

# Media

Sept 30, 2005

## Media Quote of the Week

"Look around and you'll see parents who take little kids to R-rated movies, who allow their kids to listen to and sing misogynistic melodies and sexual lyrics, and who let their kids play video games where the most graphic violence is the main selling point. I know otherwise responsible parents who smoke marijuana with their teenage kids, and I know parents who have no problem with their kids watching MTV and VH1 music video junk for hours a day. Indeed, parents today seem to have little compunction about the tremendous amounts of garbage from the popular culture being pumped directly into their children's cerebral cortex. Will we pretend that daily loads of toxic smut will not permanently coarsen our children, robbing them of their innocence and making them grow up preternaturally? By treating our children as young adults rather than big kids, we are allowing them to skip the childhood stage of life, which is essential to a strong foundation in their later years. **(Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, "Linking Teen Sex to Teen Suicide." WorldNetDaily.com)**

**Sept 30, 2005**

## Statistic of the Week

A study by the Heritage Foundation based on the government-funded National Longitudinal Survey of Adolescent Health, found that about 25 percent of sexually active girls say they are depressed all, most or a lot of the time, while only 8 percent of girls who are not sexually active feel the same. Fourteen percent of girls who have had intercourse have attempted suicide, only 5 percent of sexually inactive girls have. And whereas 6 percent of sexually active boys have tried suicide, less than 1 percent of sexually inactive boys have. The report challenges the previously held notion that teens become sexually active in order to self-medicate their own depression. (WorldNetDaily.com)

## Majority of Moms With Kids Under 14 Say They "Regularly Censor" TV Shows, Online Activity, and Video Games

May 4, 2005

The majority of moms with kids under 14 say they "regularly censor" TV shows, online activity, and video games their kids watch, according to new study from Decision Analyst, a marketing research and consulting group. The study was conducted in late 2004, and drew on Decision Analyst's American Consumer Opinion Online panel; 5,760 women were surveyed about issues concerning their kids. Bonnie Kenoly, EVP/Decision Analyst explained, "Censoring activities could include physically monitoring, as well as utilizing equipment or installed software to block certain channel or websites."

According to the survey, 92% of moms with kids 8 and under "regularly censor" their children's television viewing. Not surprisingly the study shows the percentage drops as kids get older: 85% of moms with K9-12 and then 71% of moms of Tweens 13-14 regularly censor their kid's TV viewing.

On the topic of video games the study shows that 72% of moms with K5-8 "regularly censor" video games, again that number decreases as the age of the kids gets older with 69% of moms with Tweens 9-12 and 56% of moms with Tweens 13-14 "regularly censor" their kids video game choices.

When it comes to online activity it's the opposite, with mom's censoring growing with the age of their kids; 75% of moms with Tweens 9-12 and 73% of moms with Tweens 13-14 say they censor their kid's online activities, while 69% of moms with K5-8 censor online programs. About 66% of moms with kids five years old or younger censor online activities, the study shows.

Cynopsis: Kids 05/04/05

## **Generation M: Media in the Lives of 8-18 Year-olds**

March 9, 2005

A national Kaiser Family Foundation survey found children and teens are spending an increasing amount of time using "new media" like computers, the Internet and video games, without cutting back on the time they spend with "old" media like TV, print and music. Instead, because of the amount of time they spend using more than one medium at a time (for example, going online while watching TV), they're managing to pack increasing amounts of media content into the same amount of time each day.

The study, **Generation M: Media in the Lives of 8-18 Year-olds**, examined media use among a nationally representative sample of more than 2,000 3rd through 12th graders who completed detailed questionnaires, including nearly 700 self-selected participants who also maintained seven-day media diaries.

The study - which measured recreational (non-school) use of TV and videos, music, video games, computers, movies, and print - found that the total amount of media content young people are exposed to each day has increased by more than an hour over the past five years (from 7:29 to 8:33), with most of the increase coming from video games (up from 0:26 to 0:49) and computers (up from 0:27 to 1:02, excluding school-work). However, because the media use diaries indicate that the amount of time young people spend "media multi-tasking" has increased from 16% to 26% of media time, the actual number of hours devoted to media use has remained steady, at just under 6 ½ hours a day (going from 6:19 to 6:21), or 44 ½ hours a week. For example, one in four (28%) youth say they "often" (10%) or "sometimes" (18%) go online while watching TV to do something related to the show they are watching. Anywhere from a quarter to a third of kids say they are using another media "most of the time" while watching TV (24%), reading (28%), listening to music (33%) or using a computer (33%).

“Kids are multi-tasking and consuming many different kinds of media all at once,” said Drew Altman, Ph.D., President and CEO of the Kaiser Family Foundation. “Multi-tasking is a growing phenomenon in media use and we don’t know whether it’s good or bad or both.”

