

Center on Media and Human Development
School of Communication
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Children, Media, and Race
**Media Use Among
White, Black, Hispanic, and
Asian American Children**



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Introduction

This report documents differences in the role of media in the lives of White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian children in the United States: which types of media they use, how much time they spend in various media activities, which media platforms and devices they own, and what the media environment is like in their households. The data presented here are the result of new analyses of two data sets, breaking out the findings by race and ethnicity: the 2010 Kaiser Family Foundation *Generation M²* survey of media use among 8- to 18-year-olds, and the Foundation's 2006 survey about media use among children age six and under (*The Media Family*).

Historically, scholars have been aware of differences in the amount of time that White and minority children spend with media, especially TV. But last year's *Generation M²* study indicated a large increase in the amount of time both Black and Hispanic youth are spending with media, to the point where they are consuming an average of 13 hours worth of media content a day (12:59 for Blacks and 13:00 for Hispanics), compared with about eight and a half hours (8:36) for White youth, a difference of about four and a half hours a day. In recent years, this gap in media use between White and Black youth has doubled, and between White and Hispanic youth it has quadrupled.

The *Generation M²* report received a lot of public attention, but the findings concerning minority youth were largely overlooked. For this report, we have gone back to the original data set, re-analyzing the key findings by race so that we can more fully document the varying patterns of media use among White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian American children. In addition, we have tried to explore some of these issues in early childhood by conducting new analyses of data from *The Media Family* concerning media use among children ages zero to six.

Because race often correlates with socio-economic status and family structure, we also examined differences in total media exposure among young people from different socio-economic groups (as measured by parent education) and

family type (single- or two-parent families). These differences were significant, but more modest: a gap of about an hour and a half in media use between young people who have a parent with a college degree and those who do not (10:00 vs. 11:27) and a gap of about an hour and 45 minutes a day between children who live in single-parent households and those who live in two-parent households (12:02 vs. 10:15). Further analyses revealed that race-related differences are by far the most robust and remain strong even when controlling for parent education and family structure. [See Methodology]

There is a wealth of data indicating that media are a powerful influence on young people's development. Research has indicated that media can play a positive role in promoting early childhood literacy, enhancing and customizing educational curricula for young people of all ages, and communicating critical health messages to children and adolescents. Alternatively, other studies indicate a negative relationship between media use and important health outcomes, including violence, sexual activity, tobacco use, and obesity. In far too many of these areas, there are substantial health and educational disparities among young people that must be addressed.

Given the tremendous role media play in the lives of all young people today, and given the additional four and a half hours a day of media consumption among minority youth, the purpose of this report is to briefly hit a national "pause" button: to stop and take note of these differences, to consider the possible positive and negative implications for young people's health and well-being, and to reflect on how each of us can respond in our own realms—as educators, public health advocates, content creators, and parents—in a way that benefits children, tweens, and teens to the greatest extent possible.

Key Findings

This report reveals important differences in the ways 8- to 18-year-olds use media and explores the roots of those patterns in early childhood. Understanding these differences and similarities is important to help inform the work of the many educators, public health leaders, content creators, and parents who are working to ensure that media are used to help address health and educational disparities among youth, not exacerbate them. Here are the key findings among 8- to 18-year-olds:

- Minority youth—Black, Hispanic, and Asian 8- to 18-year-olds—consume an average of four and a half more hours of media a day than White youth do. These differences hold up even when controlling for socio-economic status (as measured by parent education) and whether the child is from a single- or two-parent family.
- The biggest differences are in the amount of time spent with TV (a difference of about one to two hours of TV a day between White and minority youth), music (a difference of about an hour a day), computers (up to an hour and a half difference), and video games (from 30 to 40 minutes difference).
- Use of mobile platforms differs substantially by race, with minority youth spending anywhere from about an hour and a half to an hour and three-quarters more time watching videos, playing games, and listening to music on mobile devices like cell phones and iPods each day (a total of 3:07 in mobile media use among Asians, 2:53 among Hispanics, 2:52 among Blacks, and 1:20 among Whites).
- Black and Hispanic youth are especially devoted to TV, watching about an hour more live TV each day than White or Asian youth (3:23 for Blacks, 3:08 for Hispanics, 2:28 for Asians, and 2:14 for Whites) and about 45 minutes more each day on other platforms (computers, cell phones, and iPods) than White youth do (1:20 for Blacks, 1:18 for Hispanics, and 1:17 for Asians, compared with :35 for Whites).
 - Black and Hispanic youth are also more likely to have a TV in their bedroom (84% of Blacks and 77% of Hispanics, compared to 64% of Whites and Asians) and to have cable and premium channels in their rooms (42% of Blacks and 28% of Hispanics have premium channels in their bedrooms, compared with 17% of Whites and 14% of Asians).
- Minority youth eat more meals with the TV on: 78% of Blacks and 67% of Hispanics say the TV is “usually” on during meals at their home, compared with 58% of Whites and 55% of Asians.
- Asian youth are especially drawn to computers, spending nearly three hours a day (2:53) in recreational computer use (the figure is 1:17 for White youth, 1:24 for Blacks, and 1:49 for Hispanics). They have more computers in the home than other young people do (an average of 2.8 per household, compared with 1.8 for Hispanics and Blacks and 2 per home for Whites). And they are a lot more likely to have a computer in their bedroom than other young people are (55% of Asians, compared with 39% of Hispanics, 34% of Blacks, and 32% of Whites).
- There are no significant differences in how often young people multitask their media (using more than one medium at a time). This is a practice that all youth seem to have adopted at relatively equal rates; for example, around four in ten White (37%), Black (44%), and Hispanic (41%) 7th to 12th graders say they use another medium “most of the time” they’re watching TV.
- There are also similarities in the amount of time young people spend using a computer for schoolwork and in their tendency to multitask with media during homework.
 - Across the board, 8- to 18-year-olds spend far less time using the computer for school work than for fun (about :16 to :20 a day for school work, compared to anywhere from 1:17 among Whites to 2:53 among Asians for recreational use each day).
 - Anywhere from a quarter to a third of youth say they use media “most of the time” they’re doing their homework, without significant differences by race.
- Reading print is the only medium without statistically significant differences by race or ethnicity. Across all groups, young people read for pleasure for an average of about 30 to 40 minutes a day.

