Is there an app for that: Parenting style influences on children's media exposure

Daniel G. Gibson
Pacific University

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Is there an app for that: Parenting style influences on children's media exposure

Abstract
The world of electronic media has become the near-omnipresent influence on children. On average, American youth are exposed to eight hours of media per day. Additionally, media influence has crossed socio-economic factors so that children of all backgrounds are having similar exposure. This ever-growing influence has been found to have both positive and negative influences dependent upon the amount of exposure and more importantly the type of content. Past research has examined the effects of media on children's development or the importance of particular parenting styles on child development; however, few studies have connected the two topics. The present study further examines the relationship between parenting style and children's media exposure. Male and female child participants from grades fourth through twelfth, along with their parents, completed online surveys. Child participants filled out a revised Parenting Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) that determined into what style of parenting their parents fit. Parent participants filled out the Child Media Exposure Questionnaire-Individual Parent (CMEQ-IP), which determined their children's exposure to media outlets (i.e., television/movies, video games, Internet, electronic music devices, and cell phones) and how they monitored their children's media exposure. The findings of this study highlights the importance of not only authoritative parenting style on children's development (i.e., media exposure) but more significantly how parents who share parenting styles have a more positive influence on their children's media exposure when compared to parents who have incongruent styles of parenting.

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IS THERE AN APP FOR THAT: PARENTING STYLE INFLUENCES ON CHILDREN’S MEDIA EXPOSURE

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY

OF

SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

PACIFIC UNIVERSITY

HILLSBORO, OREGON

BY

DANIEL G. GIBSON

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF

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The world of electronic media has become the near-omnipresent influence on children. On average, American youth are exposed to eight hours of media per day. Additionally, media influence has crossed socio-economic factors so that children of all backgrounds are having similar exposure. This ever-growing influence has been found to have both positive and negative influences dependent upon the amount of exposure and more importantly the type of content. Past research has examined the effects of media on children’s development or the importance of particular parenting styles on child development; however, few studies have connected the two topics. The present study further examines the relationship between parenting style and children’s media exposure. Male and female child participants from grades fourth through twelfth, along with their parents, completed online surveys. Child participants filled out a revised Parenting Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) that determined into what style of parenting their parents fit. Parent participants filled out the Child Media Exposure Questionnaire-Individual Parent (CMEQ-IP), which determined their children’s exposure to media outlets (i.e., television/movies, video games, Internet, electronic music devices, and cell phones) and how they monitored their children’s media exposure. The findings of this study highlights the importance of not only authoritative parenting style on children’s development (i.e., media exposure) but more significantly how parents who share parenting styles have a more positive influence on their children’s media exposure when compared to parents who have incongruent styles of parenting.
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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

**Background**

“Mom and Dad, you just don’t understand…..” This statement, or more precisely its sentiment, has been expressed by children for as long as there have been parent/child relationships. However, this sentimentality has never been more relevant and accurate than it is today due, at least in significant part, to the worldwide explosion of electronic media. Twenty-first century American youth now have an ever-evolving array of influences in addition to parents, friends and school, such as television, movies, video games, portable music devices, smart phones, Internet, email, and social networks. These influences may vary depending on the child; however, one variable impacts a child’s interactions with these influences: the parent. The term “parent” is used for convenience in this study, but denotes a child’s full-time, legal guardian (which could include a grandparent or any other relative or full-time caregiver).

Parents’ influence on their children, whether positive or negative, derives in large part from their parenting style. There has been substantial research on electronic media, and on parenting style; however, the research has been limited in connecting the two topics. The limited research that connects the topics has typically picked only one outlet (e.g., parenting style influence on children’s MySpace use). For the most part, there is valuable research on parenting style and the vast influences it can and does have on child development. Also, the research on electronic media offers rich data regarding media consumption and the many influences this can and does have on children’s development. Due to this recent, expanding eruption in media, there is a definite need for identifying and connecting how particular parenting styles (e.g., authoritative) will largely impact children’s interactions with differing media outlets.
To amend this gap in the research and to further explore the topic of parenting style influences on children’s media exposure, I plan to: a) define the distinction between children’s media use and exposure and examine the relative rates of children’s media use and exposure—looking at possible moderating variables (e.g., socioeconomic status, gender, and race and ethnicity); b) define the differing parenting styles and their influences on children’s development and media exposure; c) offer solutions for how parents can educate themselves to better monitor their children’s media use and exposure.

I plan to explore not only the negative influences of media due to time of exposure and content but also to address the positive influences. Research has supported that parents who adopt an authoritative parenting style have, in general, more positive influence and interaction with their children when compared to parents who adopt authoritarian or permissive styles of parenting (Roberts & Foehr, 2008). Like prior research, I expect to find that parents who utilize an authoritative parenting style will have more positive influences with their children’s cognitive development related to media exposure than parents who implement an authoritarian or permissive style.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Rates of Media Use/Exposure

During the mid-1990’s television dominated the media world, but now televisions are contending within an arena of media devices. American children are now equipped with smartphones, iPods, social networks, email, interactive multiplayer video games, and virtual reality sites (Brooks-Gun & Donahue, 2008). They spend more time with media than any single activity except sleeping, with the average American youth (ages 8-18) reporting six hours of daily media use (Roberts & Foehr, 2008).

With the miscellany of media devices, American children have learned to juggle multiple devices at once. Due to this multitasking, researchers have emphasized the importance of differentiating between media use and exposure. Media use has been defined as the amount of time individuals dedicate to all media separately; for example, a child may spend one hour watching television. Media exposure denotes media content encountered by individuals conveyed in units of time; for example, a child is exposed to one hour of television while she surfs the internet during that same hour, which would be combined to total two hours of media exposure. When the distinction between media use and exposure is considered, then those children who averaged six hours of media use daily could be translated to eight and half hours of daily media exposure (Brooks-Gun & Donahue, 2008; Roberts & Foehr, 2008).

Roberts and Foehr (2008) and Brooks-Gun and Donahue (2008) conducted a meta-analysis to sift through a vast amount of research on how media use and exposure may vary across demographics (e.g., race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status (SES), age, and psychosocial variables such as personal adjustment and academic performance). They found that exposure to media peaks early for children around two-years-old and briefly declines once they enter school,
then climbs again among 11- and 12-year-olds, peaking at almost eight hours daily. They found that this average was relatively consistent across demographics; however, there were differences between groups in exposure time relative to the media outlet. Black youth had relatively high television and video game exposure when compared to white and Hispanic youth; whereas, white youth had relatively high personal computer, Internet, and instant messaging exposure when compared to the other ethnic groups, with black youth having the least exposure. It was also found that media exposure was negatively related to SES indicators; however, researchers are currently finding that this relationship may be diminishing.

