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THE INFLUENCE OF DEPRESSION AND OBESITY ON SLEEP QUALITY IN CHILDREN/ADOLESCENTS

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Aims: Limited to no literature exists on the association among sleep quality, obesity and depression in pediatric populations. This study aims to explore this association by examining the sleep quality of children and adolescents before and after a twelve-week comprehensive multidisciplinary pediatric obesity program.

Methods: Archival data from the pediatric obesity program included 71 children ages 6-17 ($M=10.24$, $SD=2.74$) who had been assessed pre and post intervention using the Children's Depression Inventory (CDI), a Sleep Questionnaire, and physician derived Body Mass Index (BMI). On all measures, higher scores indicate presence of symptoms of depression, sleep difficulties, or obesity.

Results: High scores on the CDI proved to predict poor sleep quality both at intake and exit. Hierarchical regression exhibited change in BMI from intake to exit and predicted sleep quality. As BMI decreased from intake to exit, sleep quality increased.

Conclusions: The current study suggests that sleep quality is influenced by the level of depression in children and adolescents both at pre and post intervention measures. Both depression and BMI influenced sleep quality. When the effect of BMI was accounted for, depression significantly predicted sleep quality. The more depressed children/adolescents reported to be, the lower their quality of sleep. Thus, this study suggests the importance of sleep and depression in the treatment of pediatric obesity. This research supports the importance of a multidisciplinary approach to addressing pediatric obesity.