



# Sleep characteristics of youth who experience internalizing disorders and current suicidal ideation

Summer Chapman & Victor Buitron, PhD



## Introduction

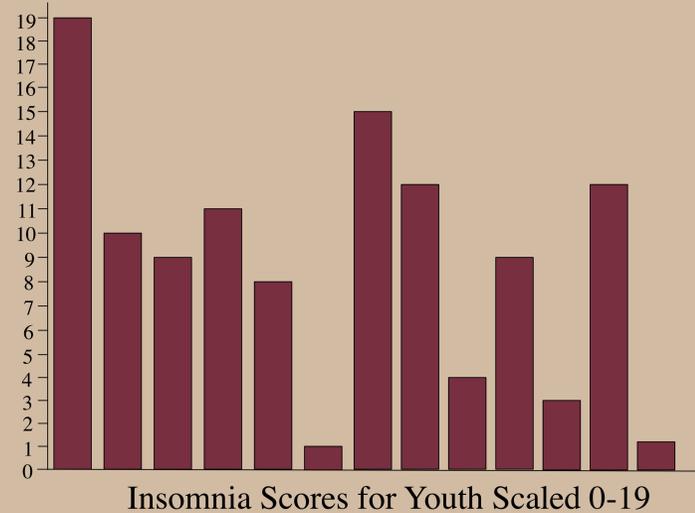
Sleep health is associated with mental health outcomes and reduced suicidal ideation. We aimed to get a multidimensional sleep profile of adolescents affected by internalizing problems and suicidal ideation.

## Abstract

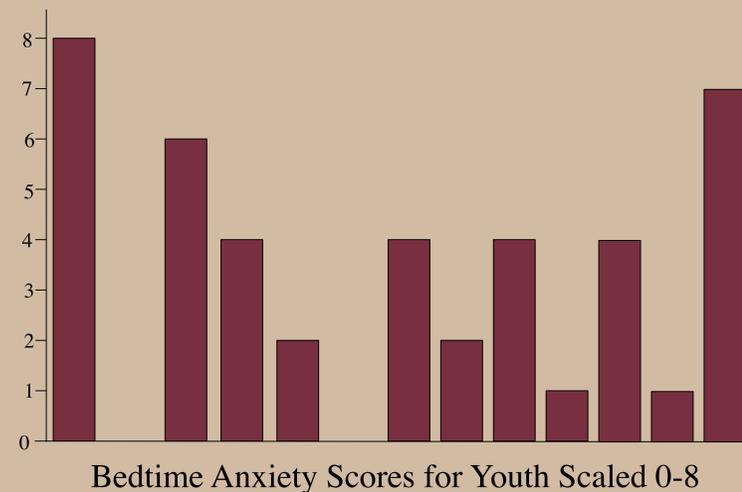
This study uses secondary data analysis for the purpose of this study exploring sleep characteristics of youth at-risk for suicidal ideation. We referenced previous literature while analyzing data from Dr. Buitron’s previous study. We found among this at-risk sample, they experienced sleep dysregulation and a common feeling of experiencing “too little” sleep. We concluded that targeting sleep variability in treatment may provide additional support to promote emotional regulation.

## Methodology

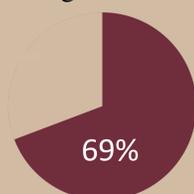
This study consisted of a literature review and incorporation of previous data from Dr. Buitron’s research study *Brief modular approach to target perceived burdensomeness in clinic-referred youth* involving 18 youth aged 10 to 17 years old presenting with internalizing disorders and suicide-related cognitions.



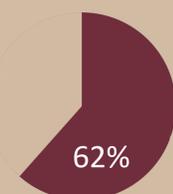
These scores can demonstrate sleep dysregulation in ways such as inability to sleep, stay asleep, or waking up too early and not being able to fall back asleep. A higher score describes a higher impairment.



These scores can demonstrate the level of anxiety and worry nearing bedtime.



Report “too little” sleep



Report nightmares “sometimes” or “usually”



Report non-zero caffeine consumption

**Weekday-to-weekend waking time difference:**  
Average: 3.15 hours later  
Maximum: 6 hours later

## Results

The results of our study demonstrate heterogeneity in sleep characteristics among this at-risk sample, while illustrating severely impaired sleep health parameters among a subset of participants. The graphically displayed results highlight that a large majority of this youth sample perceived that they have insufficient sleep and a majority consumed caffeinated beverages.

## Conclusions

This descriptive study uses multidimensional assessment of sleep health parameters in an at-risk sample for youth to illustrate marked impairments in multiple domains. Given that sleep health is critical for emotion regulation, targeting evident sleep deficits, including extreme variability from weekend nights to weeknights, may be an effective way to support treatment. Further high temporal resolution and clinical trial data can inform the topic of sleep health in at-risk youth.

## References

Baiden, P., Tadeo, S. K., Tonui, B. C., Seastrunk, J. D., & Boateng, G. O. (2020). Association between insufficient sleep and suicidal ideation among adolescents. *Psychiatry Research*, 287, 112579. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2019.112579>

Buitron, V., Hill, R. M., Bose, D., Vaclavik, D., Rey, Y., & Pettit, J. W. (2022). Brief modular approach to target perceived burdensomeness in clinic-referred youth. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, 52(4), 752–762. <https://doi.org/10.1111/sltb.12858>

Moo-Estrella, J., Arankowsky-Sandoval, G., & Valencia-Flores, M. (2021). Sleep habits and sleep problems associated with depressive symptoms in school-Age Children. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing*, 35(2), 157–163. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcap.12358>