

How we spent our time in 2003

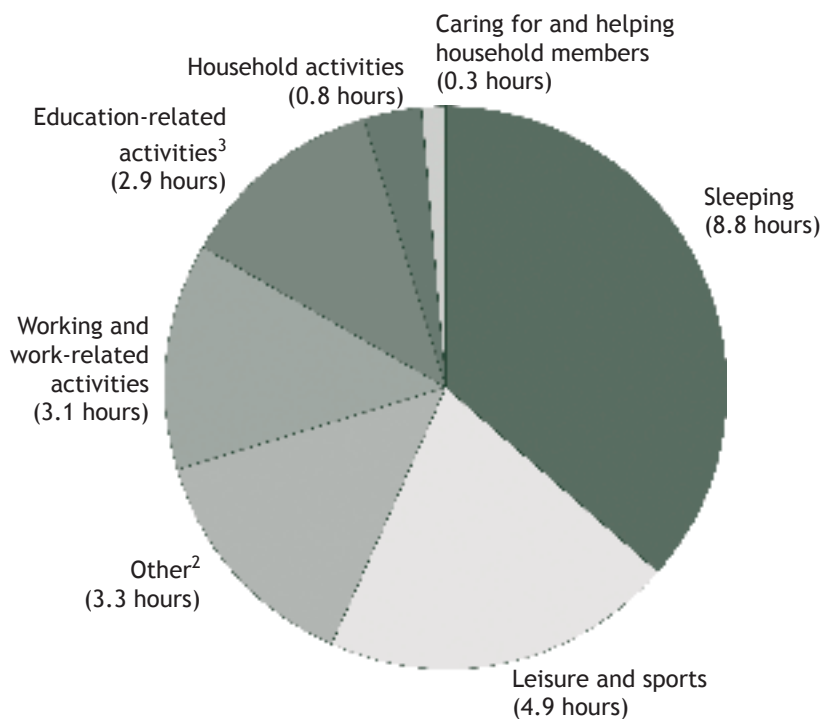
Time, and how we use it, is the subject of the newest survey from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. One conclusion: time use varies by age.

The American Time Use Survey counts the hours that people in the United States devote to sleep, paid work, and leisure and other activities. As the charts show, 15- to 24-year-olds differed from 25- to 34-year-olds in the way that they spent their time on weekdays in 2003. People in the younger age group spent most of their waking hours on leisure and sports activities, for example, while work dominated daytime pursuits for the older group. And educational activities consumed much more of the younger group's time.

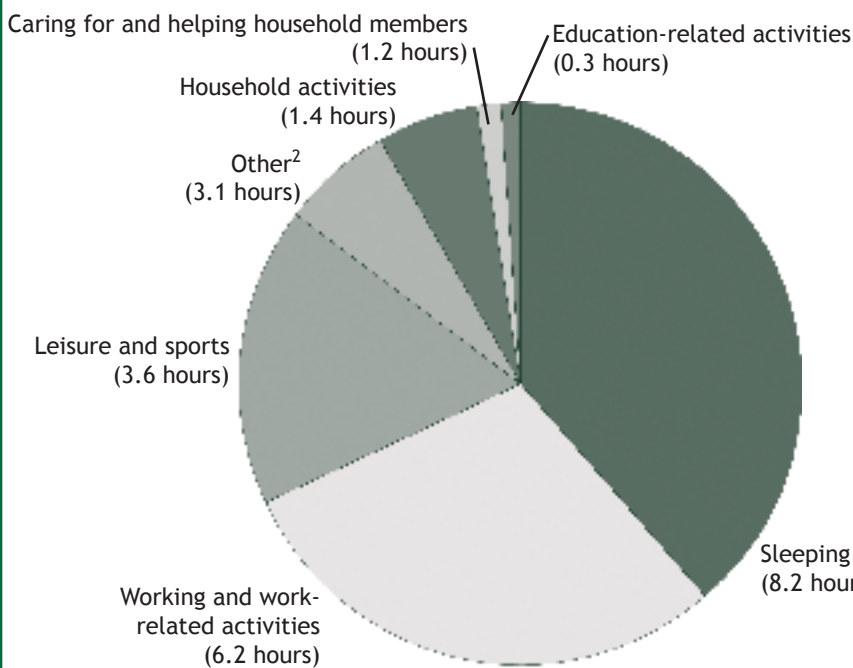
The data in these charts are averages, so they mask some variations within the groups. For example, 15-year-olds spend much of their weekdays in school, and 24-year-olds are more likely to be working than going to school. But educational activity is understated for youths because the data are averages for all respondents and because the data include hours reported for all weekdays—not just those during the school year.

The survey gathers data drawn from telephone interviews questioning respondents about their activities on the previous day. This information is then coded into more than 400 activity categories that can be analyzed in a number of ways, including by respondents' sex, employment status, and education level. For more information, call the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, (202) 691-6339, or visit the American Time Use Survey on the Web at www.bls.gov/tus/home.htm.

Activity¹ and weekday hours spent



15- to 24-year-olds



25- to 34-year-olds

¹ If people do two or more activities at once, only the primary activity is recorded. The time spent traveling to an activity was counted as time spent on that activity.

² "Other" includes, for example, civic, organizational, and religious activities; making purchases; and eating and drinking.

³ On days that they attended school, 15-year-olds averaged 8.4 hours on education-related activities.