Methodology

Unless otherwise noted, all findings presented in this report are among children ages 8 to 18. Findings among younger children, ages zero to six, are always referenced separately.

The findings in this report are from new analyses of data from two media use studies:

- *Generation M²: Media in the Lives of 8- to 18-Year-Olds*, released by the Kaiser Family Foundation in January 2010. These data are from a nationally representative survey of 2,002 children, 3rd to 12th graders, ages 8 to 18, conducted from October 2008 through May 2009 by Harris Interactive. Survey respondents completed anonymous written questionnaires in the classroom, focusing on their media use the prior day. The sample includes students from both public and private schools and an oversample of Black and Hispanic students. The sample includes 1,034 Whites, 422 Hispanics, 317 Blacks, and 85 Asians. The margin of sampling error for the total sample is +/-3.9%; sampling error is higher for subgroups.
- *The Media Family: Electronic Media in the Lives of Infants, Toddlers, Preschoolers, and Their Parents*, released by the Kaiser Family Foundation in May 2006. These data are from a nationally representative telephone survey of parents of children ages six months to six years old, conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates from September to November 2005. This survey also focused on the child's media use the previous day. The total sample size included in this report is 996, including 708 Whites, 176 Hispanics, and 112 Blacks. The survey did not include enough Asian respondents to allow analysis of that subgroup. The margin of error for the total sample is +/- 3% and higher for subgroups.

Data analysis for the current report was conducted by Northwestern University professor Ellen Wartella and post-doctoral fellow Alexis Lauricella. The main objective of this report is to understand the differences in media availability and use among 8- to 18-year-olds as a function of race. Because race, socio-economic status, and family structure can be conflated, a series of Analysis of Variance analyses (ANOVAs) was conducted on the *Generation M²* data, with race, socio-economic status (measured by parent education),

and family structure as independent variables, to examine the relationship between these variables and the continuous media exposure measures. (Because this was a survey of youth, asking about their parent's education was judged to be a more reliable measure than asking them to estimate their family's income.) Parent education was coded as lower (some college or less) or higher (college degree or more). Family structure was coded as either single-parent or two-parent household.

These analyses indicated that across each of the media use variables, race was a significant predictor and had the largest effect size; neither parent education nor family structure were significant predictors once race was controlled for. [See Figure 1] In some cases, however, there were significant interactions between race and parent education or race and family structure. In these cases, t-tests were conducted to examine within the different education and family structure groups whether race variables still differed for each dependent measure. In each case, there were still significant differences by race within the relevant subgroups.

Given the smaller sample size for Asian participants, not all analyses could be conducted for this group. For example, data on media multitasking was collected only among 7th to 12th graders, so results are only reported for White, Black, and Hispanic youth. Additionally, when separate analyses were conducted for parent education or family structure subgroups, the sample size for Asian youth was too small to report reliably. Similarly, there were not enough Asian children in the zero- to six-year-old sample to examine that subgroup on its own.

This study concerns *recreational* media use; unless otherwise noted, the findings do not include time spent using media for school work (e.g., reading a book for an assignment or researching something for homework on the computer). For example, data about time spent using a computer for school work was collected, but is reported separately and is not counted in the media use totals. Time spent talking on the phone or text messaging is reported separately and is not counted as part of the "media use" totals. Time spent using a computer to listen to music or watch TV or DVDs is counted under "music," "TV," or "DVD" time, in order to avoid

FIGURE 1. Analysis of Variance Results for Media Exposure Variables

		Race	Parent Education	Family Structure	Race X Parent Education	Race X Family Structure
TV content	F	21.10**	0.05	0.42	0.91	3.56**
	Eta sq.	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01
Music/audio	F	17.53**	0.75	0.18	0.38	1.88
	Eta sq.	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Computers	F	4.73**	0.80	3.27	0.89	6.70**
	Eta sq.	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01
Video games	F	14.74**	0.00	0.50	4.22**	2.22
	Eta sq.	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01
Print	F	0.81	1.35	1.53	0.82	1.44
	Eta sq.	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Movies	F	13.43**	1.14	1.63	1.21	3.18**
	Eta sq.	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01
Total Media Exposure	F	29.61**	0.43	0.04	0.25	3.37**
	Eta sq.	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01

*p<.05, **p<.01

double-counting it. Time spent reading includes print media only; time spent reading newspapers or magazines online is reported in the computer section. All times are reported in hours:minutes, for example 2:23 to represent two hours and 23 minutes.

The statistical significance of differences among sub-groups is represented in all tables through a series of superscripts; only those items with different superscripts differ significantly (p<.05). Items that do not have a superscript, or that share a common superscript, do not differ significantly.

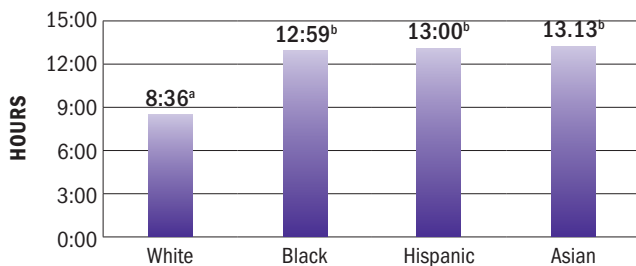
Findings

OVERALL MEDIA EXPOSURE

Adding up all of the time young people ages 8 to 18 spend listening to music, watching TV, playing video games, using the computer, reading print, and going to the movies, White youth consume an average of about 8:36 of media content a day, Black youth about 12:59, Hispanic youth 13:00, and Asian youth about 13:13 per day. [See Table 1]

CHART 1: Total Media Exposure

Among 8- to 18-year-olds, average amount of total media exposure in a typical day, by selected demographics



Analyses (ANOVAs) were run to test the relative power of race, parent education, and family structure (single- or two-parent family) in predicting media use. These analyses indicate that when controlling for all three variables, race still significantly predicts total media exposure, but parent education and family structure do not. [See Methodology section for details.]

