

HEALTHY HERO

You need plenty of ZZZZZ's

The coronavirus pandemic affected everyone's sleep in both good and bad ways, according to Dr. Walter Tsou, a former Philadelphia health commissioner.

Some people were scared and anxious which has made it difficult for them to sleep, he said. But other people found that they could sleep more because they were spending more time at home with family. They have felt safe, Dr. Tsou said.

Sleep is important and it helps keep you healthy, Dr. Tsou said. Everyone needs sleep no matter what your age. Even animals need to sleep.

Sleep "is very useful for us," said Dr. Tsou, who is an adjunct professor at the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine. "It is about giving our body time to rest and catch up and store away memories."

According to kidshealth.org, kids ages 6 to 12 need between 9 and 12 hours of sleep each night. Dr. Tsou said people sleep one-third of their lives. That's 33 1/3% of a person's life!

Babies need more sleep than grown-ups and older kids, he said.

(Please see **Get** on Page 2)



Illustration by Nalanie Figueroa

Coping with the pandemic

The third grade *Healthy Hero* staff shared ideas about how to boost your mood during the pandemic. Some ideas they had already put into action. Other ideas came out of the recent brainstorm session.

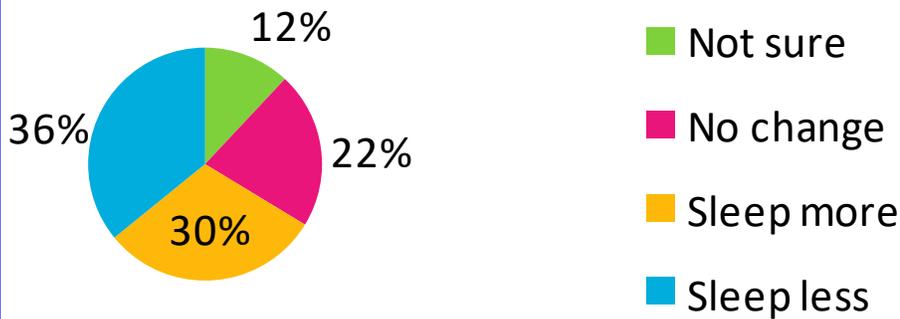
- * Go for walks and hikes. Mrs. Muller, school principal, said her family started walking in their neighborhood and then explored hiking paths in parks. They even climbed a few mountains.
- * Host Zoom meetings to feel more united with your friends and family.
- * Use FaceTime, phone calls, emails, and letters to contact your family who you haven't

seen.

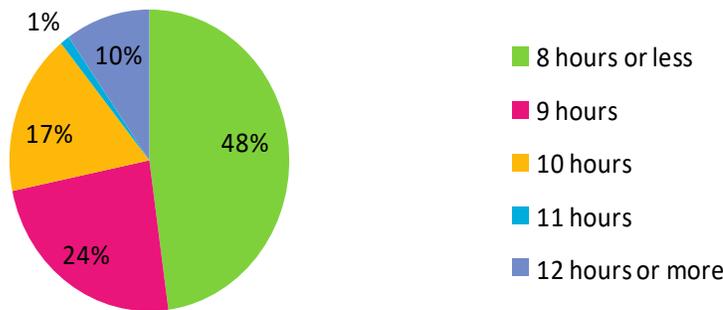
- * Play board games with your family. If another family member who lives somewhere else has the same board game, you can play together via Zoom or another videoconferencing service.
- * Go outside and play basketball.
- * Play video games with friends in other households.
- * Write poems about your favorite things.
- * Play tag.
- * Cook together as a family. Make a pizza.
- * Watch birds.
- * Ride your bike.
- * Write about the nature you ob-

(Please see **Ideas** on Page 4)

Have sleep habits changed during COVID?



Number of hours a night students sleep



Healthy Hero asked students about their sleep habits

The *Healthy Hero* reporters asked students in grades 4 to 8 to fill out a survey. The survey had two questions: 1. Have your sleep habits changed during the pandemic? 2. On a typical night, how many hours do you sleep?

