

The Impact of Technology/Media on Young Children

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ECE 210-0900

Qiwen Mai

12/07/2020

## **Abstract**

There is no doubt that the development of technology and media has a tremendously impact on our society nowadays, which has both advantages and disadvantages. It not only can support early learning but also affect the health of long-term use, it includes various people who use social media (e.g., adults, teenagers, children). Certain potential negative effects of social media may have a negative impact on many aspects of children's healthy development, such as weight status, sexual behavior, aggressive emotions and beliefs, consumerism, and social isolation. On the one hand, the media can manipulate, influence, persuade and pressure our society in both positive and negative ways; mentally, physically, and emotionally. In addition, the media also has a certain influence on family relations. On the other hand, the media is also the link between the government and the people, because all government policies and activities are communicated through the media. Educational programs help people learn anything through the Internet, TV, and radio.

Since preschoolers are learning new social and cognitive skills at an alarming rate, we do not expect children to spend a lot of time on the media. However, adolescence is an equally important period of rapid development because social media has become an essential part of their lives, which increases anxiety and reduces self-esteem. Depression, anxiety, and feelings of loneliness increase. Therefore, the media can influence the busyness of teenagers for a few hours after school and until bedtime. When they are not doing their homework (anytime), they can send text messages online or via mobile phones. Teenagers spend most of their time learning to communicate on screens. Thus, the sooner the problem is solved, the better.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Since children and teenagers are growing up immersed in digital media nowadays. They can access various forms of media, such as televisions, computers, smartphones. Since the media affects the feelings, learning, thinking and behavior of children and teenagers, parents and caregivers need to help their children develop and practice healthy media usage habits. Parents should manage the role and advice for kids using the media. For example, limit the time the child spends on the media. Help children build healthy self-esteem and involve them in things that interest them. Such as, sports, music or volunteer activities can stimulate their interest and bring them confidence. In addition, families and teachers can teach children how to use the media correctly and limit their screening time. Community members can initiate some community activities and colleges can provide workshops to promote people's awareness of positive and negative effects of the media.

The issue needs to be addressed now because social media is always changing, and new applications are constantly appearing. Even a 2-year-old child has already begun to touch electronic products. As I am an educator, adults, teenagers, and children are my target audiences. I hope that children will develop a good habit of using the media from an early age. Guardians should be role models for children. We must help children establish correct usage concepts. It is very important for parents to understand the different technologies their children use. I hope everyone can help to ensure that children are safe online.

## **Research**

Research suggests that media/technology has both advantages and disadvantages; it not only can support early learning but also effect the health of long-term use. Some potential negative effects of social media may have a negative impact on many aspects of children's healthy development, including weight status, sexual behavior, aggressive emotions and beliefs, consumerism, and social isolation. In addition, the media has a certain impact on family relationships.

## **Article 1**

According to the article “Why to Limit Your Child’s Media Use,” by American Academy of Pediatrics ([healthy children.org](http://healthychildren.org)), since children and young people are growing up in digital media nowadays, they can access various forms of media, including televisions, computers, smartphones, and other screens. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) encourages parents (and caregivers) to help their children develop and practice healthy media usage habits. Based on the article, there are some of the risks that children or teenagers may face from excessive use of digital media and screens, for example, watching TV for more than 1.5 hours a day is a risk factor for obesity in children aged 4 to 9 years. Part of the reason is that children who are exposed to high-calorie food advertisements are also more likely to eat snacks or overeat. Media use can interfere with sleep since children and youth spend more time using mobile devices on social media or in the room. Also, children who overuse online media may be at risk of Internet use problems, such as children and young people often use entertainment media while doing homework. Such multitasking can have a negative impact on schools. In addition, the display of

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young people on social media often shows dangerous behaviors, such as drug use and sexual behavior, online children and young people can become victims of cyberbullying.

However, parents must develop a personalized media use plan for their children. The media plan should consider each child's age, health, personality, and developmental stage. For example, check if the child's media use is healthy and safe, avoid exposure to the device or screen 1 hour before going to bed. Plan time together without media, such as family dinners. Lead by example and put your smartphone in a "do not disturb" state during media-free time with your family. Share the family media rules with caregivers to help ensure the rules are consistent. Engage in family activities that promote health, such as exercise, reading, and talking to each other. Finally, discuss online citizenship and security issues with children and teenagers. includes respecting others online, avoiding cyberbullying and pornography, being vigilant against online scams, and protecting privacy. Encourage school to teach digital citizenship.

### **Article 2**

According to the article "How and When to Limit Kids' Tech Use," by Melanie Pinola (*The New York Times*), the author indicated that it is very important to educate children to use technology in a healthy way and master the skills and habits that make them successful digital citizens. She provides some basic parenting guidelines which includes different ages to help parents establish basic rules and maintain technical harmony at home. Such as Aim for balance. In many ways, technology can help children of all ages to enhance their abilities, express their creativity and keep in touch with others through various tools. The most important step is to establish a balanced or sustainable relationship with technology. Parents should be role models for children and set the boundaries between working time and family time. Make technology a

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family affair, and when setting limits for children, children can start learning how to self-regulate and know when screen time will interfere with them.

Moreover, for babies under 2 years old, since they are surprisingly good at tapping and swiping, we had better keep our phone and tablet as far as possible. Limit the use of technology to a minimum; Skip the "educational" videos; Co-view and co-play with the children. For the toddlers and preschoolers (2-5 years old), parents should play, watch, and browse together while saving more technical time, choosing games and apps for them. For young children (6-12 years old), it is the time to establish and strengthen healthy technical habits. Parents should set up the child account to use the computer for homework and encourage creativity. Remind children not to share personally identifiable or sensitive information online and watch out for cyberbullying. For teenagers (13-18 years old), children at this age want more freedom and privacy, but parents still need to ensure their safety. Stay in touch while maintaining trust. Parents should set up rules on phone and device usage; Teach social media and critical thinking best practices; Establish trust, parents need to balance respect for your children's privacy rights while ensuring your children's safety and avoid children's technology addiction.