Since children and teens often use more than one medium at a time—watching a TV show while perusing their Facebook page, for example—these totals do not reflect the actual amount of time out of a day that young people are devoting to media (one hour of watching TV and using Facebook equals two hours of media content but only one hour out of the teenager’s day). Factoring in this media multitasking, the *Generation M²* study estimated the total amount of time spent using at least one type of media each day at just under six and a half hours (6:22) for White youth, just over nine hours (9:14) for Hispanic youth, and just under ten hours (9:44) for Black youth. It is also important

to remember that young people may well be doing something else at the same time that they are using media—for example, getting dressed, riding the bus, going for a run, doing homework, or eating dinner. But for those six or nine or nearly ten hours each day, whatever else they are doing they are using at least one, and often two or more, types of media. And they are managing to consume eight and a half to 13 hours worth of media content in that time period.

Younger children

Among children ages zero to six, Hispanic children average 1:29 in screen media use per day, Whites 1:31, and Blacks 1:58. [See Table 2] For these younger children, regression analyses conducted as part of the original study controlling for race, income, and parent education found that each factor has an independent relationship with time spent using media. These analyses also revealed that among these younger children, whether the child was from a single- or two-parent household did not appear to be a significant predictor of media use, once other factors were controlled for.

TYPES OF MEDIA

Differences in media consumption are especially pronounced with regard to TV, with Black youth (ages 8 to 18) watching an average of nearly six hours of TV a day on various platforms (5:54), Hispanic children close to five and a half hours (5:21), Asian youth more than four and a half hours (4:41), and White youth averaging about three and a half hours (3:36) a day. This includes time spent watching live TV, as well as DVDs, pre-recorded shows, and computer and mobile viewing. [See Table 1]

There are also significant differences in time spent listening to music and playing video games: about three hours a day listening to music and an hour and a half playing video games among Asian, Black, and Hispanic 8- to 18-year-olds, compared to about two hours a day listening to music and one hour playing video games among White youth. Asian youth spend an average of nearly three hours a day (2:53) using computers, Hispanics just under two hours a day (1:49), Blacks 1:24, and Whites 1:17. [See Table 1]

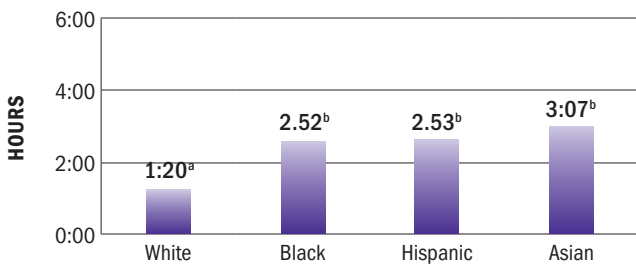
The only medium where there isn't a significant difference between racial and ethnic groups is in time devoted to reading, with youth across the board averaging between a half-hour and 40 minutes a day (:33 for Blacks, :34 for Hispanics, :38 for Asians, and :39 for Whites). [See Table 1]

MOBILE MEDIA

Youth of different races are equally likely to own cell phones (ranging from 61% to 72%, not a statistically significant difference) and iPods or other MP3 players (ranging from 72% to 77%). [See Table 4] But there is a big difference in the frequency and duration of mobile media usage.

CHART 2: Mobile Media, 8- to 18-Year-Olds

Among 8- to 18-year-olds, amount of time spent consuming media on a mobile platform in a typical day



For example, White youth average :26 a day consuming media on a cell phone, compared to 1:28 for Blacks, 1:11 for Asians, and 1:04 for Hispanic youth. [See Table 5] Adding iPods and handheld gaming devices into the mix, Asian, Hispanic, and Black youth spend a total of around three hours a day using mobile media (3:07 for Asians, 2:53 for Hispanics, and 2:52 for Blacks), compared with 1:20 for White youth. [See Table 6] This does not include time spent talking or texting on a cell phone, where there are also some significant differences by race. [See Table 5]

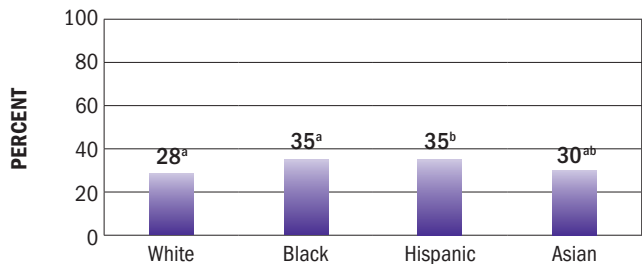
MEDIA MULTITASKING

Although there are large differences in the total amount of media consumed by White and minority youth and in the amount consumed on mobile platforms, there are virtually no differences in the rate of media multitasking across racial and ethnic groups. Depending on the primary medium involved, anywhere from 18% to 47% of 8- to 18-year-olds say that “most of the time” they are using that medium they are also using some additional type of media. Those rates vary from medium to medium, but they don't vary significantly by race. [See Table 7]

Another type of multitasking that many young people engage in is using entertainment media while they are doing their homework: having TV or music on in the background, IM'ing, and so on. As with other types of multitasking, there is very little difference in the percent of youth who say they use entertainment media “most of the time” they are doing homework (35% of Hispanics and Blacks, 30% of Asians, and 28% of Whites).

