



Policy Statement—Sexuality, Contraception, and the Media

abstract

FREE

From a health viewpoint, early sexual activity among US adolescents is a potential problem because of the risk of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. New evidence points to the media adolescents use frequently (television, music, movies, magazines, and the Internet) as important factors in the initiation of sexual intercourse. There is a major disconnect between what mainstream media portray—casual sex and sexuality with no consequences—and what children and teenagers need—straightforward information about human sexuality and the need for contraception when having sex. Television, film, music, and the Internet are all becoming increasingly sexually explicit, yet information on abstinence, sexual responsibility, and birth control remains rare. It is unwise to promote “abstinence-only” sex education when it has been shown to be ineffective and when the media have become such an important source of information about “nonabstinence.” Recommendations are presented to help pediatricians address this important issue. *Pediatrics* 2010;126:576–582

INTRODUCTION

Early sexual activity among teenagers can be problematic. According to the 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 46% of all high school seniors have had sexual intercourse, and 14% have had 4 partners or more.¹ Although pregnancy rates have generally been decreasing since 1991, the United States still has the highest teen pregnancy rate in the Western world,² and for the first time in 15 years, the birth rate increased 3% from 2005 to 2006.³ Early intercourse also increases the risk of contracting a sexually transmitted infection (STI), including HIV, and adolescents have one of the highest STI rates of any age group.⁴ Although 15- to 24-year-olds account for only one-quarter of the sexually active population in the United States, they contract nearly half of all new STIs every year.⁴ A recent study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention revealed that 1 in 4 teenagers has had an STI.⁵ Ten percent of young women who had first had sex in their teenage years reported that their first time was involuntary, and the younger they were, the more likely that was the case.⁶

WHAT CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS LEARN FROM THE MEDIA

American children and teenagers spend more than 7 hours/day with a variety of different media.⁷ Those media are filled with sexual messages and images, many of which are unrealistic.² On television (TV), which remains the predominant medium in terms of time spent for all young people, more than 75% of prime-time programs contain sexual

THE COUNCIL ON COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA

KEY WORDS

sexual activity, adolescents, media, television

ABBREVIATIONS

STI—sexually transmitted infection

TV—television

This document is copyrighted and is property of the American Academy of Pediatrics and its Board of Directors. All authors have filed conflict of interest statements with the American Academy of Pediatrics. Any conflicts have been resolved through a process approved by the Board of Directors. The American Academy of Pediatrics has neither solicited nor accepted any commercial involvement in the development of the content of this publication.

www.pediatrics.org/cgi/doi/10.1542/peds.2010-1544

doi:10.1542/peds.2010-1544

All policy statements from the American Academy of Pediatrics automatically expire 5 years after publication unless reaffirmed, revised, or retired at or before that time.

PEDIATRICS (ISSN Numbers: Print, 0031-4005; Online, 1098-4275).

Copyright © 2010 by the American Academy of Pediatrics

content, yet only 14% of sexual incidents mention any risks or responsibilities of sexual activity.^{8,9} Talk about sex on TV can occur as often as 8 to 10 times per hour.¹⁰ Between 1997 and 2001 alone, the amount of sexual content on TV nearly doubled.⁹

So-called reality TV has also entered the picture. In 1997, there were only 3 reality dating shows; by 2004, there were more than 30.¹¹ Some shows, such as *Temptation Island*, bring participants together for the sole purpose of seeing who “hooks up.” A study of college students revealed that viewing such shows correlated with beliefs in a double standard—that men are sex driven and that men and women are sexual adversaries.¹¹ It is interesting to note that the less sexually experienced students were more likely than sexually experienced students to be watching reality shows, which suggests the importance of such programs for sexual socialization.^{12,13}

In addition to TV, other media provide frequent messages about sexual behavior.