**Parenting Style Influences**

This dynamic world of electronic media is almost omnipresent within the lives of today’s American children. As media has been growing in influence and commonality, it is becoming less discriminating. No longer do you have to be of a certain ethnicity or social class for the media to have its influence (Roberts & Foehr, 2008). Children today face more influences than any other time the world has seen. Yet, of these influences, there is one that sets the developmental stage for how children interact with electronic devices: the parents.

A parent’s positive or negative influence on his or her child stems from his or her parenting style. To examine parenting style influences on children’s development, I will discuss the findings of three studies. In each study, researchers used two different parenting style questionnaires to assess parenting style influences on children’s development. In the first and third studies, researchers used Buri’s (1991) Parenting Authority Questionnaire (PAQ). In comparison to Bahmrind’s approach, Buri’s questionnaire labels parents in three categories: *authoritarian, authoritative,* and *permissive* (Leman, 2005; McKinney & Renk, 2008). In the second study, the researchers used the Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, Eastin, and Dornbusch
Parenting Style Questionnaire (PSQ) that divides parents’ authority styles into four categories: authoritarian (high strictness, low warmth), authoritative (high strictness, high warmth), indulgent (low strictness, high warmth), and neglectful (low strictness, low warmth) (as cited in Rosen, Cheever, & Carrier, 2008). By use of the PAQ and PSQ, researchers in the following three studies explored parenting style influence on children’s development.

In the first study, Leman (2005) assessed parenting style influence on young children’s moral reasoning and perceptions of adult rule justifications. Leman’s hypothesis was that children in the authoritative parent group would report that adults give more explanations when compared to reports of children in the authoritarian parent group. His sample consisted of 11-year-old (n = 100) participants from two suburban schools in London, England. The data were collected from the PAQ and a booklet of vignettes that the children filled out. The booklet presented five vignettes that required a response related to types of justifications children attributed to adults depicted in the stories. Responses to each of the stories were coded in two different ways. First, the responses were examined to determine whether they offered an explanation or not. Second, when an explanation was attributed, it was classified into one of six categories: Equality, Authority, Consequences for Child, Consequences for Others, Rules and Norms, and Other. Leman found that children in the authoritative parent group perceived that adults would give more justification based on equality in social interactions when compared to children in the authoritarian parent group.

The implications from Leman’s study may also speak to whether authoritative parents will not only monitor their children’s electronic media exposure, but also spend more time monitoring and discussing media content than parents who adopt authoritarian and permissive styles. The findings regarding children of authoritative parents perceiving more rule justification
could support one of my hypotheses, which is that authoritative parents will have more qualitative interactions regarding their children’s media exposure time than authoritarian and permissive parents.

In the second study, Rosen, Cheever, and Carrier (2008) provided a different view of parenting style: They examined how parenting style affects teen MySpace use. Rosen et al. had two hypotheses for their study. First, they hypothesized that parents would not limit or monitor older teens’ MySpace use but would monitor younger teens’ use. Second, they predicted that authoritative parents would have more positive MySpace behaviors (e.g., increased knowledge of teens’ use and more limit-setting and monitoring) than authoritarian, permissive, or neglectful parents. The data were collected from an anonymous online survey of both MySpace users (n = 341) and one of the user’s parents (n = 341) in the Los Angeles area. Rosen et al. found that both hypotheses were supported: Parents monitor younger teens’ MySpace use more than they monitored older teens’ use, and authoritative parenting was associated with increased knowledge of teens’ use and more limit-setting and monitoring than was authoritarian parenting. The authors concluded by recommending that parents become more aware of their teens’ MySpace use (e.g., by examining their teens’ profile pictures, friend lists, etc.). Also, parents needed to be more active in setting limits and monitoring the Internet use of all their children, regardless of age.

Rosen et al.’s (2008) finding, that parents monitor their older teens’ use of MySpace less than younger teens, is one reason I choose to focus on children in grades four through 12. This is also the age range where children reported the most media use than any other age range (Brooks-Gun & Donahue, 2008). Another important finding was that authoritative parents had more knowledge of their teens’ MySpace use and more limit-setting and monitoring than parents who
adopted the other two styles of parenting. This awareness and monitoring supports Leman’s (2005) study, which found that, children of authoritative parents perceive their parents to provide more rule justification and explanation.

One other important point is the impact a particular parenting style has on not only children’s media exposure but how a certain style impacts the overall emotional and cognitive development of children. In the last study, McKinney and Renk (2008) explored parenting style influence when children transition to adulthood. The authors assessed this influence on college students looking at four factors related to emotional adjustment. For the first factor, researchers examined the different parenting styles that fathers and mothers used with their sons and daughters. For the second factor, researchers investigated the influence of congruent and differential parenting of fathers and mothers on their adult children attending college. For the third factor, in addition to differences between fathers and mothers, researchers looked at whether and how parenting styles might change depending on the sex of the child. Finally, the researchers wanted to determine whether congruent parenting styles were more important than any other combination of parenting styles adopted. McKinney and Renk’s sample consisted of 324 female and 151 male undergraduate students (ages 18-22) who were enrolled in a psychology course at a state university. They found that mothers were more likely than fathers to adopt an authoritative and permissive parenting style, whereas fathers were more likely to adopt an authoritarian parenting style. Men in the study reported receiving more permissive parenting than the women, which according to McKinney and Renk supported the notion that mothers and fathers believed their sons were more capable of caring for themselves than their daughters. Men reported higher emotional adjustment than women. In addition, participants’ perceptions of congruent authoritative parenting were more emotionally adjusted when compared
to participants of any other combination. Furthermore, participants who perceived that their mother was authoritative and their father authoritarian related to moderate emotional adjustment. McKinney and Renk concluded by suggesting the importance of further examination of parenting styles adopted by both fathers and mothers. They also suggested further research on parenting style differences as related to the sex of the children.