CHART 3: Multitasking During Homework

Percent of 8- to 18-year-olds who say they use entertainment media “most” of the time they are doing their homework



THE HOME ENVIRONMENT

Across racial and ethnic groups, 8- to 18-year-olds live in homes with an average of just under four TV sets and between two to two and a half video game players per household. Asian youth average almost three computers per household (2.85), White youth about two per household (2.09), and Black and Hispanic youth just under two (1.86 and 1.80 respectively). [See Table 8]

Bedroom media

One big difference in young people's home media environments is that Black and Hispanic youth are much more likely to have TVs, DVD players, and video game consoles in their bedrooms than other youth in their age group. For example, 86% of Black and 77% of Hispanic 8- to 18-year-olds have a TV in their bedroom, compared with 64% of White and Asian youth. Similarly, 62% of Black and 59% of Hispanic youth have a video game player in their room, compared with 44% of Whites and 39% of Asians. Black youth are also much more likely to have cable TV and premium channels available in their room, and Asian youth are much more likely to have a computer in their room (55%, compared with 32% to 39% for the other groups). [See Table 9]

Younger children and bedroom media

An analysis of data from children age six and under shows that these differences begin to emerge at a young age. For example, in this age group about half (54%) of Black children have a TV in their room, compared with 27% of White and 39% of Hispanic children. [See Table 10] Some of this difference may be due to shared living arrangements; for example, 28% of Black children in this age group have a TV in their room and share a room with a sibling, parent, or someone else, compared with 10% of White children this age. [See Table 11]

Background TV

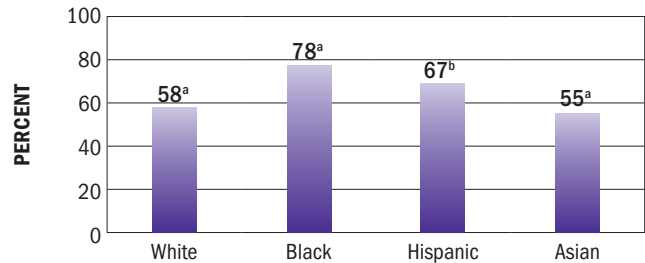
Another area of difference is that Black and Hispanic youth are more likely to live in homes where the TV is usually on during meals. For example, 78% of Black youth, 67% of Hispanic, 58% of White, and 55% of Asian 8- to 18-year-olds say the TV is "usually" on during meals in their home.

Younger children and background TV

Similar differences were evident in the earlier study of children age six and under: Black and Hispanic parents were more than twice as likely as White parents to say their child had lunch or dinner in front of the TV (for example, 27% of Black, 22% of Hispanic, and 10% of White children had

CHART 4: TV on During Meals

Among 8- to 18-year-olds, percent who say the TV is "usually" on during meals at their home



dinner in front of the TV). [See Table 12.] Black parents were also about twice as likely to say the TV is "always" on in their home, whether anyone is watching it or not (23% of Blacks, 12% of Whites, and 9% of Hispanics). [See Table 13]

MEDIA RULES

Most parents do not set limits on the amount of time their children can spend watching TV, playing video games, listening to music, or using the computer, and this finding holds true across the racial and ethnic groups in the study. However, there *are* some differences in the likelihood of parents imposing rules about the *type* of media content their children are allowed to use, with White parents more likely to set rules about what their children can do on computers, what video games they can play, and whether or not they are allowed to have a profile on a social networking site. [See Table 14]

TELEVISION

As mentioned above, television continues to be the most popular medium among 8- to 18-year-olds of all races and ethnicities. However, minority youth spend significantly more time watching TV each day than White youth. These differences are apparent in live TV as well as the newer types of platforms available for viewing: watching on computers and on iPods or cell phones. For live TV, Black and Hispanic

youth watch about an hour more each day than White or Asian youth (3:23 for Blacks, 3:08 for Hispanics, 2:28 for Asians, and 2:14 for Whites). And when it comes to watching on other platforms (computers, cell phones, or iPods), White youth spend about 45 minutes less each day than other young people do (:35 for Whites, compared with 1:20 for Blacks, 1:18 for Hispanics, and 1:17 for Asians). [See Table 15]

Younger children and TV

The analysis of data concerning children age six and under found that Black parents were more likely than Hispanic parents to say they've seen their kids imitate positive behavior from TV, like helping or sharing (72% of Black parents, 66% of Whites, and 59% of Hispanics). All three groups of parents were equally likely to say they had seen their child imitate aggressive behavior from TV (22% to 25%). [See Table 17.] There was also no difference in the proportion of parents who said TV mostly "calms" or "excites" their child (from 15% to 20% for exciting and 46% to 56% for calming). [See Table 18.] Black parents are more likely than White or Hispanic parents to put their children to sleep to TV "most" or "all" of the time (18%, compared with 8% of White and Hispanic parents). [See Table 19]

Parents' views about the educational value of TV did not vary significantly by race or ethnicity, with anywhere from 32% to 41% saying they thought TV mostly helps young children's learning, and 28% to 37% saying it mostly hurts. [See Table 20.] Parents of white children (27%) were more likely to report that their children spent most of their TV time watching educational shows compared with parents of Black (18%) and Hispanic (16%) children. Black children in this age group are a little more likely than others to spend half or more of their TV time watching non-children's shows (22%, compared with 13% of Whites and 18% of Hispanics). [See Table 21]

COMPUTERS

When it comes to spending time using computers for entertainment, Asian youth lead the way, spending an average of almost three hours (2:53) a day among 8- to 18-year-olds, followed by Hispanic youth at 1:49, Blacks at 1:24, and Whites at 1:17. [See Table 22]

Asian youth have more computers at home and are more likely to have a computer in their bedroom. [See Table 23] Asian youth are also substantially more likely to have their own laptop than White youth (41% of Asians, 35% of Hispanics, 33% of Blacks, and 24% of Whites). Hispanic youth spend more time using computers than White youth do, despite the fact that they have fewer computers at home and are less likely to have home Internet access than their White or Asian peers (74% of Hispanics and 78% of Blacks, compared with 89% of Asians and 88% of Whites). [See Table 23]

Computers for school work

Children across the various racial and ethnic groups spend far less time using the computer for schoolwork than for entertainment: an average of :16 a day for White, Black, and Hispanic 8- to 18-year-olds and :20 for Asians. [See Table 24]

