Pilot Study to Determine Feasibility of Measuring Sleep Hygiene and ADHD in Mother, Father and School-Aged Child

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DOI: 10.4172/2472-1786.100043

Abstract

Children who have Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are more likely to have sleep problems than peers without ADHD. These problems affect quality and quantity of sleep which may exacerbate or mimic ADHD symptoms. Consistent sleep hygiene can ameliorate some sleep problems. However, at least 50% of children with ADHD have a parent with the disorder. These adults are likely to have sleep problems and executive function deficits that can make establishing and maintaining consistent sleep hygiene difficult. The purpose of this pilot study was to determine the feasibility of a) 6-10-year-old children with ADHD tolerating actigraphy watches and completing sleep diaries with parent help, and b) of both mother and father completing surveys about their own sleep hygiene and ADHD symptoms as well as surveys about the child’s sleep and sleep hygiene. A convenience sample of five parent-child triads was recruited from a small private school in the Southeast. Children had a diagnosis of ADHD, were between 6-10 years old, understood English. None of the children had begun puberty, had physiologic sleep problems or had co-morbid Autism, Tourette syndrome, or anxiety disorder. All parents lived with the participating child, and read and wrote English. Parents did not have physiological sleep problems. Children were able to complete diaries and wear actigraphy watches while both parents were able to complete instruments for themselves and/or their child. The in-person session with parent and child will focus on instruction on the actigraphy watches; parents will complete instruments in their home and return them with the watch to the principal investigator (PI) at the end of seven days. These results substantiated the feasibility of the protocol and will guide a larger study to determine relationships and effect sizes of identified variables and child sleep.