

Parent and teacher support protects teens from sleep problems and depression

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A new study suggests that disturbed sleep in adolescents is associated with more symptoms of depression and greater uncertainty about future success. However, perceived support and acceptance from parents and teachers appears to have a protective effect.

Results show that disturbed sleep was significantly associated with [depressed mood](#) and greater uncertainty about future success. Higher levels of perceived support from parents and from teachers were associated with significantly fewer [sleep disruptions](#) and subsequently with fewer [symptoms of depression](#) and greater optimism about the future. These associations with better outcomes were not observed from perceptions of support from peers.

"We were surprised that while perceived support and acceptance from [parents and teachers](#) had a protective effect, support and acceptance from peers did not," said Fred Danner, PhD, the study's lead author and professor of [educational psychology](#) at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, Ky.

The research abstract was published recently in an online supplement of the journal *Sleep*, and Danner will present the findings Wednesday, June 5, in Baltimore, Md., at SLEEP 2013, the 27th annual meeting of the Associated Professional Sleep Societies LLC.

The study involved 6,092 adolescents between the ages of 15 and 19 years who completed the Swiss Multicentre Adolescent Survey on

Health, a comprehensive health and psychological functioning questionnaire. Measures included questions concerning sleep disruption, depressive symptoms, uncertainty about finishing school and getting a job, and levels of emotional support and acceptance from parents, teachers and peers.

"These results confirm the link between sleep quality and depression in a large national sample," said Danner.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), studies have shown that about eight percent of adolescents meet the criteria for [major depression](#). The National Institute of Mental Health also reports that half of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 14.

More information: "The influence of supportive parents, peers, and teachers on adolescent sleep, depression, and hopes for the future," *Sleep*, 2013.

Provided by American Academy of Sleep Medicine

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