Social networking

Asian and Hispanic youth are particularly avid social networkers. For example, Asian 8- to 18-year-olds spend an average of :33 and Hispanics :29 a day on social networks, compared with :21 among Black youth and :19 among Whites. [See Table 22] White youth are also less likely to have visited MySpace or Facebook (56%, compared with 68% of Hispanics, with Blacks and Asians in the middle) and to have created a profile on one of those sites (47%, compared with 61% of Hispanics). [See Table 25]

Other computer activities

There are no racial or ethnic differences in the proportion of young people who have ever downloaded music, written a blog, posted a video, or watched a TV show online. There are also no significant differences in the percent of youth who

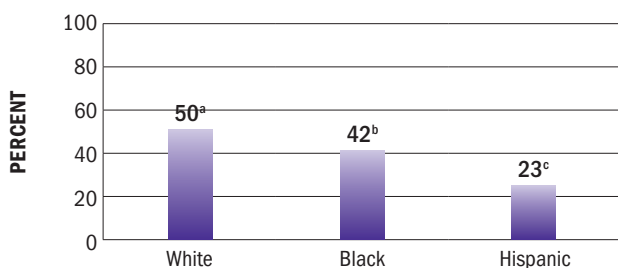
have gotten information about a health issue that affects them or someone they know (58% of Whites, 50% of Hispanics, and 49% of Blacks). [See Table 25]

Younger children and computers

The embrace of online and social media among Hispanic tweens and teens is particularly interesting given that there is a large gap in computer use in the early years, with 23% of Hispanic children age six and under having ever used a computer, compared with 50% of White and 42% of Black children. Black and White parents of young children are also more likely to endorse the educational benefits of computers than Hispanic parents are: 81% of Black parents say computers mostly help children’s learning, compared with 63% of Hispanic and 70% of White parents. [See Table 26]

CHART 5: Use of Computers, 0- to 6-Year-Olds

Percent of 0- to 6-year-olds who have ever used a computer



VIDEO GAMES

Among 8- to 18-year-olds, White youth spend less time playing video games in a typical day than other young people do (:56 for Whites, 1:25 for Blacks, 1:35 for Hispanics, and 1:37 for Asians). [See Table 27]

The biggest differences with regard to video games come in mobile gaming—on cell phones, iPods, and handheld players. White youth spend an average of :24 a day in mobile game play, compared with :53 a day for Blacks, :51 for Hispanics, and 1:00 for Asians. Hispanic youth also spend

more time than Black or White youth playing console games (:45 a day, compared with :32 a day for Blacks and Whites and :38 a day for Asians). [See Table 27]

Younger children and video games

With regard to younger children, Black parents of zero- to six-year-olds have a less unfavorable view of the educational impact of video games than other parents (34% of Black parents say video games mostly hurt children’s learning, compared with 49% of White parents and 63% of Hispanics). [See Table 28] Black children also start playing video games at earlier ages than White and Hispanic youth: 39% of Black zero- to six-year-olds have ever played console video games, compared with 28% of Whites and 25% of Hispanics. Black children in this age group average :12 a day in console game-playing, compared with :04 a day for White and Hispanic youth. Young Black children are also twice as likely as other children this age to have a video game player in their bedroom (20% vs. 9% of White and Hispanic children). [See Table 29]

MUSIC

After television, music is the medium that shows the greatest difference in the amount of time tweens and teens of different races devote to it each day, with White youth spending much less time listening than minority youth (1:56 for Whites, compared with 3:00 for Blacks, 3:08 for Hispanics, and 2:56 for Asians). The biggest differences are in new media: Black, Asian, and Hispanic youth spend a lot more time listening through their cell phones, iPods, and computers than White youth do. [See Table 30]

Younger children and music

This pattern was not evident among zero- to six-year-olds, where there was no statistically significant difference in the average amount of time spent listening to music each day. Music-listening was a relatively popular activity among all groups, at :48 a day for White children, :54 for Blacks, and :43 for Hispanics. [See Table 2]

PRINT

The one medium where there is no statistically significant difference between young people of different races and ethnicities is reading print. The average amount of time spent reading print for pleasure is :39 a day for Whites, :33 a day for Blacks, :34 a day for Hispanics, and :38 a day for Asians. However, the overall similarity in rates of reading does mask one difference, which is time spent reading books in particular. Here, Black youth average :18 a day, Hispanics :20, and Whites :28. [See Table 31] Further analysis indicates that this difference is especially pronounced in the tween years but ceases to be statistically significant by the time the tweens become teens, when time spent reading books for pleasure has gone down among all races (:31 a day of reading books among White 8- to14-year-olds, compared with :18 for Blacks, :23 for Hispanics, and :25 for Asians). [See Table 32]

Younger children and reading print

Among children age six and under, there are notable differences in reading. Fifty percent of Hispanic, 66% of Black, and 75% of White parents of children in this age group say their children read or are read to “every day.” At this age, White children spend :44 a day reading or being read to, Black children spend :39, and Hispanics :24. [See Table 33]

Conclusion

In recent years, the opportunities for young people to use media have grown exponentially, with more TVs, video game players, and computers in the home and bedroom and a myriad of new mobile devices like cell phones and iPods for watching videos, playing games, and listening to music on the go.

As these opportunities for media use have grown, young people have taken them up eagerly and begun spending ever more time with media each day. Minority youth have been especially quick to adopt these new media platforms, just as they continue to be more devoted to traditional media.

There is no other activity that young people devote as much of their daily life to as they do to media, and its place in their lives is still growing. As we consider the impact of media use on children and adolescents—the types of messages they are exposed to, the information they learn, the people and products they connect to, and the creativity some media afford them—it is important to understand that their media habits vary, not just by age, gender, and socio-economic status, but also by race and ethnicity.

Understanding these differences is important. As media have assumed an expanding place in young people’s lives—occupying more of their time and being used more privately and on platforms that allow interaction and targeting—the potential for media to impact youth, both positively and negatively, has never been greater.

