



“Something Has to Give”: An Urban Community-Engaged Study of Adolescent Sleep

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BACKGROUND & SIGNIFICANCE

- Sufficient sleep is critical to adolescent health, daily function, and school performance¹⁻¹¹
- 70% of US adolescents do not get the recommended amount of nighttime sleep²⁻⁴
- Few studies have examined the perspective of adolescents attending school in an urban community and sleep

AIM

To explore multi-level influences on adolescent sleep health and behavior from the perspectives of adolescents, parents, and school personnel

METHODS

- Community-engaged focus group study¹³⁻¹⁶
- Community Advisory Board (CAB) provided guidance on all aspects of project—recruitment, questioning route & interpretation of findings
- Inclusion criteria: community member & contact with adolescents (home, school or community agency), English speaking & willingness to participate

Data Analysis

Focus groups audio-recorded, transcribed, loaded into ATLAS.ti¹⁸ & analyzed for themes using Content Analysis¹⁷

RESULTS

- 7 focus groups (N=46)
- 3 teen, 2 parent, 1 Nurse/NP, 1 Teacher/SW
- 3-10 participants in each group
- 30-76 minutes each

	Teens N=23 (50%)	Parents N=12 (26%)	Nurses/NPs N=5 (11%)	Teacher/SWK N=6 (13%)	Mean (SD)
Gender					
Male	8 (35%)	1 (8%)		3 (50%)	
Female	15 (65%)	11 (92%)	5 (100%)	3 (50%)	
Race/ethnicity					
African Am	10 (43%)	3 (25%)	5 (100%)	6 (100%)	
White	1 (8%)	1 (8%)			
Latinx	13 (57%)	8 (67%)			
Grade (ages 13-19)					
Middle School	6 (26%)				
High School	11 (48%)				
Recent HS Grad	4 (18%)				
College Freshman	1 (4%)				
Other	1 (4%)				
Education					
Bachelor's degree			2 (40%)		
Master's degree			2 (40%)	6 (100%)	
Doctoral degree			1 (20%)		
Years in occupation					12.7 (6.3)

THEMES

Knowledge & Beliefs

- Attitudes- “Sleep is Boring” –Teen
- “They’re studying in bed; they’re socializing in bed. They’re doing everything in bed” -Nurse
- Knowledge- “I don’t think anyone gets 8 hours...”-Teen
- “Health not 100% if you do not sleep”-Parent
- Misperceptions “Some people are like you can catch up on sleep.”

Sleep Habits

- Sleep Routine-
 - Waking Up- “Everyone has their own habits and routines”-Parent
 - Weekends & Summer- “I barely go to sleep at all” –Teen
 - Naps- “I was sleeping for so long. It’s like a mini nighttime” –Teen
 - Nighttime Socializing- “wide awake...having a whole group chat” -Parent

Causes of Decreased Nighttime Sleep

- Packed schedule- “I had a very heavy workload...going to sleep early was not happening”-Teen
- Homework- “I’m up until 2” -Teen
- Family Responsibilities- “I have to bring my mom to work ... I have to get up at 6:30”- Teen
- Mental Health- “I can’t believe the stressful lives and traumatic things that are going on in some of their lives”-Teacher/SW
- Environment- “Music, motorcycles, you know fights... It’s difficult” -Parent



Consequences of Decreased Nighttime Sleep

- Health- “They’ll come in for a headache...but it’s really because they didn’t sleep” - Nurse
- Mood- “Irritable, moody attitude, want to kill the world because they didn’t go to bed”
- School-
 - Attendance- “They sleep right through their alarms and don’t hear it”-Parent
 - Engagement- “We see kids everyday who have fallen asleep in school” –Teacher/SW
 - Performance- “you only got 2 hours of sleep you’re...falling asleep on the test” –Teen
 - Accommodating needs of tired students- “Try to clear up information they missed in the next class” -Teacher

Exhaustion

- Overarching theme
- Defined as “drained of one’s physical or mental resources, very tired, or completely used up” (<https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/exhausted>)
- Participants identified symptoms of exhaustion- chronic tiredness or sleepiness, headaches, impaired decision making/ judgement & moodiness
- Many contributing factors influenced the decreased sleep consequences health, mood and school & unidirectional

Solutions & Ideas

- The Phone- “to give it up is a big deal” -Teacher
- Sleep Education- “I think education is a big thing...a lot of us don’t know. We literally don’t know” -Teen
- School Schedule- “I’d rather have it like in middle school, we started at 9:15 and came out at 3:30” -Teen

DISCUSSION

- Adequate sleep was an issue for the teens in this study and was influenced by a variety of factors
- Older teens had additional factors ---earlier school start times, college preparation, work, activities, socializing with peers, & family responsibilities that contributed to decreased nighttime sleep
- Teens are exhausted—negatively impacts health, mood, & school

Strengths

- Teens from middle school - college participated
- Diverse sample of adolescents & parents
- All participants connected to the same community
- Input from CAB in all aspects of project
- Rigor of analysis

Limitations

- Only the most interested likely participated
- Few of the groups small (n=3)

CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS

- Provides initial data to help build an intervention to meet the needs of adolescents in our community
- Intervention needs to be multifactorial
- Focus on sleep education, phone use, balancing of competing demands, and working with schools to evaluate factors that contribute to decreased sleep among teens

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