Ninety-two students took part in the survey. Here are key results from the survey:

44/92 students say they sleep eight or less hours a night = 48%

33/92 students say they sleep less than they used to before the pandemic = 36%

9/92 students say they sleep 12 or more hours a night = 10%

28/92 students say they get more sleep now than before the pandemic = 30%

—Survey analysis by Yair Yunga

Get enough sleep every night

(Continued from Page 1)

“Think about it,” he said. “When you are young, everything is new to you. The voices. The people around you. The speech. ... They are storing information in the brain. [Young people] need a lot of sleep.”

“The more information you are receiving, the more sleep you need,” he said.

So what happens if you don’t get enough sleep?

If you don’t get enough sleep over a long period of time, you can get sick, gain weight, and become depressed, Dr. Tsou said.

KidsHealth offers “one more reason to get enough sleep: If you don’t, you may not grow as well.”

Dr. Tsou shared some suggestions about how to sleep better:

- Keep the room quiet.
- Make sure your bed is comfortable.
- Your room shouldn’t be too hot or cold.
- Use enough blankets.

- Being active during the day will make you fall asleep easier. When possible, exercise and play outside.

Dr. Tsou said turn off phones, tablets, and TVs. They can be distracting.

“Have a quiet and dark room,” he said. “If you do that, the body actually knows this is sleep time and you are more likely to fall asleep.”



—By Healthy Hero staff

Did you know?

Animals also need to sleep. Compare the number of hours you sleep a day to the following animals:

Horse	3 hours	Pig	8 hours	Dog	11 hours
Lion	13 hours	Tiger	16 hours	Bat	20 hours

Source: American Academy of Sleep Medicine

Get the scoop about germs!

Dr. Jim Alsop recently visited with the *Healthy Hero* staff to answer the reporters' questions about germs. He works at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children as a pediatric resident. That means he is training to be a specialist in treating children.



Dr. Alsop started off the interview by saying that it is very important to protect yourself against germs. Use soap and water every time you eat or sneeze, he said.

He said people often think of germs as bad things. Some germs are good for your body as well, he said. The reporters then interviewed Dr. Alsop. What follows has been edited for length and clarity.

How do germs get into the body?

There are a bunch of different ways such as touching your face or putting your hands in your mouth. That's why washing your hands is super important. ... Also germs can get into your body when someone coughs or sneezes and doesn't cover their mouths.

How do germs go away?

Let's say the germ comes into your body. ... Your body has ways to protect itself. Your immune system. ... sends out protector cells. Sometimes your body needs a little extra help. ... We can give you antibiotics that help against bacteria.

How do viruses spread?

It depends on the type of virus. Like the cold virus, it transmits itself through little droplets in the air.

When did germs start to exist in the world?

We think they are very old. They have been around longer than we have as humans. We weren't able to see them or understand them until we could use microscopes.

Which place do germs appear most?

When we look under microscopes there are a lot of germs on places where people touch a lot. In your house, it might be the kitchen counter.

How long are you supposed to wash your hands?

You want to make sure every part of your hand, including between your fingers and the back of hand, is cleaned.

What are the different types of germs that help the body out?

There are bacteria in your body that have grown up with you...The bacteria [in your digestive system] help break down food for you. The body is taking in nutrients in the food.

How long do germs stay in your system?

It depends on the germ. Common cold germs stay about 7 to 10 days or two weeks.

How do germs appear?

They need help traveling around. They need help from you and me. It is important to keep things clean. Germs can be traveling on hands. They travel along with animals.

Dip into this book to learn about germs

Germs

Written by Lesa Cline-Ransome

Illustrated by James Ransome

Published by Henry Holt and Co.

Healthy Hero reporters read this 40-page picture book. The author describes what germs are and what they do to our bodies.



