

## **Sleep Problems in School-aged Children and Teenagers From Bogotá, Colombia Private Schools, and Screen Exposure During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

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**1. Introduction** As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Colombian government promoted the use of technologies to avoid physical-attendance activities in schools. This augmented screen-time exposure of patients ages 9-17, possibly modifying their sleep patterns. There aren't former studies that describe alterations in the sleep patterns and screen-time exposure of our population in this context.**2. Methods**An observational, cross-sectional study was performed in participants aged 9-17 that were enrolled in private schools in Bogota. An online based survey was sent to their parents, which led to a questionnaire that included demographics, questions about screen-time exposure for academic and recreational activities, and the BEARS questionnaire to evaluate the presence of sleep-related problems. A descriptive statistical analysis was performed. **3. Results**A total of 81 participants completed the questionnaire and were analyzed. Participants were classified in two groups: ages 9-12 (n=39), and ages 13-17 (n=42). Mean age was 9.12 years (SD 1.94) in the first group, and 14.95 years (SD 1.40) in the second. The male-to-female ratio was 1:1. By the time the questionnaire was performed, 20% of the participants were already attending school physically, 21% virtually and 59% in a combined alternating manner. Participants spent an average of 6 daily hours in school-related activities and 2 daily hours in recreational activities. 59% of parents of children aged 9-12 and 28% of aged 13-17 considered their child was not sleeping enough and 26% and 14%, respectively, reported that their child was snoring. Furthermore, 36% of both groups referred feeling daytime sleepiness, 33% of children felt they were struggling to fall asleep at night and 17% of teenagers reported waking up at night after falling asleep. **4. Conclusions**High quality, adequate sleep is crucial for appropriate child development. During the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown we found an increase in screen exposure of children and adolescents in private schools in Bogota, Colombia when compared to previous reports. We confirmed sleep problems that could require further study and intervention. We advocate for the development of measures oriented to reducing screen-time exposure and improving sleep quality in the pediatric population during pandemics.

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