- Music continues to be a major source of sexual suggestiveness. In 1 study, 40% of lyric lines contained sexual material, and only 6% contained healthy sexual messages.¹⁴ An analysis of the 279 most popular songs in 2005 revealed that 37% contained sexual references and that degrading sexual references were common.¹⁵
- Virtually every R-rated teen movie since the 1980s has contained at least 1 nude scene and, often, several instances of sexual intercourse (eg, the *American Pie* movie series).¹⁶ Teen movies also contain distorted views of romance and normal adolescent sexuality.^{16–18}
- Teen magazines are popular with preadolescent and adolescent girls and devote an average of 2.5 pages

per issue to sexual topics.¹⁹ Coverage of sex as a health issue in magazines is more common than on TV, but the overarching focus seems to be on deciding when to lose one’s virginity.^{12,20}

- The Internet has become an abundant source of both sexual information and pornography that cannot be regulated.^{21,22} Online pornography is now a \$1 billion industry.¹² In a national sample of 1500 10- to 17-year-olds, nearly half of the Internet users had been exposed to online pornography in the previous year.²³ In addition, unwanted sexual solicitations and harassment are not uncommon,²⁴ although they may not be as frequent as parents fear.²⁵
- Social networking Web sites and home pages enable teenagers to present themselves publicly, sometimes in sexually suggestive ways.^{12,26} One study of 233 teen home pages revealed that nearly 10% mentioned sex, and girls were 3 times more likely to do so than boys.²⁷ A recent study of 500 publicly available MySpace profiles revealed that nearly one-quarter of them referenced sexual behaviors.²⁸ Also, a national survey of nearly 1300 teenagers and young adults revealed that 20% reported having sent or posted nude pictures or videos of themselves (“sexting”).²⁹
- Advertisements often use sex to sell. Women are as likely to be shown in suggestive clothing (30%), partially clad (13%), or nude (6%) as they are to be fully clothed.³⁰ As one expert noted, “When sexual jokes are used to sell everything from rice to roach-killer, from cars to carpets, it’s hard to remember that sex can unite two souls, can inspire awe. Individually, these ads are harmless enough, sometimes even funny, but the cumulative effect is to degrade and devalue sex.”³¹ Advertisements for

erectile dysfunction drugs are ubiquitous. In the first 10 months of 2004, the makers of these drugs spent nearly \$350 million on advertising.³² At the same time, advertisements for birth control products are rare.²

Because so many sex education programs have recently been focused on abstinence only, the media have arguably become one of the leading sex educators in the United States today.² Adolescents frequently cite the media as a source of sexual information.² For example, in a national survey the media rivaled parents and schools as a source of information about birth control.³³ The media are powerful sources for behavioral “scripts” concerning sexual situations, especially for inexperienced teenagers.^{2,34} Yet, parents and legislators fail to understand that although they may favor abstinence-only sex education (despite the lack of any evidence of its effectiveness),³⁵ the media are decidedly not abstinence only. In fact, the United States has some of the most sexually suggestive media in the world.² American media make sex seem like a harmless sport in which everyone engages, and results of considerable research have indicated that the media can have a major effect on young people’s attitudes and behaviors.^{12–18} In fact, the media may function as a “superpeer” in convincing adolescents that sexual activity is a normative behavior for young teenagers.^{2,36,37} In a survey of 2100 11- to 17-year-old girls, only the 11-year-olds reported that they did not feel pressure from the media to begin having sex.³⁸

IMPACT OF SEXUAL CONTENT ON ADOLESCENT BEHAVIOR

Numerous studies have delineated the media’s powerful influence on adolescents’ sexual attitudes, values, and beliefs.^{2,39–42} Unlike the media violence re-

search literature, in which some 2000 studies exist, there have been only a handful of studies on the effects of sexual content on actual behavior. At least a dozen correlational studies have examined the relationship between the amount of sexual content viewed on TV and early onset of sexual intercourse.^{43–53} The most recent studies have revealed that (1) listening to sexually degrading lyrics is associated with earlier sexual intercourse,^{40,53} (2) black female teenagers' exposure to rap music videos or X-rated movies is associated with the likelihood of multiple sexual partners or testing positive for an STI,⁴⁹ (3) teenagers whose parents control their TV-viewing habits are less sexually experienced,^{51,52} and (4) exposure to sexual content in the media is a significant factor in the intention to have sex in the near future.^{52–54}

