

Later parental-mandated bedtimes for teens linked to depression and suicidal thoughts

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Earlier parental-mandated bedtimes could help protect teens from depression and suicidal thoughts by lengthening sleep duration, according to a research abstract that will be presented at SLEEP 2009, the 23rd Annual Meeting of the Associated Professional Sleep Societies.

The study by James Gangwisch, PhD, of Columbia University in New York, examined data from 15,659 adolescents. A total of 1,143 teens (7.3 percent) suffered from depression and 2,038 (13 percent) had suicidal thoughts. Adolescents with parental-mandated bedtimes at midnight or later were 25 percent more likely to suffer from depression and 20 percent more likely to have suicidal ideation compared with adolescents who had parental-mandated bedtimes of 10 p.m. or earlier.

"It is a common perception and societal expectation that adolescents do not need as much [sleep](#) as preadolescents, yet studies suggests that adolescents may actually require more sleep," said Gangwisch. "Studies have found that adolescents do not go to bed early enough to compensate for earlier school start times, and transitions to earlier school start times have been shown to be associated with significant sleep deprivation."

According to Gangwisch, the study supports the argument that inadequate sleep could lead to depression. "Adolescents with later parental-mandated bedtimes went to bed later, got less sleep, and were less likely to get enough sleep. Short sleep duration explained the relationship between parental-mandated bedtimes and depression,

functioning as a risk factor for [depression](#) and suicidal ideation."

Source: American Academy of Sleep Medicine ([news](#) : [web](#))

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