TABLE 1: Total Media Exposure, 8- to 18-Year-Olds

Among 8- to 18-year-olds, average amount of time spent with each medium in a typical day

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian
TV content	3:36 ^a	5:54 ^b	5:21 ^b	4:41 ^{ab}
Music/audio	1:56 ^a	3:00 ^b	3:08 ^b	2:56 ^{ab}
Computer	1:17 ^a	1:24 ^{ab}	1:49 ^b	2:53 ^{ab}
Video games	:56 ^a	1:25 ^b	1:35 ^b	1:37 ^{ab}
Print	:39	:33	:34	:38
Movies	:13 ^a	:43 ^b	:33 ^b	:26 ^{ab}
Total media exposure	8:36^a	12:59^b	13:00^b	13:13^b

TABLE 2: Total Media Exposure, 0-to 6-Year-Olds

Among 0- to 6-year-olds, average amount of time spent with each medium in a typical day

	White	Black	Hispanic
TV content	1:19 ^a	1:38 ^b	1:22 ^a
Music	:48	:54	:43
Computer	:08 ^a	:09 ^a	:03 ^b
Video games	:04 ^a	:12 ^b	:04 ^a
Print	:44 ^a	:39 ^a	:24 ^b
Electronic books	:05	:06	:03
Total screen media	1:31^a	1:58^b	1:29^a

Note: TV content in this age group includes TV, DVDs, and videos.

TABLE 3: Overall Media Use, 0-to 6-Year-Olds

In a typical day, percent of 0- to 6-year-olds who spend any time

	White	Black	Hispanic
Reading or being read to	87 ^a	83 ^a	66 ^b
Listening to music	84 ^a	83 ^a	76 ^b
Watching TV	73	78	77
Watching a video or DVD	35 ^a	22 ^b	29 ^{ab}
Playing computer games	14 ^a	14 ^a	4 ^b
Playing console video games	8	14	7

TABLE 4: Mobile Media Ownership, 8- to 18-Year-Olds

Among 8-to 18-year-olds, percent who own each media device

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian
Cell phone	63	72	67	61
Laptop	24 ^a	33 ^b	35 ^b	41 ^b
Hand-held game player	61	58	53	63
iPod/MP3 player	77	75	76	72

TABLE 5: Cell Phone Use, 8- to 18-Year-Olds

Among 8- to 18-year-olds, average time spent in a typical day using a cell phone for

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian
Talking	:25 ^a	:46 ^b	:37 ^b	:36 ^{ab}
Texting	1:22 ^a	2:03 ^b	1:42 ^{abc}	1:37 ^{abc}
Consuming media	:26 ^a	1:28 ^b	1:04 ^c	1:11 ^{bc}

TABLE 6: Mobile Media Use, 8- to 18-Year-Olds

Among 8-to 18-year-olds, average time spent using mobile media in a typical day

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian
Cell phone				
Listening to music	:08 ^a	:35 ^b	:21 ^c	:17 ^{ac}
Playing games	:09 ^a	:29 ^b	:24 ^c	:28 ^{abc}
Watching TV	:09 ^a	:23 ^b	:19 ^b	:26 ^b
iPod/MP3 player				
Listening to music	:30 ^a	:40 ^{ab}	:54 ^b	1:06 ^b
Watching TV	:08 ^a	:20 ^b	:29 ^b	:18 ^{ab}
Handheld gaming (iPod or gaming device)				
Playing games	:15 ^a	:24 ^b	:27 ^b	:32 ^b
Total mobile media	1:20 ^a	2:52 ^b	2:53 ^b	3:07 ^b

TABLE 7: Media Multitasking, 7th to 12th Graders

Percent of 7th to 12th graders who say they use another medium “most” of the time they

	White	Black	Hispanic
Listen to music	44	47	42
Use a computer	43	38	36
Watch TV	37	44	41
Play video games	18	23	27
Read a book, magazine, or newspaper	28	26	30

*Note: These questions were only asked of 7th to 12th graders. The sample size for Asian youth was not sufficient to report reliably.***TABLE 8: Media in the Home, 8- to 18-Year-Olds**

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian
Among 8- to 18-year-olds, average number of each media platform in the home				
TVs	3.77	3.82	3.68	3.76
DVDs/VCRs	2.80 ^a	2.70 ^a	2.67 ^a	3.38 ^b
TiVo/DVR	.90 ^a	1.24 ^b	.87 ^a	.94 ^{ab}
CD players	2.48 ^a	2.11 ^b	1.90 ^b	1.96 ^b
Radios	2.68 ^a	2.38 ^b	2.39 ^b	2.21 ^b
Computers	2.09 ^a	1.86 ^{ab}	1.80 ^b	2.85 ^c
Video game players	2.26	2.44	2.35	2.44
Among 8- to 18-year-olds, percent who live in homes with				
Cable/satellite TV	83 ^a	90 ^b	83 ^a	78 ^a
Premium channels	43 ^a	63 ^b	47 ^a	32 ^a

TABLE 9: Media in the Bedroom, 8- to 18-Year-Olds

Among 8-18 year-olds, percent with each item in their bedroom

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian
TV	64 ^a	86 ^b	77 ^c	64 ^a
Cable TV	41 ^a	68 ^b	59 ^c	42 ^a
Premium channels	17 ^a	42 ^b	28 ^c	14 ^a
DVD/VCR	53 ^a	64 ^b	62 ^b	51 ^{ab}
TiVo/DVR	8 ^a	20 ^b	14 ^c	7 ^{ac}
CD player	74 ^a	65 ^{bc}	66 ^b	54 ^c
Radio	76 ^a	80 ^{ab}	75 ^b	65 ^c
Computer	32 ^a	34 ^{ab}	39 ^b	55 ^c
Internet access	29 ^a	33 ^{ab}	37 ^b	56 ^c
Video game player	44 ^a	62 ^b	59 ^b	39 ^a

TABLE 10: Media in the Bedroom, 0- to 6-Year-Olds

Among 0- to 6-year-olds, percent with each item in their bedroom

	White	Black	Hispanic
TV	27 ^a	54 ^b	39 ^a
VCR/DVD player	22 ^a	35 ^b	22 ^a
Video game player	9 ^a	20 ^b	9 ^a
Computer	3	6	8