### **Media in the bedroom**

Children’s bedrooms have increasingly become multi-media centers, raising important issues about supervision and exposure to unlimited content. Two-thirds of all 8-18 year-olds have a TV in their room (68%), and half (49%) have a video game player there. Increasing numbers have a VCR or DVD player (up from 36% to 54%), cable or satellite TV (from 29% to 37%), computer (from 21% to 31%), and Internet access (from 10% to 20%) in their bedroom. Those with a TV in their room spend almost 1½ hours (1:27) more in a typical day watching TV than those without a set in their room. Outside of their bedrooms, in many young people’s homes the TV is a constant companion: nearly two-thirds (63%) say the TV is “usually” on during meals, and half (51%) say they live in homes where the TV is left on “most” or “all” of the time, whether anyone is watching it or not.

**Parental rules.** While prior studies indicate that parents have strong concerns about children’s exposure to media, about half (53%) of all 8-18 year olds say their families have no rules about TV watching. Forty-six percent say they do have rules, but just 20% say their rules are enforced “most” of the time. The study indicates that parents who impose rules and enforce them do influence the amount of time their children devote to media. Kids with TV rules that are enforced most of the time report two hours less (2:01) daily media exposure than those from homes without rules.

These kids are spending the equivalent of a full-time work week using media, plus overtime,” said Vicky Rideout, M.A., a Kaiser Family Foundation Vice President who directed the study. “Anything that takes up that much space in their lives certainly deserves our full attention.”

## **Additional findings**

### **Time Spent With Media and Other Activities**

On average, young people spend 3:51 a day watching TV and videos (3:04 watching TV, 0:14 watching prerecorded TV, and 0:32 watching videos/DVDs), 1:44 listening to music, 1:02 using computers (0:48 online, 0:14 offline), 0:49 playing video games, 0:43 reading, and 0:25 watching movies.

They also spend an average of 2:17 a day hanging out with parents, 1:25 in physical activity, and 1:00 pursuing hobbies or other activities. Seventh – 12th graders spend an average of 2:16 hanging out with friends, 0:53 talking on the phone, 0:50 doing homework, and 0:32 doing chores.

The study did not find a correlation between time spent watching TV and time spent exercising, playing sports, or engaged in other types of physical activity. There was no statistically significant difference in the amount of time light, moderate, or heavy TV viewers reported spending in

physical activity (1:25, 1:21, and 1:34, respectively).

### **Computers and the Internet**

Since 1999 there have been big changes in the percent of 8-18 year olds who have a computer at home (73% to 86%), have two or more computers at home (25% to 39%), have Internet access at home (47% to 74%), and go online for more than an hour in a typical day (5% to 22%).

### **The Digital Divide**

A majority of young people from each of the major ethnic and socio-economic groups now has Internet access from home, but the divide between groups remains substantial. For example, 80% of White youth have Internet access at home, compared to 67% of Hispanics and 61% of African-Americans. Similarly, in a typical day 71% of children who go to school in higher income communities (>\$50,000 a year) will use the Internet, compared to 57% of kids from middle (\$35-50,000) and 54% of those from lower (<\$35,000) income areas.

### **Reading and Education**

Nearly three out of four (73%) 8-18 year-olds read for pleasure in a typical day, averaging 43 minutes a day. Some kids read more than others: those whose parents set and enforce rules about TV (0:16 more per day than those without rules), those without a TV in their bedroom (0:16 more), and those in homes where the TV is not left on most of the time whether anyone is watching or not (0:18 more).

Nearly one-third (30%) of young people say they either talk on the phone, instant message, watch TV, listen to music, or surf the Web for fun “most of the time” they’re doing homework.

Half (50%) of all young people say they have looked for health information online.

The study found no relationship between children’s reported grades and their use of TV or computers; but it did find that those who get the lowest grades (Cs and Ds or below) spend more time playing video games (0:21 more) and less time reading (0:17 less) than those with high grades (mostly As and Bs).

### **New Media Environment**

As new technologies have become available, young people have been quick to make use of them, changing how they use media as well as which media they use. For example, 64% have downloaded music from the Internet; 48% have streamed a radio station through the Internet; 66% use instant messaging; 39% have a cell phone; a third (34%) say they have a DVR such as TiVo in their homes; 32% have created a personal Web site or Web page; 18% have an MP3 player; and 13% have a hand held device that connects to the Internet.

While the amount of time spent watching TV has remained steady since 1999, the type of TV has changed. In any given day, 69% of all 8-18 year-olds watch cable, while 49% watch broadcast, a nearly exact reversal of the situation in 1999, when 69% watched broadcast and 50% watched cable.