McKinney and Renk’s (2008) exploration on parenting style influences after the children leave the home suggests the importance of congruent parenting and parenting from a particular style, namely authoritative. They found that when both mothers and fathers adopted authoritative parenting styles, their children had greater emotional adjustment than children whose parents adopted any other parenting style combination. McKinney and Renk also found that depending on the sex of children, parenting style may change. In all three studies, researchers found that authoritative parenting is most effective in navigating their children’s emotional and cognitive development (Leman, 2005; McKinney & Renk, 2008; Rosen, et al., 2008).

Baumrind (1971) supported the importance of parents implementing authoritative parenting for children’s overall self-worth. She reported that children whose parents implemented an authoritative style tended to be more self-reliant, goal-oriented, independent, and responsible when compared to children of authoritarian or permissive parents. She further reported that children who are parented under an authoritarian style display deficits in these areas (e.g., self-esteem), and permissive parenting was found to not be significantly related to self-esteem.
Media and Child Development

Children have always had many developmental influences surrounding them, such as family, friends, and school; however, in the past decade, there has been an impressive expansion and continuing evolution in the media world, inevitably becoming the developmental playground for today’s American children. The limit to children’s media exposure is no longer the home environment. Companions such as digital music devices, tablets, and smart phones make easy portability, thus increasing their pervasive influence on development.

Up until the 1980’s, researchers of social science regarded viewing television, especially by younger viewers, as being cognitively passive and hypnotizing by visually fast-moving stimuli (Kirkorian et al., 2008). Jerome Singer supported this theory—finding that the “busyness” of television leads to sensory overload and bombardment that interferes with reflection and cognition, which as a result, impacts children’s ability to process information or content and thus they cannot learn from it (Singer, 1980). Other researchers have found that media exposure had a positive relationship with risk-taking behaviors and a negative relationship with school performance and personal adjustment (Brooks-Gun & Donahue, 2008; Roberts & Foehr, 2008). Some studies indicate media can shorten attention span, distort body image, and work in conjunction with other factors to escalate obesity, create fear, and increase aggressive and anti-social behaviors if exposure is unmonitored and unlimited (Wilson, 2008). Though there has been substantial research on the negative effects of media in general, other research has supported media’s potential for having a positive association with children’s development.

Recently, researchers have argued that certain media programs and content can have a positive impact on children’s cognitive development (Kirkorian, Wartella, & Anderson, 2008). For example, Rice et al. (1990) found that viewing Sesame Street by children at the age of three
was a significant predictor for scores on vocabulary at the age of five, irrespective of various confounding variables such as gender, parental attitudes toward television, parental education, and family size. Greater cognitive gains were also found for children who viewed *Sesame Street* more than children who watched fewer hours (Rice et al., 1990). This relationship exists even if children view the program alone without a co-viewing parent to guide additional linguistic support (Miron, Bryant, & Zillman, 2001). Another extensive study supported the claim that early viewing of educational media at age five was a positive predictor for high school grades in math, science, and English; it was also found that early educational media exposure was positively associated with a mass of other factors such as involvement in extracurricular activities and leisure time reading (Kirkorian, Wartella, & Anderson, 2008).

Kirkorian et al. (2008) presented an experimental study with a group of fifth graders on whether certain types of video games (e.g., *Marble Madness*) can improve spatial skills. It was found that the group that was assigned to navigate virtual marbles through virtual obstacle courses had significantly higher scores on a spatial skills posttest when compared to the other groups. Kirkorian et al. further reported that similar results have been found by other researchers, whereas, media that portrays violent content had a negative association with children’s academic achievement (Kirkorian et al., 2008).

### Time vs. Content

For many years, researchers have concluded the more time children spend with the media the more negative the relationship becomes. When variables like content were controlled for, time became less important and content became the new focus. For example, there is a large portion of research on the negative relationship between television viewing and reading books (Brooks-Gunn & Donahue, 2008; Kirkorian et al., 2008; Roberts & Foehr, 2008; Wilson, 2008).
However, Anderson et al. (2001) found, through a longitudinal study on a cohort of five-year-olds \((n = 570)\), that viewing educational television positively predicted book reading in adolescence.

Numerous studies have pointed to the unambiguity and blatancy of media (a “what you see is what you get” position). Media designers have a very specific goal in mind: to captivate and engage their audiences through the different devices. Because today’s society is so highly immersed in media (and is only expanding in its consumption), spending more time is inevitable; however, the influence on the cognitive and even emotional development of children largely comes from media content (Brooks-Gunn & Donahue, 2008).

**What Parents Can Do**

Fifty-three percent of children between eight- to 18-years-old reported no rules related to television viewing from their parents; from that 53 percent, those children between the ages of 12-18 reported only 13-14 percent. There are mixed findings related to parental monitoring of media exposure; nevertheless, research over the past 40 years has found that less than 50 percent of parents monitor or enforce media viewing limits or had regular discussions based on media content with their children, regardless the age of the children (Schmidt & Vandewater, 2008).

Schmidt and Vandewater reported that parents who took an active mediation role with their children’s media use (by co-viewing and talking about the content) had children who possessed a greater understanding of and demonstrated real-life application to the content and media production techniques. The authors go on to report the growing need for parents to become educated about what is available to help them monitor their children’s media interactions (e.g., V-chip, Digital Video Recorder [DVR], and general parental settings on smart phones and computer use). The numerous media devices are not much different than any other teaching
tool—bad for some things and good for others (Schmidt & Vandewater, 2008). It is important for parents, and society in general, to understand that children need to be taught how to act rather than to be acted upon.

**Current Study**

The aforementioned studies focus on the relationships between media exposure and child development, as well as the relationships between parenting style and child development. The majority of the literature includes samples consisting of only the children relative to media or parenting style influences on their development.

Given the limited scope of samples and topics in the previously discussed studies, the present study extends such research related to children’s identification of their parents’ styles of parenting, type of media exposure, and health oriented beliefs and behaviors.

**Hypotheses**

H1: Authoritative parents will monitor how much time their children are exposed to the media more than authoritarian and permissive parents as measured by the revised PAQ and the Child Media Exposure Questionnaire – Individual Adult (CMEQ-IA). There will be no difference between the amount of time authoritarian and permissive parents monitor their children’s media exposure as measured by the revised PAQ and the CMEQ-IA.

H2: Authoritative parents will monitor their children’s media content more than authoritarian and permissive parents as measured by the revised PAQ and the CMEQ-IA. There will be no difference between authoritarian and permissive parents on how much they will monitor their children’s media content as measured by the revised PAQ and the CMEQ-IA.

