

Frequency and implications of exposure to violent web sites on youth behavior

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Growing Up With Media

* Thank you for your interest in this presentation. Please note that analyses included herein are preliminary. More recent, finalized analyses may be available by contacting CIPHR for further information.



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Background

- An estimated 97% of youth use the **Internet** (Lenhart, Madden & Hitlin, 2005; USC Annenberg School Center for the Digital Future, 2005).
- The majority of adolescent Internet-health research has focused on **victimization** (e.g., Finkelhor, Mitchell, Wolak, 2000; Wolak, Mitchell, Finkelhor, 2006; Ybarra, Mitchell, Wolak, Finkelhor, 2006) and **health seeking behavior** (e.g., Grey, Klein, Noyce et al., 2005; Ybarra & Suman, 2006).

Problem Statement

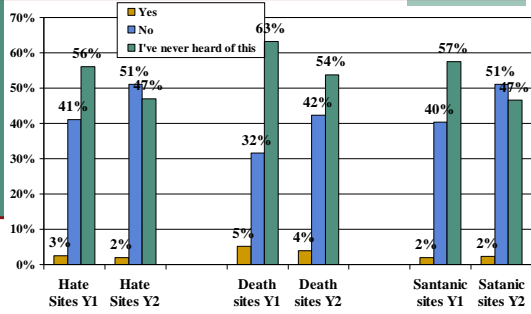
As our understanding of associations between media violence and youth violent and aggressive behavior continues to grow, there continues to be a noticeable dearth of research about media violence consumed by young people on the Internet.

- What is the frequency of exposure to violence online?
- Is this online violence related to violent or aggressive behavior?

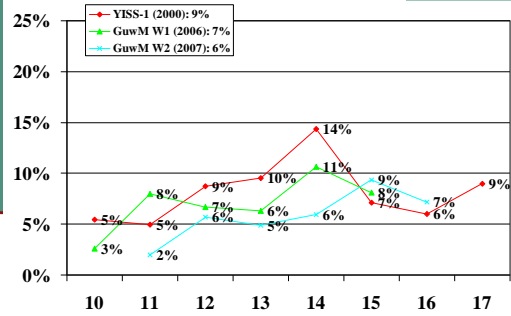
Definitions

- A “hate” site is one that tells you to hate a group of people because of who they are, how they look, or what they believe.
- A “death” website that shows pictures of dead people or people dying. Some people call these “snuff” sites.
- A “satanic” website shows satanic rituals, like devil worship or Satan worship

Frequency of exposure



Online exposure to hate and death sites across age and time



How did they hear about the web site?

(top 3 in 2007)

Hate sites:

- Friend (50%),
- Link from another site (22%),
- Typed it in (17%)

Death sites:

- Friend (71%),
- Search engine (31%),
- Email (30%)

Satanic sites:

- Banner ad (22%),
- Friend (19%),
- Email (17%)

Demographic profile of youth looking at hate, death, satanic sites

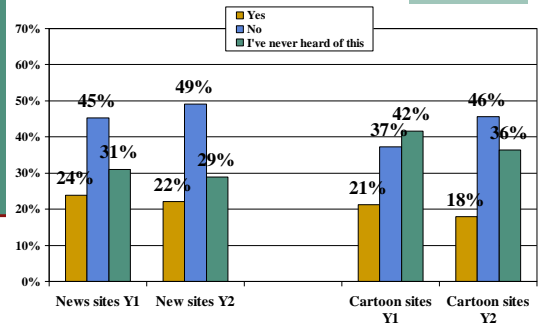
Among 1,206 11-16 year old youth in Oct-Dec, 2007:

- 14.2 years old (OR = 1.2, p<.02)
- 48% male (OR = 0.85, p<.64)
- 73% are White (OR = 0.97, p=0.94)
- 17% are Hispanic (OR = 1.1, p=0.79)

Definitions

- A website, including news-related sites, that shows pictures of war, death, “terrorism”
- A website (that’s not an online game) that shows cartoons, like stick people or animals, being beat up, hurt, or killed

Frequency of exposure



How did they hear about the web site?