TABLE 11: TV in the Bedroom, 0- to 6-Year-Olds, by own or shared room

Among 0- to 6-year-olds, percent who have a TV in their bedroom and who

	White	Black	Hispanic
Have their own room	17 ^a	26 ^b	14 ^a
Share a room with a sibling	8 ^a	16 ^b	13 ^{ab}
Share a room with a parent	2 ^a	10 ^b	11 ^b
Have some other sleeping arrangement	-	2	-

TABLE 12: TV During Meals, 0- to 6-Year-Olds

In a typical day, percent of all 0- to 6-year-olds who eat each meal in front of a TV

	White	Black	Hispanic
Breakfast	16	14	19
Lunch	7 ^a	15 ^b	18 ^b
Dinner	10 ^a	27 ^b	22 ^b
Snack	38	43	44

TABLE 13: Background TV, 0- to 6-Year-Olds

Among 0- to 6-year-olds, percent whose parents say the TV is on in their home, whether anyone is watching or not

	White	Black	Hispanic
“Always”	12 ^a	23 ^b	9 ^a
“Always” or “most of the time”	31 ^a	50 ^b	26 ^a

TABLE 14: Media Rules, 8- to 18-Year-Olds

Among 8- to 18-year-olds, percent who say they have rules about

	The amount of time they can spend with				The type of content they can use			
	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian
TV	29	26	26	34	52 ^a	43 ^{ab}	38 ^b	45 ^{ab}
Music	8 ^a	14 ^b	12 ^{ab}	17 ^b	31 ^a	26 ^a	17 ^b	22 ^{ab}
Computers	37	34	33	36	60 ^a	44 ^b	43 ^b	49 ^{ab}
Video games	31	27	28	32	37 ^a	23 ^b	22 ^b	26 ^{ab}
Whether they can have a social networking profile	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	40 ^a	30 ^b	24 ^b	27 ^b

TABLE 15: TV Viewing, 8- to 18-Year-Olds

Among 8- to 18-year-olds, average amount of time spent watching TV content in a typical day

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian
Live TV	2:14 ^a	3:23 ^b	3:08 ^{bc}	2:28 ^{ac}
Time-shifted TV				
On Demand	:11 ^a	:21 ^b	:11 ^a	:07 ^a
Self-recorded	:09 ^a	:14 ^a	:07 ^{ab}	:04 ^{bc}
DVD/Video				
On a TV	:24	:28	:25	:36
On a computer	:03 ^a	:08 ^b	:11 ^{bc}	:08 ^{bc}
Other platforms	:35 ^a	1:20 ^b	1:18 ^b	1:17 ^a
Internet	:17 ^a	:37 ^b	:30 ^b	:33 ^b
iPod/MP3 player	:08 ^a	:20 ^{bc}	:29 ^c	:18 ^{ab}
Cell phone	:10 ^a	:23 ^b	:19 ^b	:26 ^{ab}
Total TV content	3:36 ^a	5:54 ^b	5:21 ^b	4:41 ^{ab}

TABLE 16: TV on New Platforms, 8- to 18-Year-Olds

Percent of 8- to 18-year-olds who have ever watched a TV show

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian
On the Internet from a computer	48	48	48	49
On a cell phone, iPod, or other MP3 player	26 ^a	30 ^{ab}	35 ^b	28 ^{ab}

TABLE 17: Imitating Positive and Negative Behaviors on TV, 0- to 6-Year-Olds

Percent of parents who say they have ever seen their 0- to 6-year-old imitate positive or negative behaviors from TV

	White	Black	Hispanic
Aggressive behaviors like hitting or kicking	25	22	22
Positive behaviors like sharing or helping	66 ^{ab}	72 ^a	59 ^b

TABLE 18: TV Calming or Exciting Children, 0- to 6-Year-Olds

Percent of parents of 0- to 6-year-olds who say TV generally

	White	Black	Hispanic
Calms their child down	54	46	56
Gets their child excited	15	20	17
Both equally	9	13	10
Depends on child's mood or show they're watching	12	10	8

TABLE 19: Falling Asleep to the TV, 0- to 6-Year-Olds

Among 0- to 6-year-olds, percent whose parents put them to sleep with the TV on

	White	Black	Hispanic
All or most of the time	8 ^a	18 ^b	8 ^a
About half the time	3	3	4
Less than half the time	4	14	12
Never/No TV in child's bedroom	83	75	74

TABLE 20: Parental Attitudes Toward Educational Impact of TV, 0- to 6-Year-Olds

Among 0- to 6-year-olds, percent whose parents say TV mostly helps/hurts children's learning

	White	Black	Hispanic
Mostly helps	38	41	32
Mostly hurts	30	28	37
Doesn't have much effect on	21	21	20

TABLE 21: Types of TV Shows Viewed, 0- to 6-Year-Olds

Among 0- to 6-year-olds who are regular TV viewers, percent whose parents say they watch

	White	Black	Hispanic
Mostly kids' educational shows	27 ^a	18 ^b	16 ^b
Mostly kids' entertainment shows	9 ^a	7 ^a	16 ^b
An equal amount of kids' educational and entertainment shows	49	51	47
Half or more non-kids' shows	13 ^a	22 ^b	18 ^a

TABLE 22: Time Spent in Various Computer Activities, 8- to 18-Year-Olds

Among 8- to 18-year-olds, average amount of time spent using a computer in a typical day for

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian
Social networking	:19 ^a	:21 ^{ab}	:29 ^b	:33 ^{ab}
Games	:18 ^a	:12 ^b	:16 ^{ab}	:33 ^a
Video websites	:11 ^a	:17 ^b	:19 ^b	:31 ^{ab}
Instant messaging	:07 ^a	:12 ^{ab}	:14 ^b	:28 ^{ab}
Other websites	:10	:09	:12	:16
E-mail	:04 ^a	:07 ^{ab}	:07 ^b	:04 ^{ab}
Graphics/photos	:04	:03	:05	:10
Reading magazines/newspapers online	:02	:02	:03	:03
Anything else	:01	:01	:05	:15
Total recreational computer	1:17 ^a	1:24 ^a	1:49 ^b	2:53 ^{ab}