H3: Authoritative parents will have more qualitative interactions regarding their children’s media exposure time than authoritarian and permissive parents as measured by the revised PAQ
and the MEQ-IA. There will be no difference between authoritarian and permissive parents on the amount of qualitative interactions they have regarding their children’s media exposure time as measured by the revised PAQ and the CMEQ-IA.

H4: Authoritative parents will have more qualitative interactions regarding their children’s media content than authoritarian and permissive parents as measured by the revised PAQ and the MEQ-IA. There will be no difference between authoritarian and permissive parents on the amount of qualitative interactions they have regarding their children’s media content as measured by the revised PAQ and the CMEQ-IA.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Participants

Boys and girls in grades four through 12 were recruited through a non-random convenience sample, with their parents, from Another Choice Virtual Charter School in Idaho. Inclusion criteria for the sample were based on whether the children attend the above-mentioned school and whether they and their parents speak and can read English. Children and parent participants also needed to have at least a fourth grade reading level and be able to complete the following: basic demographic information, the revised Parenting Authority Questionnaire (PAQ), and the Children’s Media Exposure Questionnaire-Individual Parent (CMEQ-IP). Children also needed their parent’s consent in order to participate in this study. As this was an online study, children and parent inclusion was further limited due to the criterion concerning whether they have access to a personal, home, or public computer with Internet access.
Sampling Procedures

Data for this study was collected through non-random convenience sampling of children and their parents from Another Choice Virtual Charter School. The first contact was with the superintendent and school administrators to be granted access to sample participants from fourth through twelfth grade, including the students’ parents. Once permission from school administrators and the Pacific University Internal Review Board (IRB) was granted, a written description of the study and consent for the children was sent to both parties (parents and children) via email from school administrators. Content of the email included the purpose of the study, benefits of participating in the study, description of confidentiality, allotted time of the study (for both parent’s and children’s participation), my faculty sponsor’s contact information, consent, and an example of questions that children would be asked.

The email also included two links, one for the children’s survey (i.e., PAQ) and another for the parents (i.e., CMEQ-IP). These online surveys required both the children and parents to enter a “student homework password,” unique for each child, which is required by all students at Another Choice Virtual Charter School in order to access their homework assignments. The purpose of children and parent participants entering the children’s homework code within the survey was to pair a child’s data with his or her parent’s data.

Measures

Below are the measurement instruments that were used in the present study.

**Parenting Authority Questionnaire (PAQ).** The PAQ was designed to measure three types of parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting styles, defined by Baumrind (1971) and revised by Buri (1991). Some revisions were made to the original Buri (1991) instrument to simplify verbiage and to create two instruments, one for participants’
fathers and another for their mothers (see Appendices A and B for complete instrument with revisions). Dr. John R. Buri, one of the main researchers regarding the use of the Parenting Authority Questionnaire (PAQ), stated that the PAQ can be filled out by children of any age. After conducting my own pilot tests with the PAQ, I determined that children and parent participants would need to have at least a fourth grade reading level. The PAQ scale comprises 30 items asking respondents to rate their father’s and mother’s parenting behaviors on a five-point Likert scale: one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree). There are three subscales with ten items each for the three parenting styles (i.e., authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive). Higher scores on each of the subscales represents endorsement of the measured parenting style.

Evaluation of the psychometric properties of the PAQ indicate strong reliability and validity (Buri, 1991). Test/re-test reliability coefficients were strong despite there only being 10 items per scale, results are as follows: \( r = .78 \) for a mother’s authoritativeness, \( r = .86 \) for a mother’s authoritarianism, \( r = .81 \) for a mother’s permissiveness, \( r = .92 \) for a father’s authoritativeness, \( r = .85 \) for a father’s authoritarianism, and \( r = .77 \) for a father’s permissiveness (Buri, 1991).

**Child Media Exposure Questionnaire – Individual Parent (CMEQ-IP).** The CMEQ-IP was designed by me, my faculty advisor, and another individual on the Media Research Team because there was not an appropriate instrument available. The CMEQ-IP (see Appendix C for complete instrument) includes categorical/nominal, interval, and ratio wherein parents detail their child’s media use; specifically, their children’s media use and exposure and the type of content and monitoring/qualitative interactions that takes place, along with basic demographic information (e.g., SES, age, ethnicity, etc.).
Research Design

Participants in this study were selected through a non-random convenience sample in an uncontrolled condition. Because groups were established through whether participants, by self-report, fit into a certain parenting style, this study is quasi-experimental and will be conducted as a between-subjects design. This study contains one independent variable (i.e., parenting style) with three groups or conditions (i.e., authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive) with four dependent variables: a.) authoritative parents will monitor their children’s media exposure time more than authoritarian or permissive parents; b.) authoritative parents will monitor their children’s media content more than authoritarian and permissive parents; c.) authoritative parents will have more qualitative interaction regarding their children’s media exposure time more than authoritarian and permissive parents; d.) authoritative parents will have more qualitative interactions regarding their children’s media content than authoritarian or permissive parents.

Demographics

Out of 61 parents who began filling out the CMEQ-IP online, only 52 parents completed the measure. Out of 58 children who began filling out the PAQ online, only 46 children completed the measure. After pairing children’s responses to their parents’ responses and determining the amount of complete parent/child pairs, it was determined that 37 parent/child pairs of data were usable for analyses. Out of the 37 parent participants, 36 child participants completed the PAQ for their fathers and 36 for their mothers (two child participants completed the PAQ for one parent—one child for a father and the other for their mother). Of the 37 parent/child pairs 25 mothers and 20 fathers were identified as Authoritative, 3 mothers and 3 fathers as Permissive, 4 mothers and 9 fathers as Authoritarian, 1 mother and 3 fathers as “Balanced” (representing equal responses/scores for two types of parenting styles), and 3
mothers and 1 father as “Other” (representing equal responses/scores for all three styles of parenting).

Child Participants

Child participants attended Another Choice Virtual Charter School, which is a virtual charter school where all their schoolwork is completed online in the convenience of their own home, with occasional in-vivo schoolwork. Though the survey was sent to students from grades four through 12, the majority of child participants were in grades eight through 12 (please see Table 1 below). Of the children retained for analyses, approximately 54 percent ($n = 20$) were identified by their parents as male and 46 percent ($n = 17$) identified as female. Approximately 81 percent ($n = 30$) of child participants were identified by their parents as white or Caucasian; eight percent ($n = 8$) as Hispanic or Latino; eight percent ($n = 2$) as Multi-racial; three percent ($n = 1$) did not report race/ethnicity.

