

Media stream: the negative impact on today's youth essay sample

[Life](#), [Adolescence](#)



Consuming media, it seems, has far outstripped reading story books or playing dress up as the average American children favorite past time. Overall, children between the ages of 2 to 18 spend an average of almost 5 and a half hours a day at home watching television, playing video games surfing the web or using some other form of media (“ Unraveling new media’s effect on children). Media affects youth not only by displacing time they spend doing homework or sleeping, but also by influencing beliefs and behaviors. The constant stream of media has a huge negative impact on today’s youth, a rising issue that shouldn’t be ignored or minimized. The mass increase in violence through today’s media is quite unbelievable. By the age of 18 the average adolescent will have seen an estimated 200, 000 acts of violence on television alone (“ Health effects of media on children and adolescence.”). Much of the violence on television and in the movies is presented in a sanitized and glamorous fashion, and in children’s programming it is often presented as humorous. This is simply not the case. A number of researchers have recently suggested that repeated exposure to mediated violence can lead to anxiety and fear, and an acceptance of violence as an appropriate means of solving conflict (Strasburger).

As a result, this causes desensitization, resulting in increased aggression and decreases in selfless acts. Children who continuously play violent video games experience an increase in physiological signs of aggression. A recent analysis of video games revealed that more than half of all games contain violence, including 90% rated as inappropriate for children (Clay). Health professionals worry most about first person shooting games. In 2006, an 18 year old named Devin Moore was arrested in Alabama on suspicious of car

theft. The police officers brought him in for processing with no issues. Minutes later Moore attacked one of the officers, stealing his gun and shooting both the officers. He fled down the hall and shot a 911 dispatcher in the head, grabbed a set of car keys and stole a police car. Moore had no criminal record. He claimed he was only acting out what he had played many times in the most familiar video game, Gran Theft Auto (“ The effects of the social media on children).

In the aftermath of the West Paducah, KY shooting it was discovered that the shooter had never fired a real gun in his whole life before that day, yet his marksmanship was accurate and lethal (“ Are violent video games playing into the school shooting epidemic?.”). And we have all heard about the massacre in Newton, Connecticut at Sandy Hook Elementary. Twenty year old Adam Lanza fatally shot twenty young children, and seven adults, that included his mothers. “ Adam Lanza wore ear plugs, changed clips frequently, and shot up 3 cars belonging to staff members at Sandy Hook Elementary. Habits that he may have developed from his long hours of playing Call Of duty, a violent and popular first person shooting game.” (Caulfield)While not every child that plays violent video games will act out in this manner, it is clear that in many cases this had played a vital role in actions taking place.

A majority of movies, TV shows, and song lyrics have a constant stream of sexually explicit content. While all age groups could potentially be affected by sexual messages through the media, adolescents are particularly vulnerable. Teens may not be sufficiently cognitively developed to accurately

consider what they are being exposed to.(Barnes) These messages are bombarding teens at an age where they are still developing their values and beliefs around gender roles, sexual behaviors and attitudes.

An analysis of broadcast media content indicate that on average, teenaged viewers see 143 incidents of sexual behavior on network television during prime time; with portrayals of 3 or 4 times as many sexual acts occurring between unmarried partners. (“ Teens, sex, and the media: Is there a connection?”) . As much as 80% of all movies shown on network or cable have sexual content. An analysis of music videos indicates that 60% portray sexual feelings and impulses (StrasBurger). A close look at sexual content in the media almost universally shows it in a positive light with little discussion of the consequences and risk of unsafe sex. As a result teens report that their main source of information about sex, dating, and sexual health comes from what they hear and see in the media.(Grant)

Adolescents are naturally curious about sex and often turn to media in an attempt to seek out information. Interactive media can encourage antisocial beliefs and behaviors in children and adolescents. It is true that by eliminating barriers like geography, time of day and physical availability for a conversation, these Medias make it quicker and easier to keep in contact. On the other hand, these interactions are taking place with computers, handhelds, or cell phones, not people. Experts are finding that this lack of face time with others is having a tangible effect on our society (“ Social Media: Making us less social.”) Affecting our ability to become well rounded adults and cope in life situations where we have to deal on an emotional

level with other individuals. Even though people can spend half their day chatting online with a vast number of people, research has found that we are now lonelier than ever. In fact, the number of lonely people in the United States has nearly tripled over the last twenty years (Cornblatt).

But how can this be with the upbringing of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Tumblr? I personally don't have any of these social networks. I never got the concept of spending all your precious free time engulfed in your laptop, on the phone, or the eyes glued to the television. I'd rather go out and explore what life brings. Social networking has a huge impact on today's youth. Yet, some may challenge the view that media has a positive effect. There are not many restrictions on creatively expressing oneself. Media makes it easier to gain and access information. The different kinds of media gives people a general understanding and respect of other people's form of expression.

These social media sites offer sites such as Facebook and Twitter provide adolescence new ways to access communication and entertainment (Clay). However, it is simply not true that the media has a positive influence on today's adolescence. It has become common today that media has our soul attention. We use it in our work place, in our schools, and during our personal down time. Let's go back to the days where children actually went to their friend's house and asked if they wanted to play. Or how about the days of hide and seek, a friendly game of basketball, or building sand castles on the beach? Just a look at today's youths behavior it's obvious that there is something wrong. The negative influences of media are vast, and shouldn't be overlooked.