

For teens, online bullying worsens sleep and depression

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Teens who experience cyberbullying are more likely to suffer from poor sleep, which in turn raises levels of depression, found a University at Buffalo study.

Although research has examined the relationship between online bullying and depression, the UB study is one of few to explore the connection between cyber victimization and sleep quality.

The study surveyed more than 800 adolescents for sleep quality, cyber aggression and depression.

The [research](#) will be presented by Misol Kwon, first author and [doctoral student](#) in the UB School of Nursing, at SLEEP 2019, the 33rd annual meeting of the Associated Professional Sleep Societies in San Antonio, Texas from June 8-12.

"Cyber victimization on the internet and [social media](#) is a unique form of peer victimization and an emerging mental health concern among teens who are digital natives," said Kwon. "Understanding

these associations supports the need to provide sleep hygiene education and risk prevention and interventions to mistreated kids who show signs and symptoms of depression."

Nearly one third of teens have experienced symptoms of depression, which, in addition to changes in sleep pattern, include persistent irritability, anger and social withdrawal, according to the U.S. Office of Adolescent Health.

And nearly 15 percent of U.S. high school students report being bullied electronically, says Kwon. At severe levels, depression may lead to disrupted [school performance](#), harmed relationships or suicide.

The risks of allowing depression to worsen highlight the need for researchers and clinicians to understand and target [sleep quality](#) and other risk factors that have the potential to exacerbate the disorder.

Provided by University at Buffalo

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