Table 1. Grade Levels of Child Participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Number of Child Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4th Grade</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Grade</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th Grade</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th Grade</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th Grade</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th Grade</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th Grade</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11th Grade</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12th Grade</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Child Participants in Each Grade Level
**Parent Participants**

Of the parents retained for the study, approximately 84 percent \((n = 31)\) identified as female, 14 percent \((n = 5)\) as male, and three percent \((n = 1)\) did not report gender. Approximately 87 percent \((n = 32)\) of parent participants identified as white or Caucasian; eight percent \((n = 3)\) as Hispanic or Latino; three percent \((n = 1)\) as Multi-Racial; three percent \((n = 1)\) did not report race/ethnicity. Approximately 76 percent \((n = 28)\) of parent participants identified as “Married or in a Domestic Partnership”; 11 percent \((n = 4)\) as “Divorced”; five percent \((n = 2)\) as “Separated”; five percent \((n = 2)\) as “Single, Never Married”; three percent \((n = 1)\) did not report marital status. Regarding employment status, approximately 38 percent \((n = 17)\) were “Employed for Wages”; 11 percent \((n = 4)\) were “Self-employed”; three percent \((n = 1)\) was “Out of work and looking for work”; 32 percent \((n = 12)\) were classified as homemakers; five percent \((n = 2)\) were students; two percent \((n = 1)\) was “Unable to work due to disability.”

Regarding socio-economic status, there was a range in annual income for participants (please see Table 2 below).
Table 2. Participants’ Annual Income.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual Income</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25k or less</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25k - 49,999k</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50k - 74,999k</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75k - 99,999k</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100k - 124,999k</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125k - 149,999k</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150k or more</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: NR = Not Reported
Chapter 4: Results

Due to overrepresentation of authoritative parents (mothers \(n=25\) and fathers \(n=20\)) and an underrepresentation of authoritarian parents (mothers \(n=4\) and fathers \(n=9\)) and permissive parents (mothers \(n=3\) and fathers \(n=3\)) (with the remaining participants classified as “Balanced” (mothers \(n=1\) and fathers \(n=3\), “Other” (mothers \(n=3\) and fathers \(n=1\)), and two child participants completed the PAQ for one parent), between-group analyses were not possible (please see Table 3 & 4). While this unequal distribution across parenting style groups impacted my original hypotheses, exploratory analyses were conducted to examine differences in child media exposure between parents who shared parenting styles \(n=18\) and those who had incongruent (i.e., non-shared) parenting styles \(n=19\)(please see Table 5 below).

Table 3. *Father: Parenting Style Sample Averages.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parenting Style</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authoritative</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permissive</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Balanced&quot;</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Other&quot;</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. *Mother: Parenting Style Sample Averages.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parenting Style</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authoritative</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permissive</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Balanced&quot;</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Other&quot;</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. *Shared/Non-Shared Parenting Style Sample Averages.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parenting Style</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Shared</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Media Use/Time and Exposure

A series of independent-samples $t$ tests were conducted to determine whether there were significant differences between parents who shared parenting styles and those who had differing styles, as related to how much time their children spend with each media outlet and how much of that time they are exposed to other outlets. Results ranged due to reduced samples with certain media outlets (e.g., child participants not using a cell phone). The results indicated that the child participants in the shared group had, on average, less time with each media when compared to the non-shared group. Specifically, children in the shared group ($M=1.46$) spent less time viewing television / movies than did those in the non-shared group ($M=2.40$) ($t(34)=2.56$, $p=.015$). This difference was also found for Internet use ($M_{\text{shared}} = 2.18$, $M_{\text{non-shared}} = 4.82$) ($t(34)=2.33$, $p=.026$).

Though not all statistically significant, across all electronic media outlets, except for listening to music, children whose parents shared parenting styles spent less time with the media then those children whose parents had differing parenting styles. These differences between groups were greater when looking at exposure to media outlets. Children of parents who practice the same parenting style were less likely to be exposed to multiple sources of media influences when compared to children in the non-shared group. Though children in the shared group spent slightly more time listening to music (shared: $M_{\text{use/time}} = 3.23$) when compared to the non-shared group (non-shared: $M_{\text{use/time}} = 3.08$), the shared group had less media exposure (shared: $M_{\text{exposure}} = 1.72$) when compared to the non-shared group (non-shared: $M_{\text{exposure}} = 3.34$).

As stated earlier in this paper, media use is defined as the amount of time children dedicate to all media outlets separately (e.g., a child may spend one hour on the Internet). Media exposure is measured by media content encountered by children conveyed in units of time (e.g.,
a child is exposed to two hour of music while he surfs the internet during those same two hours, which would be combined to total four hours of media exposure) (Brooks-Gun & Donahue, 2008; Roberts & Foehr, 2008). Tables 5 and 6 display the average amount of time children spend using the media and of those hours the amount of time they are exposed to different media outlets.

Table 6. Media Use/Time Averages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours/Day</th>
<th>TV/Movies</th>
<th>Video Games</th>
<th>Internet</th>
<th>Music</th>
<th>Cell Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Shared</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>6.45</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>2.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>6.45</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>2.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7. Media Exposure Averages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours/Day</th>
<th>TV/Movies</th>
<th>Video Games</th>
<th>Internet</th>
<th>Music</th>
<th>Cell Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Shared</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>6.45</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>2.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>6.45</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>2.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results indicated that if participants were in the shared group they had on average less time with each media when compared to the non-shared group. A significant difference was found between groups in regard to how many hours in a normal day child participants watched television/movies ($M_{shared} = 1.46$, $M_{non-shared} = 2.40$) ($t(34) = 2.56$, $p = .015$) and spent more time using the Internet ($M_{shared} = 2.18$, $M_{non-shared} = 4.82$) ($t(34) = 2.33$, $p = .026$).

Media Rules and Emotional Effect

A chi-square test of independence was conducted to evaluate whether parents in the shared group will set time limits and rules of type of media content differentially than do parents in the non-shared group. The results indicated that parent participants in the shared group were
more likely to set rules for how much time their children were allowed to listen to electronic music devices/radio when compared to the non-shared group ($\chi^2 (1, N = 37) = 5.39, p = .029$).

