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National Sleep Foundation Highlights New Evidence for Screen Time Usage and Poor Sleep

Washington, D.C. (December 1, 2020): Featured in the December issue of the National Sleep Foundation's (NSF) [Sleep Health](#) Journal, new research illuminates and reinforces the connection between poorer sleep and the amount of time children spend on screen media devices during the day.

[Screen media use and sleep disturbance symptom severity in children](#) (Garrett C. Hisler, Brant P. Hasler, Peter L. Franzen, Duncan B. Clark, Jean M. Twenge) sought to evaluate how screen media use relates to symptoms of sleep-wake disturbances. "Children who spend more time on screens have more trouble sleeping, while children who spend less time looking at screens each day fall asleep more quickly, sleep longer, have fewer sleep disturbances and insomnia symptoms, and are less sleepy during the day," explained corresponding author Garrett Hisler, PhD, Postdoctoral Associate at the University of Pittsburgh.

"The results of this large study support the widespread understanding that screen-based media use is linked to delays and decreases in children's sleep. As digital media devices have become more portable, children are more likely to bring a screen to bed with them, which not only delays bedtime, but may lead to sleep disruptions in the night," said Lauren Hale, PhD, Professor at Stony Brook University and NSF Board Member. "More research is necessary to better understand how screen media effects on sleep health contribute to daytime consequences, including physical, psychological, and cognitive functioning," Hale added.

Importantly, the authors concluded that screen use throughout the day affects sleep at night. NSF advises reducing evening screen time in children and adults for better sleep health. Phones can be psychologically stimulating and pose a barrier to falling asleep and staying asleep. Digital media devices have LED screens that emit blue light, which can affect the body's natural sleep/wake cycle. Turning off electronic devices before bed and a relaxing wind-down routine lets the mind and body prepare for sleep. For information on how to help maintain good sleep health, see NSF's [Making Time for SLEEP](#).

About the National Sleep Foundation

National Sleep Foundation (NSF) is dedicated to improving health and well-being through sleep education and advocacy. Founded in 1990, the NSF is committed to advancing excellence in sleep health theory, research and practice. theNSF.org | SleepHealthJournal.org