Elementary School Start Times

• Compared to the extensive and consistent literature on the negative impact of early start times in middle/high school students, the evidence in elementary students is limited and conflicting
  
  • One US study shows little/no effect of a change to earlier start (8:20a to 7:45a) on sleep duration, behavior in 3-5th graders\(^1\)

• School-aged children are much more likely to be “morning larks” with a strong preference for earlier bed and wake times

• Several recent studies suggested early start times (KY) may be associated with more academic and behavior problems in KG-6th graders BUT\(^2-3\)
  
  • The study did not assess sleep duration for any of the subjects
  • An "early" start is not defined for the analyses that were done
  • Kentucky has two time zones, and the range of sunrise time spans 1 hour 15 minutes, which is not accounted for in the data analysis regarding school start time
  • 6th grade students are often on the verge of puberty which makes them more like adolescents than young children in terms of their sleep habits and preferences
  • 6th grade students alone comprised half of all behavior incidents in the state report of elementary students' misbehaviors (versus Kindergarten - grade 5)

\(^1\)Appleman et al 2015; \(^2\)Keller et al 2014; Keller et al 2017