TABLE 23: Computers and Internet in the Home and Bedroom, 8- to 18-Year-Olds

Percent of 8- to 18-year-olds who have computers and Internet access

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian
In their home				
Computer	94 ^a	89 ^b	92 ^{ab}	98 ^c
Internet access	88 ^a	78 ^b	74 ^b	89 ^a
High speed Internet	61	55	52	62
Own laptop	24 ^a	33 ^b	35 ^b	41 ^b
In their bedroom				
Computer	32 ^a	34 ^a	38 ^b	55 ^c
Internet access	29 ^a	33 ^{ab}	37 ^b	56 ^c

TABLE 24: Using a Computer for Schoolwork, 8- to 18-Year-Olds

Average amount of time 8- to 18-year-olds spend in a typical day using a computer for school work

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian
8- to 14-year-olds	:13	:16	:13	*
15- to 18-year-olds	:25	:17	:18	*
Among all	:16	:16	:16	:20

* The sample size for Asian youth is not sufficient to report reliably.

TABLE 25: Specific Computer Actions, 8- to 18-Year-Olds

Percent of 8- to 18-year-olds who say they have ever

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian
Visited MySpace or Facebook	56 ^a	63 ^{ab}	68 ^b	67 ^{ab}
Created a profile on MySpace or Facebook	47 ^a	53 ^{ab}	61 ^b	58 ^{ab}
Visited a social networking site other than MySpace or Facebook*	46	47	52	*
Created a profile on a social networking site other than MySpace or Facebook*	24 ^a	35 ^{ab}	35 ^{ab}	*
Read a blog *	53 ^a	44 ^a	43 ^b	*
Written a blog*	29	33	26	*
Downloaded music from the Internet	59	60	67	70
Listened to the radio through the Internet	29	23	30	33
Watched a video on a site like YouTube or Google Video	76 ^{ab}	68 ^a	68 ^a	83 ^b
Posted a video to a site like YouTube or Google Video*	25	25	22	*
Watched a TV show on the Internet from a computer	48	48	48	49
Gotten health information online*	58 ^a	49 ^{ab}	50 ^{ab}	*

*These questions were asked of 7th to 12th graders only; the sample size for Asian youth in this group is too small to report reliably.

TABLE 26: Parental Opinion of Educational Impact of Computers, 0- to 6-Year-Olds

Among 0- to 6-year-olds, percent whose parents say using a computer mostly helps/hurts children's learning

	White	Black	Hispanic
Mostly helps	70 ^a	81 ^b	63 ^a
Mostly hurts	7 ^{ab}	4 ^a	11 ^b
Doesn't have much effect on	15	10	14

TABLE 27: Time Spent Playing Video Games, 8- to 18-Year-Olds

Among 8- to 18-year-olds, average amount of time spent playing video games on each platform in a typical day

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian
Console player	:32 ^a	:32 ^a	:45 ^b	:38 ^{ab}
Cell phone	:09 ^a	:29 ^b	:24 ^b	:28 ^{ab}
Handheld player	:15 ^a	:24 ^b	:27 ^b	:32 ^b
Total video games	:56 ^a	1:25 ^b	1:35 ^b	1:37 ^{ab}

TABLE 28: Parental Opinion of Educational Impact of Video Games, 0- to 6-Year-Olds

Among 0- to 6-year-olds, percent whose parents say playing video games mostly helps/hurts children's learning

	White	Black	Hispanic
Mostly helps	18	20	13
Mostly hurts	49 ^a	34 ^b	63 ^c
Doesn't have much effect on	23 ^a	31 ^a	15 ^b

TABLE 29: Video Games and Young Children, 0- to 6-Year-Olds

	White	Black	Hispanic
Amount of time spent playing console video games in a typical day	:04 ^a	:12 ^b	:04 ^a
Percent who have ever played console video games	28 ^a	39 ^b	25 ^a
Percent with a video game player in their bedroom	9 ^a	20 ^b	9 ^a

TABLE 30: Time Spent Listening to Music, 8- to 18-Year-Olds

Among 8- to 18-year-olds, average amount of time spent listening to music in a typical day

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian
Music	1:48 ^a	2:42 ^b	2:52 ^b	2:37 ^b
Radio	:29 ^a	:34 ^a	:39 ^a	:17 ^b
CD	:16 ^a	:16 ^a	:20 ^a	:04 ^b
Cell phone	:08 ^a	:35 ^b	:21 ^c	:17 ^{ac}
iPod/MP3	:30 ^a	:40 ^{ab}	:54 ^b	1:06 ^b
Computer	:25 ^a	:37 ^b	:38 ^b	:52 ^b
Total Music/Audio	1:56 ^a	3:00 ^b	3:08 ^b	2:56 ^{ab}

TABLE 31: Time Spent Reading Print, 8- to 18-Year-Olds

Among 8- to 18-year-olds, average amount of time spent reading print in a typical day

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian
Magazines	:08	:11	:10	:08
Newspapers	:03	:04	:03	:05
Books	:28 ^a	:18 ^b	:20 ^b	:25 ^{ab}
Total print	:39	:33	:34	:38

Note: Does not include time spent reading for school.

TABLE 32: Time Spent Reading Books, 8- to 18-Year-Olds, by age

Average amount of time spent reading books in a typical day among

	White	Black	Hispanic
8- to 14-year-olds	:31 ^a	:18 ^b	:23 ^a
15- to 18-year-olds	:23	:19	:17

Note: Does not include time spent reading for school. The sample size for Asian youth was not sufficient to report reliably when broken down by age.

TABLE 33: Reading and Young Children, 0- to 6-Year-Olds

	White	Black	Hispanic
Amount of time spent reading or being read to in a typical day	:44 ^a	:39 ^a	:24 ^b
Percent who read or are read to “every day”	75 ^a	66 ^b	50 ^c

Credits

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