Additionally, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate differences between parent participants in the shared group with parents in the non-shared group related to whether a certain group were more likely to attribute a positive or negative emotional affect with their children’s absence of media outlets. It was found that parent participants in the shared group believed their children would be less affected by the absence of television/movies in comparison to parent participants in the non-shared group ($F (1, 36) = 4.72, p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .45$). This difference was also found for Internet use ($F (1, 36) = 5.34, p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .90$).

Parents were offered an opportunity to comment regarding information they felt was important to highlight. These comments are presented in Appendix D.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to fill the gap in the existing research regarding how particular parenting styles (e.g., authoritative) will impact children’s electronic media exposure. While most of the current research available has focused on parenting styles and their implications on child development (e.g., emotional well-being, school performance, etc.) or electronic media influences on children, little research has been conducted pairing the two together and examining how a particular parenting style can have a direct impact on children’s exposure to the many electronic media outlets.
Gathering this data required both parents and children to separately fill out online measures. This researcher speculated that what was required of participants may attract parents of a particular style of parenting. For example, this study required parents to voluntarily fill out measures regarding their media regulating behaviors for their children. Additionally, parents had to consent for their children to fill out measures that would determine what style of parenting their parents implement and also necessitated communication between both parent and child related to their combined and yet separate participation in this study. Due to these requirements, such research attempting to sample both children and parents separately may primarily attract parents who implement an authoritative parenting style.

My original assumption that more parents who apply an authoritative style of parenting would participate in this study was found to be correct. The vast majority of parents who participated were categorized as being authoritative. This overrepresentation of authoritative parents created an uneven distribution across parent participants, impacting of the ability to explore my original hypotheses. There was, however, a balanced distribution between shared styles of parenting \((n = 18)\) and non-shared styles of parenting \((n = 19)\), which offered important findings. Though the sample in this study had an over-representation of mother participants who applied an authoritative parenting style, there were significant differences if these mothers’ partners did or did not share their style of parenting on their children’s media exposure.

Differences were found between shared and non-shared parents in how much time in a normal day their children spend watching television. The child participants in the shared group watched nearly half the amount of television/movies when compared to child participants in the non-shared group. A similar pattern was found in regard to how much time in a normal day their
children spend using the Internet. The child participants in the shared group spent nearly half the amount of time using the Internet when compared to child participants in the non-shared group. Regarding overall electronic media use, children in the shared parenting style group, on average, spent less time in a typical day with each media outlet (i.e., television/movies, video games, Internet, and cell phone) than those children in the non-shared parenting style group. When exposure is estimated, children in the shared group had nearly half the amount of exposure to other media outlets while using the cell phone when compared to child participants in the non-shared group. Though difference between groups and the other media outlets show (see Table 5 & 6) differences, only television/movies and Internet reached statistical significance. One possible reason for this was due to some parent participants reported their children not using certain media outlets. For example, out of the shared styles of parenting ($n = 18$) and non-shared styles of parenting ($n = 19$), only ($n = 12$) in the shared group and ($n = 13$) in the non-shared group reported their children use a cell phone. However, on average, child participants in the shared group had much less media exposure than did child participants in the non-shared group.

Concerning parent participants’ perception related to their children’s emotional reaction in the absence of certain media outlets, those parents in the shared group attributed that their children would have more positive reactions when compared to parents in the non-shared group. Specifically, results indicated that parent participants in the shared group attributed their children having a more positive emotional reaction in the absence of television/movies when compared to parent participants in the non-shared group and a more positive emotional experience if they no longer had access to the Internet when compared to parent participants in the non-shared group.

These findings are similar to those of McKinney and Renk (2008) who found that participants having experienced shared authoritative parenting were more emotionally adjusted
when compared to participants of any other parenting combination. Additionally, when both mothers and fathers adopted authoritative parenting styles, their children had greater emotional adjustment than children whose parents adopted any other parenting style combination (McKinney & Renk, 2008).

As electronic media spreads in popularity and influence it is inevitably creating a new environment within which children are being fostered and raised. Researchers have found that media outlets can be positive tools to strengthen and assist parents in their children’s development while at the same time exposing them to content that can have negative impacts on their cognitive, emotional, and social development. Like other research, this study has found that parents have an indispensable and vital role in monitoring their children’s media exposure. Other researchers have organized parental influence by specifying that parents who implement an authoritative parenting style have more positive influence with the development of their children. This study has not only furthered that speculation, highlighting the importance of a particular style of parenting, but has also established the distinction that parents who share parenting styles create a consistent atmosphere of teaching and monitoring for their children. Essentially, as parents share this authoritative style, rather than generating a frustrated expression of misunderstanding, children are more likely to express the sentimentality of “Mom and Dad, you do understand….”

**Limitations and Future Directions**

In this design phase of the research there were some foreseeable limitations; however, the benefits of the chosen method outweighed the costs. The first limitation is likely to be found in the reliability of the data. Children were asked to fill out the revised PAQ on their father, mother, or other identifiable guardian and to respond honestly to general questions about their
parents’ styles of parenting. It is also likely that because children are filling out the survey in a natural, uncontrolled environment (likely at home) that social influences may reduce the comfort level for children to ask questions or fill out the measure honestly in the midst of their parents.

Our limited sample can possibly be attributed to our primary contact with children and parent participants being through a single email message, rather than speaking to them in-person. Complete participation also depended on the children and parents’ combined and separate motivation and follow-through with the online survey. As mentioned previously, the likelihood of study participation itself may represent bias in the sample with regard to parenting style. For example, parents who adopt an authoritative style of parenting may be more inclined to discuss participation in this study with their children and then allow their children to complete questions about their parenting behaviors without them being present; however, this example is not meant to suggest this was the likelihood or that this didn’t happen with another style of parenting, but rather a possible influence.

Because of the resulting unequal distribution across parenting styles, this researcher was not able to explore the original hypotheses. This inherent difficulty might account for why most researchers who examine parenting style influences conduct their research solely with children rather than both children and parents.