What is more, as the author writes, "In 2016, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) revised its previous recommendation of no screen time for children under 2. The new guidelines were broadened a bit, with recommendations for only video chatting for children under 18 months, co-watching high-quality programs, such as the classic Sesame Street or Wonder Pets! for children ages 18 to 24 months, one hour a day of screen time for children ages 2 to 5 years, and "consistent limits" on screen time for children ages 6 and above." I totally agree with her, as educators and adults, we need to minimize the negative impact of technology and media on young children, help and ensure that children are safe online.

### Article 3

According to the official journal of the Canadian Paediatric Society “Impact of media use on children and youth,” (*Paediatrics & Child Health*)” This article was about the beneficial and harmful effects of media on children’s mental and physical health. Television has the potential to have positive and negative effects on teenagers and children, such as violence, nutrition, learning, sexuality, and advertising. On one hand, there is a correlation between watching violent TV shows and the increase in children’s violent behaviors. Television restricts children’s time for important activities such as playing, reading, spending time with family members, participating in sports, psychological and social skills. Also, television watching may contribute to obesity, since prime-time advertising promotes unhealthy eating habits, children are more likely to eat high-calorie snack foods while watching TV.

Moreover, the developmental stages of children play an important role in commercial advertising because young children do not understand the concept of marketing. Children under eight are developmentally unable to understand the difference between commercials and regular programs. In addition, some media such as magazines, radio, video games and the Internet, may also affect children's eating habits, exercise habits, buying habits and mental health. If children are allowed to access these media without adult supervision, they may have the same harmful effects as television. For example, the impact of violent video games on children has been a public health concern for many years. And teenagers may see the media as the main source of information about sex, second only to school sex education programs.

On the other hand, television can also affect learning. Watching Sesame Street is an example that shows that young children can learn lessons about racial harmony, cooperation, simple arithmetic, and letters through educational television format. The educational value of

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Sesame Street has been proven to improve the reading and study skills of the audience. Under certain adverse conditions, healthy TV habits may actually be a useful teaching tool. Also, parents play an important role in children's social learning, they must monitor and control children's viewing habits, for example, the Internet has great potential to provide educational information for children and young people, but when children are exposed to computer screens for a long period of time, it will harm their health. The article suggests that parents should be aware of the importance of television early in their children's lives. At the end of the first year of a child's life, the basic rules of TV viewing should be formulated, and healthy viewing habits should be established in the second year. Also, parents should help children distinguish fantasy from reality, especially in terms of sex, violence, and advertising. Families should limit the use of television, computers, or video games as entertainment activities,

### References

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### **Small Advocacy Action**

Since even a 2-year-old child has already begun to touch electronic products, as an early childhood educator in the future, I can advocate and take action to make parents, educators, and adults generally aware of this problem. Teach children how to use the media correctly and limit their screening time. Be open to the media used by children and make suggestions to them, discuss, and communicate issues and concerns with parents. Teach students about social media security, privacy, security, and digital literacy. Dealing with abusive and dangerous student online content. Finally, engage in family activities that promote health, such as exercise, reading, and talking to each other. Discuss online citizenship and security issues with children and teenagers. includes respecting others online, avoiding cyberbullying and pornography, being vigilant against online scams, and protecting privacy. Encourage school to teach digital citizenship.

### **Large Advocacy Action**

Since children and young people are growing up in digital media nowadays, parents, educators and adults can collaborate and discuss how technology/media can have positive and negative effects on children. Parents and caregivers need to help their children develop and practice healthy media usage habits. Parents should manage the role and advice for kids using the media. For example, limit the time the child spends on the media. Help children build healthy self-esteem and involve them in things that interest them. Such as, sports, music or volunteer activities can stimulate their interest and bring them confidence. In addition, families and teachers can teach children how to use the media correctly and limit their screening time.

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Community members can initiate some community activities and colleges can provide workshops to promote people's awareness of positive and negative effects of the media.

On the other hand, social media can be the center of cyberbullying, personal information being exposed, children unknowingly talking to strangers or being exposed to age-appropriate content. Therefore, parents do need to take some time to sit down with their children and discuss media issues in an age-appropriate way, because parents are the most influential people in their children's life. Parents should teach children not to accept friend requests from strangers. If there are privacy settings on social platforms, encourage children to use them because they are there for a reason. Remind children that do not believe everything online, everything they see online may not be real. Be friendly and respect others. Help children safe online.

### **Commentary**

The reasons why I choose this topic to advocate is that the development of technology and media has a tremendously impact on our society nowadays, which is Including various people who use social media (e.g., adults, teenagers, children). This topic impacted me as an early childhood educator by learning the media's positive and negative way for children, and how to deal with those impacts. Some of social media may have a negative impact on many aspects of children's healthy development, including weight status, sexual behavior, aggressive emotions and beliefs, consumerism, and social isolation. In addition, the media has a certain impact on family relationships. As I am an educator, we should cooperate with parents to help children cope with and prevent these impacts as soon as possible. Find out what type of and how much media are used and what media behaviors are appropriate for each child. Place consistent limits on hours of media use as well as types of media used and check children's media use for

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their health and safety. As families, guardians, and teachers of children, we must help children establish a correct view of use. It is very important for parents to learn about the different technology's children are using. I hope everyone can help and keep children safe online.