers to a Goodnight Sleep

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- Difficulty falling asleep
- Student's mental health
- Trauma
- Community violence
- Students current living situation
  - Homelessness
  - Foster care
- Social media/use of electronic devices
- Early school start time
- Heavy homework and school assignments load
- Extra-curricular activities and practices



# Sleep Deprivation Impacts

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- Brain functioning
- Mental health
- Physical health

# How Sleep Deprivation Impacts The Brain

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- Scientists measuring sleepiness have found that sleep deprivation leads to **lower alertness and concentration**. It's more difficult to focus and pay attention, so you're more easily confused. This hampers your ability to perform tasks that require logical reasoning or complex thought. Sleepiness also impairs judgment.



# How Sleep Deprivation Impacts The Brain

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- Sleepiness slows down your thought processes
  - The ability to be alert and concentrate decreases
  - It is more difficult to focus and pay attention, thus leading to confusion
  - It is difficult to perform tasks that require logical reasoning or the need to think with complexity
  - It is more challenging to make sound decisions due to the inability to assess a situation
- Excessive sleepiness impairs memory
  - Lack of sleep interferes with the brains ability to consolidate new information into memories
- Poor sleep makes learning difficult
  - It is more difficult to grasp information
  - It is difficult to remember information being presented

Sleepiness: Cognitive and Emotional Effects (<https://www.webmd.com/sleep-disorders>)

# How Sleep Deprivation Impacts Mental Health

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- Lack of sleep can alter your mood by causing irritability and anger, which in turn, may impact the ability to cope with stress
- Chronic lack of sleep may lead to depression
- Lack of sleep may impact self-esteem
- Lack of sleep can increase psychiatric symptoms and increase risk for suicide ([https://columbia psychiatry.org/news/how-to-sleep-deprivation-affects-your-mental-health](https://columbia.psychiatry.org/news/how-to-sleep-deprivation-affects-your-mental-health))



# How Sleep Deprivation Impacts Physical Health

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- Lack of sleep is a contributor to diabetes and obesity
- Lack of sleep may impact physiological growth spurt in teenagers

# How Sleep Deprivation Impacts Student Outcomes

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- Students have poor school attendance
- Students often times have poor grades
- Students often times have below average assessment scores
- Students experience difficulty completing classwork and homework assignments
- Students physical health begins to impacted
- Students may experience behavioral challenges



# How to support better sleep

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- Be supportive of students and parents
- Gain support from parents, guardians
- Assist students in establishing organizational skills and structure
- Assist students with developing time management skills
- Advocate for later school start times
- Encourage and assist parents to seek out support services and programs
- Implement mindfulness or other mind calming activities

# Discussion Ideas

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- Would changing the start time increase attendance outcomes for students?
- What are the challenges/barriers in changing school start times for students?