The *Healthy Hero* staff agreed that the book would be interesting to all students in kindergarten through eighth grade.

Ericka, a third grade staff member, said "the book shares real facts about germs, and eve-

ryone needs to know about germs because germs are everywhere."

The entire staff liked the book. Another third grade reporter shared that, "the book is important because it talks about good germs and bad germs." Reporter Yair said "everyone needs to read the book so you can know how to avoid the bad germs."

If you want to learn how germs get into your body or why good germs are inside your body, you should read this book. You should also read this book if you want to learn about germs like yeast, mold, and bacteria. They can be found in your food and help make it yummy.

What kids thought of 2020

Editor's note: St. Veronica fifth graders recently wrote about how 2020 has been different from 2019. Here are excerpts from several essays.

This year has been challenging. School has gotten harder because of online school. I think a lot has gotten harder in school because it's harder for teachers to show what we have to do.



For me 2020 has not been that bad because I can just talk to my friends over the phone and play video games. Just because 2020 has not been that bad for me doesn't mean that it was perfect. For example, I couldn't go outside to play basketball.

Even though I feel like 2020 has not been that bad for me it has been bad for others. We have survived most of this year but the real question is will this happen again?

—Alphonso Walker

* * *

To have to stay home with your family is a lot to take in. You also have to do things differently. My life has changed a lot this year. School has been hard. We are doing school at home now and I don't like doing school at home as much as school in person. I also don't like not being able to see my teachers in person. 2020 has been very hard because of all the changes.

I am seeing my family a lot more ... now that we are doing school at home. It's good to spend time with family and now we have more time together. We also get to do art and crafts.

The Healthy Hero wants to hear from you!

We'd love to consider your articles or illustrations for our newspaper and the 2021 book produced by *Healthy NewsWorks*. Here are two ideas!

1. Tell about something you have learned or been able to do that you might not have discovered without the pandemic.
2. What do you find you are missing most during the pandemic? Have you found something to do or have that helps you? If so, what is that?

St. Veronica Healthy Hero

A publication of St. Veronica Catholic School, which is part of Independence Mission Schools. Student staff members are third graders and include Tatiana Arias-Suarez, Ericka Burgos, Heriel Espinosa, Brycen Jones, Anthony Lugo Ramos, Ja'Mari Rivera, Violet Najera-Rivas, Iriana Santiago, Crismell Rodriguez, Yaniel-Suarez, Alexander Tejada, Albert Wood, and Yair Yunga. The *Healthy Hero's* faculty advisor is School Principal Mrs. Muller.

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When you're at home you need persistence. That's what is happening in 2020.

—Makayla Lantigua

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Some things that have changed are that people have to wear their masks and have hand sanitizer on them all the time.

Even though there are many things in 2020 that have changed, what has stayed the same is that there are still events. People still gather in the city. People drive around to see other people. Also people still go to stores but not as many stores are open.

What was different about 2020 and 2019 is that in 2019 the students were able to go to their school building and in 2020 the students have to do virtual school on their laptops.

COVID-19 caused many people to get sick and go to the hospitals. So many people are dying.

One thing that people should remember about COVID-19 is that you should wear your masks. Also another thing that people should remember is that you should stay six feet away from other people.

—Sianni Carasquillo

* * *

A lot of this has been challenging for me.

I have been really stressed in school with having a lot of school work to do. That gave me a lot of stress and that put me down a lot but I told myself that I was not giving up. So I didn't and I got back up again and I gave myself a reward for that. I'm still a little down in school but I'm still pushing myself to be the best I can.

—Emely Molina

Ideas to stay busy

(Continued from Page 1)

- serve outside your window.
- * Design a scavenger hunt.
- * Write stories.
- * Read stories.
- * Draw.
- * Solve a puzzle.
- * Paint and color,
- * Make a bingo board and play bingo.
- * Play hide and seek.
- * Clean.
- * Have a dance party.
- * Pray.
- * Sing songs.