(top 3 in 2007)

News sites:

- Friend (26%)
- Family (25%)
- Search engine (22%)

Cartoon sites:

- Friend (73%),
- Link from another site (22%)
- Search engine (20%)

Main outcome measure: Seriously violent behavior

Any seriously violent behavior: 4.8%

- Ever shot/stabbed someone: 1.0%
- Aggravated assault
 - Threatening someone with a weapon: 1.8%
 - Hurt someone badly enough to require medical attention: 2.4%
- Robbery: 1.3%
- Sexual assault: 2.4%

Alpha = 0.87

Odds of youth reporting externalizing behavior given exposure to at least one type of online violent exposure versus all other youth: Y1 -> Y1

Any exposure to violent web sites (hate, death, cartoon, or satanic sites)	Seriously violent behavior		Physical fights		Physical bullying		Relational bullying	
	Odds Ratio	P-value	Odds Ratio	P-value	Odds Ratio	P-value	Odds Ratio	P-value
All youth (n=1,588)	2.01	0.02	2.46	<.001	2.61	<.001	2.17	<.001
Males (n=796)	1.00	0.98	1.86	0.01	2.32	<.001	2.71	<.001
Females (n=792)	5.57	<.001	3.10	<.001	2.49	0.001	1.74	0.04

Adjusted for age, self-reported honesty, and self-reported privacy in completing the survey

Odds of youth reporting externalizing behavior given exposure to at least one type of online violent exposure versus all other youth: Y2 -> Y2

Any exposure to violent web sites (hate, death, cartoon, or satanic sites)	Seriously violent behavior		Physical fights		Physical bullying		Relational bullying	
	Odds Ratio	P-value	Odds Ratio	P-value	Odds Ratio	P-value	Odds Ratio	P-value
All youth (n=1,206)	3.37	0.001	3.70	<.001	5.91	<.001	1.62	0.03
Males (n=606)	2.41	0.07	3.06	<.001	6.18	<.001	1.46	0.19
Females (n=600)	5.47	0.002	4.68	<.001	4.72	<.001	2.57	0.007

Adjusted for age, self-reported honesty, and self-reported privacy in completing the survey

Odds of youth reporting externalizing behavior given exposure to at least one type of online violent exposure versus all other youth: Y1 -> Y2

Any exposure to violent web sites (hate, death, cartoon, or satanic sites)	Seriously violent behavior		Physical fights		Physical bullying		Relational bullying	
	Odds Ratio	P-value	Odds Ratio	P-value	Odds Ratio	P-value	Odds Ratio	P-value
All youth (n=1,206)	4.18	<.001	1.92	.004	2.47	<.001	1.25	0.28
Males (n=606)	5.04	<.001	1.66	0.07	2.46	.001	1.22	0.46
Females (n=600)	2.45	0.09	1.91	0.10	2.05	0.05	1.57	0.16

Adjusted for age, self-reported honesty, and self-reported privacy in completing the survey

Summary

- Older youth are more likely to seek out violent web sites, but there are no apparent differences between boys and girls
- Across violent web sites, friends are almost always the most common source of learning about the site

Summary

- 37% report exposure to violence on at least one type of web site in the last year at Year 1 (24% if news sites are excluded); 32% report any exposure in Year 2 (19% if news sites are excluded)
- The 1-year prevalence rates of exposure to death, hate and satanic sites are low: 2-4%
- News-related sites (24%) and cartoon violence sites (21%) are the two most common exposures

Summary

Exposure to violent web sites is associated with increased odds for reporting seriously violent and other aggressive behaviors, both concurrently and over time.

Limitations

(In addition to those noted in the previous presentation)

It's possible that "heard" was taken literally (i.e., "I've never heard of that")

Our measures are crude (ever/never) and don't measure the frequency of exposure

Discussion

Despite the wide availability of violent exposures online

The majority of youth (63-68%) are not exposed to violence online.

Discussion

The majority of youth who are exposed, do not also report seriously violent behavior or other types of externalizing behaviors.

Nonetheless, findings suggest that for some youth, violence online is associated with externalizing behavior offline.

Implications for youth violence prevention

Simply *knowing* about these types of web sites is not enough for a youth to visit the web site.

We need to examine further why some youth choose to look at these sites when others don't.

Implications for youth violence prevention

Intriguing sex differences in the associations between exposure to violence online and expression of violent and aggressive behaviors need to be examined further.

Professionals working with violent and aggressive youth need to be aware of their exposures online, especially using newer technologies (MySpace, YouTube).