Conclusions

This researcher was able to explore not only the importance of researching the effects of a particular parenting style, but also whether both parents share parenting styles. There were no studies known to this researcher that explored the impact of shared parenting styles versus non-shared parenting styles in which both children and parents were included in the sample. Other researchers who have examined the effects of parenting styles averaged parents PAQ scores and
calculated an average parenting style, resulting in one style for both parents, even if one parent would have been identified as a different parenting style based on their PAQ score. The vast amount of research addresses how parents of a particular style of parenting (i.e., authoritative) have a positive and direct influence on their children’s development. This researcher found significant differences between parents who shared parenting styles with those parents who did not. Even though the majority of my parent sample included authoritative parents, results indicated that parents who implementing shared parenting styles had a more positive effect on their children’s media exposure when compared to even a parent who implements an authoritative style yet whose spouse/partner implements another parenting style.

Overall, this study provides implications for future researchers on the parenting styles and media exposure. Namely, that if the goal of the study is to examine the influence of separate and distinct parenting styles, researchers should sample children in such a way to as to ensure diversity of parenting styles within the sample. Researchers that seek to recruit parents and children participants may find similar limitations to the present study, namely an overrepresentation of authoritative parents in the sample with a limited sample of other styles. Additionally, and possibly the most important implication for future research is that of shared parenting style influence. Even though over 70 percent of this parent sample was classified as authoritative, differences in parent-child interaction were found between the shared and non-shared group parent groups. The findings that children in the shared parent style group had less exposure to media and less attributed negative emotions in the hypothetical absence of media than did children in the non-shared group should be further explored.
References


Appendix A

Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) Pertaining to Fathers

Instructions: For each of the following statements, circle the number on the 5-point scale (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree) that best describes how the statement applies to you and your father. Try to read and think about each statement as it applies to you and your father during your years of growing up at home. There are no right or wrong answers, so don’t spend a lot of time on any one item. We are looking for your overall impression regarding each statement. Be sure not to omit any item.

1. My father feels that in a well-run home the children should have their way in the family as often as the parents do.*
2. Even if his children don’t agree with him, my father feels that it is for our own good if we are forced to conform to what he thinks is right.**
3. Whenever my father tells me to do something, he expects me to do it immediately without asking any questions.**
4. When family policy is established, my father discusses the reasoning behind the policy with the children in the family.***
5. My father always encourages verbal give-and-take whenever I have felt that family rules and restrictions are unreasonable.***
6. My father feels that what children need is to be free to make up their own minds and to do what they want to do, even if this does not agree with what their parents might want.*
7. My father does not allow me to question any decision he makes.**
8. My father directs the activities and decisions of the children in the family through reasoning and discipline.***
9. My father feels that more force should be used by parents in order to get their children to behave the way they are supposed to.**
10. My father does not feel that I need to obey rules and regulations of behavior simply because someone in authority has established them.*
11. I know what my father expects of me in my family, but I also feel free to discuss these expectations with my father when I feel that they are unreasonable.***
12. My father feels that wise parents should teach their children early—who the boss is in the family.**
13. My father seldom gives me expectations and guidelines for my behavior.*
14. Most of the time my father does what the children in the family want when making family decisions.*
15. Regarding the children in my family, my father consistently gives us direction and guidance in rational and objective ways.***
16. My father gets very upset if I tried to disagree with him.**
17. My father feels that most problems in society would be solved if parents would not restrict their children’s activities, decisions, and desires as they are growing up.*
18. My father lets me know what behavior he expects of me, and if I don’t meet these expectations, he punishes me.**
19. My father allows me to decide most things for myself without a lot of direction from him.*
20. My father takes the children's opinions into consideration when making family decisions, but he does not decide on something simply because the children want it.
***
21. My father does not view himself as responsible for directing and guiding my behavior.*
22. My father has clear standards for the needs of each of the individual children in the family.***
23. My father gives me direction for my behavior and activities and he expects me to follow his direction, but he is always willing to listen to my concerns and to discuss that direction with me.***
24. My father allows me to form my own point of view on family matter and he generally allows me to decide for myself what I am going to do.*
25. My father feels that most problems in society would be solved if we could get parents to strictly and forcibly deal with their children when they don't do what they are supposed to as they are growing up.**
26. My father often tells me exactly what he wants me to do and how he expects me to do it.**
27. My father gives me clear direction for my behaviors and activities, but he also understands when I disagree with him.***
28. My father does not direct the behaviors, activities, and desires of the children in the family.*
29. I know what my father expects of me in the family and he insists that I conform to those expectation simply out of respect for his authority.**
30. If my father makes a decision in the family that hurts me, he is willing to discuss that decision with me and to admit it if he made a mistake.***

Note. The parental prototype represented by each item is denoted as follows: *permissive, **authoritarian, ***authoritative.
Appendix B
Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) Pertaining to Mothers

Instructions: For each of the following statements, circle the number on the 5-point scale
(1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree) that best describes how the statement applies to
you and your mother. Try to read and think about each statement as it applies to you and
your mother during your years of growing up at home. There are no right or wrong
answers, so don’t spend a lot of time on any one item. We are looking for your overall
impression regarding each statement. Be sure not to omit any item.

1. My mother feels that in a well-run home the children should have their way in the
   family as often as the parents do.*
2. Even if her children don’t agree with her, my mother feels that it is for our own good
   if we are forced to conform to what she thinks is right.**
3. Whenever my mother tells me to do something, she expects me to do it immediately
   without asking any questions.**
4. When family policy is established, my mother discusses the reasoning behind the
   policy with the children in the family.***
5. My mother always encourages verbal give-and-take whenever I have felt that family
   rules and restrictions are unreasonable.***
6. My mother feels that what children need is to be free to make up their own minds
   and to do what they want to do, even if this does not agree with what their parents
   might want. *
7. My mother does not allow me to question any decision she makes.**
8. My mother directs the activities and decisions of the children in the family through
   reasoning and discipline.***
9. My mother feels that more force should be used by parents in order to get their
   children to behave the way they are supposed to.**
10. My mother does not feel that I need to obey rules and regulations of behavior simply
    because someone in authority has established them. *
11. I know what my mother expects of me in my family, but I also feel free to discuss
    these expectations with my mother when I feel that they are unreasonable.***
12. My mother feels that wise parents should teach their children early who the boss is
    in the family.**
13. My mother seldom gives me expectations and guidelines for my behavior. *
14. Most of the time my mother does what the children in the family want when making
    family decisions. *
15. Regarding the children in my family, my mother consistently gives us direction and
    guidance in rational and objective ways.***
16. My mother gets very upset if I tried to disagree with her.**
17. My mother feels that most problems in society would be solved if parents would not
    restrict their children’s activities, decisions, and desires as they are growing up.*
18. ****My mother lets me know what behavior she expects of me, and if I don’t meet
    these expectations, she punishes me.**
19. My mother allows me to decide most things for myself without a lot of direction
    from her.*
20. My mother takes the children’s opinions into consideration when making family decisions, but she does not decide on something simply because the children want it.***

