

ADOLESCENTS' LIVED EXPERIENCE OF SLEEPING DIFFICULTIES

Malin Jakobsson
RN, MA, PhD-student
University of Borås, Sweden

Karin Sundin
RN, PhD, Professor emerita,
Umeå University, Sweden

Karin Högberg
RN, PhD
University of Borås, Sweden

Karin Josefsson
RNT, PhD, Professor,
University of Karlstad,
University of Borås, Sweden

AIM

The aim was to illuminate the meanings of adolescents' lived experiences of sleeping difficulties

RESULTS

Four themes that illustrate the meaning of adolescents' experience of sleeping difficulties emerged: feeling dejected when not falling asleep, experiencing the night as a struggle, searching for better sleep, and being affected the next day.

The comprehensive understanding illuminates what being an adolescent with sleeping difficulties means; it is a challenge to go through the night; cope with the next day; and to harbor a panorama of emotions that emerge during the night, such as frustration, annoyance, concern, dejection, sadness, and fear. These emotions arise when the adolescent is unable to unwind and has concerns that grow during the night.

The adolescent experience a feeling of being trapped in circumstances, such as norms and values in society, in social media, in school, and in family and friend groups, all of which are incompatible with getting a good night's sleep.

METHODS

The data were obtained from narrative interviews with 16 adolescents aged 14–15 in a Swedish city and were analyzed using the phenomenological hermeneutic method.



Photo: Mostphotos

BACKGROUND

Sleeping difficulties, including insufficient sleep, trouble falling asleep, waking up at night, or sleep that does not leave an individual rested, are increasingly prevalent among adolescents and have negative consequences for their' health, well-being, and education. To date, there are few studies in sleep research that take a qualitative approach which can acquire a broader knowledge in order to provide preventive care interventions.

CONCLUSIONS

In order to understand adolescents' sleeping difficulties, a comprehensive understanding of the context in which the adolescents live is needed. By genuinely listening to the adolescents' narratives about their sleeping difficulties and the context in which they interact will parents, professional caregivers, and researchers increase their understanding.

Themes	Sub-themes
Feeling dejected when not falling asleep	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Being incapable of unwinding- Feeling distressed when there are endless sleepless hours
Experiencing the night as a struggle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Feeling concerns growing when not falling asleep- Being afraid of nightmares- Wanting to experience belonging
Searching for better sleep	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Evaluating various ways to fall asleep- Seeking a sense of security
Being affected the next day	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Feeling limited in daily life- Becoming a worse self



Contacts

Malin Jakobsson
malin.jakobsson@hb.se