Nine longitudinal studies have given potential answers to the question of whether sexy media contribute to early sexual activity, and the answer seems to be “yes.”^{41,55–62} Results of 7 of these studies have shown that exposure to sexual content in TV and other media in early adolescence—particularly for white teenagers—can as much as double the risk of early sexual intercourse. Adolescents whose parents limit their TV-viewing are less likely to engage in early sex.⁵⁸ Younger children who have viewed adult-oriented TV shows and movies are more likely to begin having sexual intercourse earlier.⁶¹ The study samples together total nearly 10 000 teenagers nationwide, and the most ambitious studies included other media such as movies, music, and magazines.⁵⁷ In addition, a recent study revealed that early exposure to sexual content doubled the risk of teen pregnancy.⁶⁰ Clearly, the media play a major role in determining whether certain teenagers become sexually active earlier

rather than later,⁶³ and sexually explicit media may be particularly important.^{41,64}

CONTRACEPTIVE ADVERTISING

The United States is the only Western nation that still subscribes to the dangerous myth that giving teenagers access to birth control—and media represent a form of access—will make them sexually active at a younger age. Other countries advertise birth control products widely and have a much lower rate of teen pregnancy.^{12,16} Although the teen birth rate had been declining in the United States up until 2005–2006, it has declined just as much or more in other countries. A recent study revealed that 86% of the recent decline in teen pregnancies could be attributed to increased contraceptive use, and only 14% was attributable to increased abstinence.⁶⁵ The recent 3% increase in teen births could be a “blip,” or it could be attributable to an increase in abstinence-only sex education and the concomitant reduction in accurate information about contraception.^{66–68}

Eight peer-reviewed, controlled clinical trials have revealed that giving teenagers freer access to condoms does not increase their sexual activity or encourage virginal teenagers to begin having sex, but it does increase the use of condoms among those who are already sexually active.^{69–76} Advertising condoms, birth control pills, and emergency contraception on TV and radio could further decrease the teen pregnancy rate. Yet, several networks refuse such advertisements.^{77,78}

Telling teenagers, “Wait until you're older to begin having sex, but if you can't wait, use birth control” is a double message. But, it is a double message that every teenager in America can understand and benefit from, and it is consistent with normal adolescent psychology, because it acknowledges

that adolescents do not always listen to their elders.² In 2007, both CBS and FOX refused a condom advertisement as “inappropriate” because it mentioned preventing pregnancy rather than preventing HIV/AIDS.⁷⁸ Advertisements for emergency contraception are virtually nonexistent on American TV, despite the fact that every year, American women have 3 million unplanned pregnancies, which lead to 1.3 million abortions. Advertising for emergency contraceptives could be an important way to reduce the number of abortions in the United States.⁷⁹

POSITIVE IMPACT

The media can be powerful vehicles for sexual health education. Socially responsible messages can be embedded into mainstream programming—a practice dubbed “entertainment-education” or “edutainment.”⁷⁹ Collaborative efforts between the Kaiser Family Foundation and the producers of the hit TV show *ER* resulted in successful story lines about the risks of human papillomavirus and the usefulness of emergency contraception.⁸⁰ In 2002, *Friends* aired an episode about condoms, and 27% of a national sample of teenagers saw the program; many of them reported that they talked about condom effectiveness with an adult as a direct result of the episode.⁸¹ In 2008, a study showed that viewers of a *Gray's Anatomy* episode learned that HIV-positive women could still have HIV-negative infants.⁸² The Soap Opera Summit in Hollywood and international efforts to embed story lines into popular soap operas are other examples of prosocial efforts. The media giant Viacom and the Kaiser Family Foundation have launched an ambitious project to produce \$120 million worth of public service announcements and print advertisements concerning HIV/AIDS and to encourage Viacom producers to include story lines in their TV shows that will raise AIDS awareness.⁸³ Such ef-

forts demonstrate that the entertainment industry can be receptive to outside input and that healthier content can be introduced into mainstream media without government pressure or the threat of censorship.

