

Study: School Might Be Harming Teens' Health

Experts almost universally agree that exercise is an essential component of a healthy lifestyle.

But what if the educational system is set up in a way that deters students from being active and, in turn, being healthier? Last week, the [New York Times](#) reported on a new study that shows that while teenagers spend about half of their waking time at school, they're only averaging 23 minutes of physical activity during the school day.

"Even though teenagers spend 42 percent of their waking time at school and get about half their day's physical activity there," Dr. Carlson [one of the authors of the study] said, "They're getting a lot less activity at school than we thought. We were surprised that they only spent about 4.8 percent of their time at school actually physically active."

The purpose of the study was to determine when and where teenagers were being most active. It revealed that, on average, teens were getting less than 40 minutes of activity per day—nowhere near the recommended 60 minutes per day.

The researchers concluded that one of the best ways to get teens to be more active is to make opportunities for physical activity during the school day. Does the school day need to be restructured to include more physical activity for teens? Could that potentially benefit their overall productivity during the school day, as well as their health?