Social Media and Adolescents

Brittany Chan
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Overview

- Adolescents’ use of social media

- Benefits
  - Communication
  - Education
  - Health information

- Risks
  - Communication
  - Privacy
  - Cyberbullying/Mental Health
  - Risky behaviors – “sexting”
  - Sleep
Teens are connected

- 95% of teens ages 12-17 are online
- 78% own cell phones (47% of these are smartphones)
- 1 in 4 teens has a tablet computer
- 9 in 10 teens has access to computer at home
- 1 in 4 teens accesses the internet mostly from their phone
Internet use over time by teens and adults

% within each age group who go online

Source: The Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project surveys. All teen data comes from separate surveys of teens and their parents. Methodological info for each survey is available at: http://pewinternet.org/Data-Tools/Download-Data
Teens are on Facebook (and Twitter, and Instagram, and…)

- 22% of teens log onto social media >10 times a day
- >50% log onto social media at least once a day
- Kaiser Family Foundation 2010 survey: 10.75 hrs/day (ages 8-19)
- Period of crucial emotional and social development
Benefits of social media to teens

- Communication
- Education
- Health information
Communication

- Opportunities for expression
  - Facebook statuses/Tweets
  - Blogs
  - Podcasts
  - Photos
  - Videos and music
- Call for help (depression, other issues)
  - Moreno, et al. (2011) – 25% of college students displayed depressive symptoms on Facebook
Communication

- Sharing of ideas/discussion
  - Commenting, chatting, messaging
  - Forming a persuasive argument

- Community engagement/philanthropy
  - 57% of teachers noticed teens using social media to engage in politics or causes (report from UK)
  - 30 Hour Famine study: 44% teens surveyed say social media makes them more aware of needs of others
Education

- Collaborate on homework/projects
- Social media as a teaching tool
  - Podcasts
  - Blogs
  - Chats
Health information

- Obtain health information anonymously (wary of inaccurate info)
  - Sexually transmitted infections
  - Depression

- Connect with others with same disease/disorder
  - Discussion forums
  - Disease-specific social networks

- Opportunities for pediatric practices
  - Dr. Natasha Burgert
  - Dr. Wendy Sue Swanson

- Parents should ask about teen searches, talk about it together
Risks

- Communication
- Privacy
- Cyberbullying/Mental Health
- Risky behaviors – “sexting”
- Sleep
Communication (?)

- Are teenagers spending more time online than in face to face communication?
- Changes in the way teens interact
- Ability to converse in person
Privacy

- Sharing too much information
- “Digital footprint”
- Inappropriate posts, photos, videos, etc.
- Ramifications for the future
  - Jobs
  - College applications
Cyberbullying

Definition: “deliberately using digital media to communicate false, embarrassing, or hostile information about another person.”

Very common (32% of all teenagers report being victim)

VS traditional bullying:
- Bully can remain anonymous
- Can happen at any time –relentless
- Pervasive, “viral”

Can cause depression, anxiety, isolation, suicide
Cyberbullying

- Ryan Halligan (age 13)
  - Hanged self after embarrassing personal info spread by a girl pretending to like him on AOL instant messenger

- Megan Meier (age 13)
  - Hanged self after receiving mean messages from “Josh Evans”, created by her neighbor and her teenage daughter (former friend of Megan)

- Tyler Clementi (age 18)
  - Harassed for being homosexual
  - Roommate used webcam to spread video of Tyler kissing another male
Facebook Depression

The development of symptoms of depression after spending a long time on social media sites

- Comparing lives?
- Less in-person interaction?
- Going online to “escape” the real world?

Some studies have found time on social networking related to depression (Pantic et al. 2012 – high school students)

Another study (Jelenchick et al. 2013) showed no relationship between social network use and depression
**Sexting**

- “Sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually explicit messages, photographs, or images via cell phone, computer, or other digital devices”
- 20% of teens have sent or posted nude/semi-nude pictures of themselves
- Felony child pornography charges vs juvenile law misdemeanors
- Can be rapidly spread, sometimes only shared within a couple or small group
Sleep is important for development!

Social media use negatively associated with hours of sleep

Having a TV in bedroom and owning cell phone negatively associated with hours of sleep

Face to face communication positively related to hours of sleep
Pediatricians’ responsibility

- Understand today’s technology and its effect on teens
- EDUCATE teens and parents!
- If desired, use these tools to help reach your teen patients
Parents’ responsibility

- Be familiar with new technologies.
- Know and follow laws.
  - Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)
- Know what your children/teens are looking at online.
- Discuss online use with your children/teens.
- Make and follow rules for social media/device use
  - Phones off at dinner
  - Phones off at a set time before bed
  - “Curfew”
Resources

- Social Media and Sexting Tips from the AAP
  [www.aap.org/advocacy/releases/june09socialmedia.htm](http://www.aap.org/advocacy/releases/june09socialmedia.htm)

- AAP Internet Safety site [http://safetynet.aap.org](http://safetynet.aap.org)
References


References


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  http://www.pewinternet.org/2013/03/13/teens-and-technology-2013/

- Swanson, W.S. Social media: Where we are.