## **Contentment**

Most young people report being largely happy and well adjusted. But the 18% who are lowest on a scale of “contentedness” (i.e., are more likely to report being sad or unhappy, having few friends and getting into trouble a lot) spend more time using media than their most contented peers (9:44 v. 8:07 in total media exposure).

## **Media & Today's Children**

May 26, 2004

Media has a more intense relationship with children today than at any time in past. Read below to learn more about the role it plays.

### **Media Use Overall**

The average child aged 8-18 uses about 47 hours of media per week.

*(source: The Kaiser Family Foundation, Kids & Media @ The New Millennium, November 1999.)*

Children under age six spend as much time consuming 'screen media' (1:58) as outside playing (2:02).

*(source: Kaiser Family Foundation, Children and Electronic Media, October 2003.)*

### **Media Links to Childhood Obesity:**

A pre-schooler's risk of obesity jumps 6% for every hour of TV they watch. If that child had a TV in his or her bedroom, the odds of being overweight jumped an additional 31% for every hour watched.

*(source: Dennison MD, Barbara A., Erb MS, Tara A., and Jenkins PhD, Paul L. (2002, June).*

*Television viewing and television in bedroom associated with overweight risk among low-income preschool children. Pediatrics, 109, 1028-1035.)*

### **Media Links to Teen Smoking:**

Movies account for 52% of all new adolescent smokers.

*(source: Dr. Stanley Glantz, University of California—San Francisco, First-Run Smoking Presentations in U.S. Movies 1999-2003, SmokeFree Movies.)*

80% of all PG-13 movies and 50% of all G/PG movies depict smoking.

*(source: Dr. Stanley Glantz, University of California—San Francisco, First-Run Smoking Presentations in U.S. Movies 1999-2003, SmokeFree Movies.)*

Time Warner movies tempt 98,000 kids into picking up smoking every year, while Disney tempts 66,000 kids.

*(source: Dr. Stanley Glantz, University of California—San Francisco, First-Run Smoking Presentations in U.S. Movies 1999-2003, SmokeFree Movies.)*

### **Violent Content and Its Effects:**

By the time an average child reaches age 18, s/he will have seen 200,000 acts of violence and 40,000 murders.

(source: Huston, A.C. et al (1992). Big world, small screen: The role of television in American society, cited at [www.mediafamily.org](http://www.mediafamily.org))

Violence is more likely to occur in children's television shows (69%) than in non-children's shows (58%).

(source: Barbara Wilson, et al, "Violence in Children's Television Programming: Assessing The Risks", *Journal of Communications* 52 (2002): 52-5.)

64% of all TV shows contain violent content.

(source: *National Television Violence Study*, Center for Communications and Social Policy, University of California at Santa Barbara, volume 3 1998.)

Over 1,000 clinical studies have shown a link between media violence and physical violence.

(source: "Media Violence," AAP Committee on Communications, in *Pediatrics*, Vol. 95, No. 6, June 1995.)

Reducing TV and video game consumption to under one hour/day decreases verbal aggression by 50% and physical aggression by 40% among 3rd and 4th graders.

(source: Dr. Thomas Robinson, Stanford University, *Pediatric Adolescent Med.* 2001;155:17-23.)

### **Sexual Content:**

64% of TV shows (excluding news, sports, and 'kids') contain overtly sexual content.

(source: Kaiser Family Foundation, *Sex on Television 3: Content and Context*, 2003)

### **Video Games and Kids:**

64% of characters in top-selling video games are male, 17% are female and 19% are non-human.

(source: *Children Now, Fair Play: Violence, Gender & Race in Video Games*, 2001.)

### **Advertising and Kids:**

The average child sees 40,000 television commercials each year.

(source: Professor Dale Kunkel in *The Handbook of Children and Media*, 2001.)

## **Sleep and Attention Problems Caused by Media**

April 30, 2004

Two new studies this week find that sleep and attention problems in children are linked to their use of media.

A Seattle pediatrician has published a survey of 1,300 children ages one to three finding that the more time kids spend with media the more trouble they have paying attention and concentrating in school. The researcher, Dmitri Christakis, says it appears kids are "mesmerized" by media, and blames the highly intense stimulation in media. For every hour they watch of TV per day, their odds of having attention problems increases by ten percent. The study provides greater support to the idea that young children's media viewing should be severely monitored. Other studies have

found that 43% of kids under age 2 watch TV every day.

This comes on the heels of a new study finding that even babies in America don't sleep enough. The National Sleep Foundation reports that American kids on average sleep one to two hours less per night than they should. About one-third of all children have a television in their bedroom and they slept an average of 20 fewer minutes per night than those who did not. Caffeinated beverages are also a culprit.