

Institute for Social Science Research - PhD Student Project

ISSR Impact Area: Health, Policy and Practice

Title: *Social neuroscience of sleep, risk and reward in young people*

Supervisor/s: [Dr Kalina Rossa](#), [Professor Simon Smith](#), [Dr Cassandra Pattinson](#),
[Dr Caroline Salom](#)

Funding:

Student Scholarship required

Project description:

Poor sleep is both a predictor and a consequence of emotional and/or behavioural dysregulation in young people, and can precipitate increased engagement with various health-risk behaviours (e.g. substance use, poor food choices). The underlying mechanisms contributing to this relationship are as yet unclear, though changes in reward related neuro-circuitry as a consequence of sleep loss may be a factor. This research program would seek to explore the relationship between sleep and circadian health and reward related functions through a series of studies incorporating a range of methodologies (including, but not limited to prospective naturalistic designs, and controlled experimental manipulations).

This PhD program will build on existing NHMRC project grants, and on-going collaborations with industry partners. The study will involve both critical review of literatures and provide scientific basis to design effective interventions aimed at improving sleep health and/or mitigating the harms associated with increased risk taking. Through this project the PhD student will gain experience in literature review, as well as theoretical and practical experience in applied quantitative and qualitative research methods.

The candidate:

We are seeking a candidate who has an excellent academic record and a particular interest in the topic. A strong background in psychology, physiology, social science or other health related background is essential as is a commitment to conduct high quality research.

Achievable Outcomes:

- A PhD from the UQ in relevant area
- Multiple scientific papers in high impact research journals
- Experience with oral/written presentations at national/international conferences
- Interact with an interdisciplinary team of researchers in order to optimise research outcomes