21. My mother does not view herself as responsible for directing and guiding my behavior.*

22. My mother has clear standards for the needs of each of the individual children in the family.***

23. My mother gives me direction for my behavior and activities and she expects me to follow her direction, but she is always willing to listen to my concerns and to discuss that direction with me.***

24. My mother allows me to form my own point of view on family matters and she generally allows me to decide for myself what I am going to do.*

25. My mother feels that most problems in society would be solved if we could get parents to strictly and forcibly deal with their children when they don't do what they are supposed to as they are growing up.**

26. My mother often tells me exactly what she wants me to do and how she expects me to do it.**

27. My mother gives me clear direction for my behaviors and activities, but she also understands when I disagree with her.***

28. My mother does not direct the behaviors, activities, and desires of the children in the family.*

29. I know what my mother expects of me in the family and she insists that I conform to those expectations simply out of respect for her authority.**

30. If my mother makes a decision in the family that hurts me, she is willing to discuss that decision with me and to admit it if she made a mistake.***

Note. The parental prototype represented by each item is denoted as follows: *permissive, **authoritarian, ***authoritative.
Appendix C

Child Media Exposure Questionnaire – Individual Parent (CMEQ-IP)

**Television**
Does your child watch television?  
Yes _____ Unknown _____ No _____ (If No, skip to the next topic)  
How many hours in a normal day does your child spend watching television? _____  
How many of those hours watching television is your child using other media devices at the same time, for example surfing the internet, on Facebook, texting, on the phone, etc. while watching television? _____  
Does your child have the television turned on even when he or she is not actively watching?  
Yes _____ Unknown _____ No _____  
If your child suddenly didn’t have television, how would it affect them emotionally?  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Negative Affect</th>
<th>Slightly Negative Affect</th>
<th>Neutral / No Affect</th>
<th>Slightly Positive Affect</th>
<th>Very Positive Affect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>

**Internet**
Does your child ever use the Internet?  
Yes _____ Unknown _____ No _____ (If No, skip to the next topic)  
How many hours in a normal day does your child spend on the Internet? _____  
How many of those hours spent on the internet is your child using other media devices at the same time, for example watching television, listening to music, texting, on the phone, etc. while using the internet? _____  
If your child suddenly didn’t have access to the Internet, how would it affect him or her emotionally?  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Negative Affect</th>
<th>Slightly Negative Affect</th>
<th>Neutral / No Affect</th>
<th>Slightly Positive Affect</th>
<th>Very Positive Affect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Electronic Music Devices/Radio**
Have you set a time limit your child is allowed to listen to electronic music devices/radio?  
Yes _____ Unknown _____ No _____ (If No, skip to the next topic)  
How many hours in a normal day does your child spend listening to electronic music devices/radio? _____  
If your child suddenly didn’t have access to the electronic music devices/radio, how would it affect him or her emotionally?  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Negative Affect</th>
<th>Slightly Negative Affect</th>
<th>Neutral / No Affect</th>
<th>Slightly Positive Affect</th>
<th>Very Positive Affect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Cell Phone**
Do you have access to a cell phone?  
Yes _____ Unknown _____ No _____
How many hours in a normal day do you spend on a cell phone? _____

If you suddenly didn’t have access to a cell phone, how would it affect you emotionally?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Negative Affect</th>
<th>Slightly Negative Affect</th>
<th>Neutral / No Affect</th>
<th>Slightly Positive Affect</th>
<th>Very Positive Affect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

What is your overall opinion of each of the following types of media?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media</th>
<th>Very Negative</th>
<th>Slightly Negative</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Slightly Positive</th>
<th>Very Positive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
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<td>Magazines /</td>
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<td>Newspapers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cell Phone</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Please indicate your reason for using each of the following forms of media:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media</th>
<th>Don’t use this form of media</th>
<th>Only because I have to (e.g., work)</th>
<th>Only because I want to</th>
<th>Because I both need and want to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
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<td>Magazines /</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cell Phone</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Please provide any additional information regarding your individual media exposure not addressed in the previous questions:
Appendix D

Parent Comments

The following comments were made by parent participants:

- My child has autism and when he is watching movies he normally is walking the track. So that is no different than people watching TV on the treadmill. He walked 10 miles Sunday. We have to use the computer for school. Rarely does he play video games and when he does it is Wii Fit.

- My child's main use of media is the internet. I do wish she would spend more time outside or interacting with others. She has social issues (Aspergers) so I think she is more comfortable staying at home and using the Internet. Electronics are a double edged sword in my opinion. They are okay in moderation if the child does not have access to adult content (which is difficult to monitor at times).

- My child agrees that watching/playing violence/sexual shows/games is Not allowed and is Not in anyway a positive behavior/influence. He enjoys watching and playing positive/family/sport and true-life shows/games and has kept a very positive and moral base.

- My daughter uses the Internet, TV, music to listen to stories while she does her school work. She has ADHD and Asperger's and we have found that if she can listen to something while working on her school work, she tends to focus on her work longer. Some days this works really well and other days it does not.

- My child is responsible with her media choices.

- I am thankful that he is beginning to see the need for less of this and more active activities.

- I wouldn't have Internet if it wasn’t for school.

- My son is very open to discussing any concerns I have regarding is use of social media. We don't always agree on the concerns I have but he does hear me out and we usually reach an agreement that is acceptable.

- My son has a very basic cell phone. He can call home or text me. He has few friends who call him or that he calls. I want him to have the cell phone so we can be in contact during school hours. He attends a virtual school, so he has to be on the internet. After school he uses his private laptop to visit chat rooms. He watches Netflix through his Xbox and usually discusses with me and his dad the shows he sees. He also watches...
YouTube through his Xbox and talks with us about the shows. I usually pop into his room to see what he's doing. I rent the games he wants, so I do know what he's doing. I've discussed them with him, too.

- Doesn't like to use his cell phone. Will not use Facebook or any other type of social media.

- He's in a virtual school He lives radio shows (adventures in odyssey)

- He's in a virtual charter school, part of schooling is his interest in gaming production and video editing

- She attends a virtual charter school