

Our Experiment about Nightmares

The Experiment

We did an experiment to see if kids have more and/or worse nightmares than adults. Nightmares are vivid, unsettling dreams that can cause fear, anxiety, and disrupt sleep. They often leave people feeling uneasy, even after waking up. We were curious to see if the frequency and intensity of these dreams would differ based on age.

We conducted the experiment because we've experienced nightmares ourselves and wanted to understand why.

The experiment was conducted over a period of about a month, from December 19 to January 21. We invited 8 participants of different ages and genders to log all their nightmares in the notebooks below. Each participant was instructed to write down the date of the nightmare, rate its intensity on a scale of one to ten, and describe what happened in as much detail as they could remember. At the end of Winter Break, we collected all the notebooks for analysis.

The Outcome

After our experiment, we collected the notebooks and read the contents inside each one. We found out from the presented data that, first of all, females are more likely to have nightmares than males because they have a higher chance of anxiety or depression, which causes nightmares, better memory of the nightmare, and societal factors that promote emotional expression. Secondly, children have a higher chance of experiencing more nightmares than adults, but don't typically experience worse ones.

We also found that the adults had more stress-related nightmares about work and their kids, while the children had more nightmares about villains, monsters, being kidnapped, and being left at school.