Goals

1. Trends

2. Benefits and risks

3. Research (Quantity v Quality)

4. What can be done

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Society has fretted over media's impact on children for 80 + years

Film

TV

Video games

Internet

Interactive media

It has become ubiquitous

among teens:

- 95% have access to a smartphone
- > 90% use a social media platform (continues to increase yearly)
- 89% are online <u>several times a day</u>
- **45%** are online almost at all times

Mental health Trends

At least a 50% increase in depression over last 5-8 years across 10-14, 14-18, and 18-21yo youth

Suicide rate has doubled in boys and tripled in girls since 2010

Physical Health Trends

Obesity epidemic over last two decades

Sleep deprivation is endemic to current generation of K-12 kids

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What are the positive effects?

- Social connection (even in real world)
- Social support (especially for marginalized kids)
- Self-expression
- Can increase awareness of good causes
- Developing and sharing interests
- Promotes some specific cognitive skills (only certain media uses)
- Information
- Career training

There are dangers/risks

- Opportunity cost– what activities are lost?
- Health– sleep, physical activity
- Developmental– what brain-based skills aren't practiced?
- Exposure to overwhelming and harmful content
- Safety (cyberbullying, sexual exploitation)
- Excessive consumerism
- Privacy
- Exposure to maltreatment
- finding communities that normalize high risk behavior

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The Data on usage

- **Initially,** Correlations between **extent of interactive media use** and
  - Depression
  - Loneliness
  - Anxiety
  - Sleep deprivation
  - Social isolation
  - Suicide

The Data (Quantity)

- Showing <u>U shaped</u> curve in teens:

  - <u>Very little</u> and <u>greater than 2 hours</u> assoc with health issues including depression

  - *increased use appears to precede mental health issues*

  - Seemed to be a sweet spot:

    - >15min and <2 hours

Vulnerable kids are more vulnerable to problems with interactive media

- ADHD

- LD

- Autism spectrum

- Depression

- Anxiety

- Social challenges

- These kids will struggle to develop safe, healthy media habits

Emerging data

- Further examination showed it was not just time spent but <u>How it is used:</u>
- Like U shape, can be <u>protective or destructive</u>
- **Positive factors:**
  - engaging with known peers/friends authentically
  - engaging in positive community, skill building, altruism

Emerging data

- **Negative**
  - following others, judging self in comparison (one of main hypotheses)
  - Cyberbullying
  - Addiction/avoidance/isolation
  - vaguebooking

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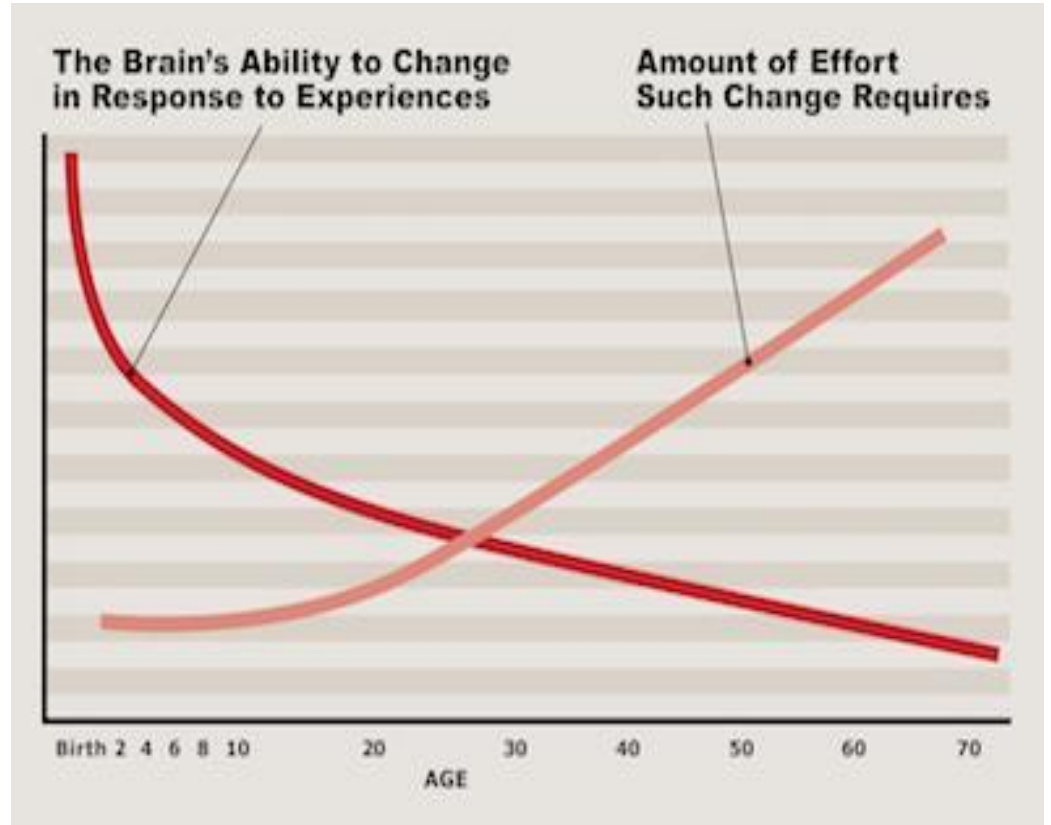
2. Benefits and risks

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There is good news

building good media habits can help with mental health

Research starting to implicate parents as an important

CDC found empower parents to discuss internet etiquette appeared to best counter to cyberbullying

Parents feel helpless:

interventions: to empower and model

Build community conversations

Sharing strategies

Discussing concerns

Strength in numbers

No judgment zone

What should a plan entail?

Parameters around:

- Time
- Place/setting
- Parental supervision
- Content
- Device

Strategies around:

- Alternative activities
- How to successfully unplug
- Consequences for violating parameters

Media Diet

How much *time spent* with media?

Media in *isolation or interactively?*

Where is media being viewed?

Who *monitors* the media diet? Who controls exposure?

What's being *modeled*?

Minimize screen time: first years

<2yo: no role for screens

2-5 years, limit regular screen time to < 1 hour per day

Ensure that sedentary screen time is not a routine part of child care for children younger than 5 years.

Maintain daily 'screen-free' times, especially for family meals and book-sharing.

Avoid screens for at least 1 hour before bedtime, given the potential for melatonin-suppressing effects.

Mitigate risks: elementary and middle school

Be present and engaged when screens are used and, whenever possible, co-view with children

Be aware of content and prioritize educational, age-appropriate and interactive programming

Use parenting strategies that teach self-regulation and self-calming

Maintain daily 'screen-free' times, especially for family meals and book-sharing.

Avoid screens for at least 1 hour before bedtime, given the potential for melatonin-suppressing effects.

Use apps that limit access to approved sites

Sharing responsibility : high school

Walk the walk: watch your own media use

View and understand social media content; follow your child's accounts

Regularly check privacy settings

Maintain daily 'screen-free' times, especially for family meals and book-sharing.

Avoid screens for at least 1 hour before bedtime, given the potential for melatonin-suppressing effects.

Adults should model healthy screen use:

Choose healthy alternatives, such as reading, outdoor play and creative, hands-on activities

Turn off their devices at home during family time