

**THE NATURE OF THE CHALLENGES IN
THE WORLD OF SOCIAL MEDIA: FRAMING THE QUESTIONS**

**Donald Meichenbaum, Ph.D.
Distinguished Professor Emeritus,
University of Waterloo,
Ontario, Canada**

and

**Research Director of
The Melissa Institute for Violence Prevention & Treatment
Miami, Florida**

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The Dangers and Promises of Social Media and Computer Technology for
Children, Youth and Their Families: A Call to Action**

THE NATURE AND CHALLENGES IN THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

1. 75% of 12-17 year olds now own cell phones in the U.S.
2. 90% of these teenagers use the Internet and 64% access it daily.
3. The current generation of youth (8 to 18) in the U.S. spend up to seven hours a day with multiple forms of electronic media. Because some youth multi-task, using multiple media simultaneously, they can pack a total of 10 hours and 45 minutes of media contact in a 7 and a half hour day.
4. Teens send up to 3400 texts a month which translates into more than 100 texts per day.
5. 71% of teenagers use more than one social network.
6. 25% of young people use the Internet as a major source of mental health information. 50% of youth turn to the Internet for help when going through “tough times.”

The following websites and references further document and underscore both the potential dangers and promises of social media and Internet technology on children, youth and their families.

WEBSITES

CNN Documentary - - Being 13

(Hour-long special demonstrates the immense power and control of social media in the lives of middle-school children)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t-9LtTkg04>

Common Sense Media

16 Apps and Websites Kids are Heading to After Facebook

<http://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/16-apps-and-websites-kids-are-heading-to-after-facebook>

This Website lists the most common Websites teens use and discusses what parents and educators need to know about the dangers of each form of social media.

Also see the following Websites for a discussion of social media usage by 8-18 year olds.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/06/facebook-texting-teens-instagram-snapchat-most-popular-social-network-373043/>

<http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/04/09/teens-social-media-technology-2015/>

Generation M²: Media in the lives of 8-18 year olds (Victoria Rideout, Ulla Foehr and Donald Roberts)

Eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED527859.pdf

REFERENCES

- Turkle, S. (2015). Reclaiming conversation: The power of talk in a digital age. New York: Penguin Press.
- Birkerts, S. (2015). Changing the subject: Art and attention in the internet age. Graywolf Press.
- Hugues, S.K. & Lewis, R.F. (2015). Frequent use of social networking sites is associated with poor psychological functioning among children and adolescents. Cyber psychology and Behavioral Social Networking, 18 (7), 380-385.
- (They reported that high use of social networking (2 hours + a day) has been found to be associated with a higher risk for psychological distress and a higher likelihood of depressogenic thoughts in youth).*
- Hertz, M.F. & David-Ferdon, C. (2014). Electric media and youth violence: A CDC issue brief for educators and care givers. Journal of Adolescent Health. Volume 41, Issue 6.
- (Discusses the influence of social media and contagion effects on youth violence.)*
- Kaiser Family Foundation Study (2010). Media in the lives of 8-18 year olds.
- Panova, T. & Eleras, A. (2016). Avoidance or boredom: Negative mental health outcomes associated with use of Information and Communication Technologies depend on users' motivations. Computers in Human Behavior, 58, 249-258.