Mass media have also been used proactively to increase parent-child communication about sex. In North Carolina, a mass media campaign using billboards and radio and TV public service announcements delivered the message, "Talk to your kids about sex. Everyone else is." In follow-up research, exposure to the message correlated significantly with parents talking to their children about sex during the following month.⁸⁴

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Pediatricians can help parents and teenagers to recognize the importance of the media by asking at least 2 media-related questions at each well visit⁷⁷: (1) How much time do you spend daily with entertainment media? and (2) Is there a TV set or Internet access in your bedroom? Research has shown that bedroom TVs are associated with greater substance use and sexual activity by teenagers.⁸⁵ A recent study revealed that office-based counseling is effective and could result in nearly 1 million more children and adolescents adhering to the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation to limit media time to less than 2 hours/day.⁸⁶
2. Pediatricians should counsel parents to recognize the importance of the media, exert control over their children's media choices, keep their children's bedrooms free of TVs and Internet connections, and avoid letting their children see PG-13- and R-rated movies that are inappropriate for them.^{61,87,88} Pediatricians and parents also need to be aware of the importance of social

networking sites and how they work so that they can effectively counsel children and adolescents about them.⁸⁹

3. Pediatricians and child advocacy groups should encourage the entertainment industry to produce more programming that contains responsible sexual content and that focuses on the interpersonal relationship in which sexual activity takes place (Table 1). One way to do this would be to hold annual seminars for writers, producers, and directors in Hollywood, perhaps in cooperation with other groups. Similarly, Madison Avenue and advertisers need to be encouraged to stop using sex to sell products. Educational seminars might help to achieve this goal.
4. Pediatricians should urge schools to insist on comprehensive sex education programs (to counter the influence of sexually suggestive and explicit media) that incorporate

TABLE 1 Guide to Responsible Sexual Content in TV, Films, and Music: Some Suggestions for the Presentation of Responsible Sexual Content

Recognize sex as a healthy and natural part of life.
Parent and child conversations about sex are important and healthy and should be encouraged.
Demonstrate that not only the young, unmarried, and beautiful have sexual relationships.
Not all affection and touching must culminate in sexual intercourse.
Portray couples having sexual relationships with feelings of affection, love, and respect for one another.
Consequences of unprotected sex should be discussed or shown.
Miscarriage should not be used as a dramatic convenience for resolving an unwanted pregnancy.
Use of contraceptives should be indicated as a normal part of a sexual relationship.
Avoid associating violence with sex or love.
Rape should be depicted as a crime of violence, not one of passion.
The ability to say "no" should be recognized and respected.

Modified from Haffner DW, Kelly M. Adolescent sexuality in the media. *SIECUS Rep.* March/April, 1987:9–12.

basic principles of media literacy into their sex education programs. Studies have shown that effective media literacy programs can be protective against unhealthy media effects.^{90,91} Federal money should be spent on comprehensive sex education programs but not on abstinence-only programs, which have been found to be ineffective.^{35,65–68,92–94}

5. Pediatricians should urge the broadcast industry to air advertisements for birth control products. The federal government also needs to encourage the advertising of birth control, especially emergency contraceptives.
6. Pediatricians should urge the broadcast industry to limit advertisements for erectile dysfunction drugs until after 10 PM.
7. Pediatricians should urge the broadcast media to include healthy messages about sex and sexuality in their programming, especially in media that children and early teenagers use most frequently.⁹⁵
8. Pediatricians, the broadcast industry, the federal government, and private foundations should support further research into the impact of sexual content in the media on children's and adolescents' knowledge and behavior.⁹⁶ A national task force on children, adolescents, and the media should be convened by child advocacy groups in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and/or the National Institutes of Health to study the issue of children, adolescents, and media, devise new research, locate funding sources, and make recommendations to Congress, the broadcast industry, and the American people.

LEAD AUTHOR

Victor C. Strasburger, MD

COUNCIL ON COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, 2009–2010

Gilbert L. Fuld, MD, Chairperson
Deborah Ann Mulligan, MD, Chair-elect
Tanya Remer Altmann, MD
Ari Brown, MD
Dimitri A. Christakis, MD
Kathleen Clarke-Pearson, MD
Benard P. Dreyer, MD
Holly Lee Falik, MD

REFERENCES

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Youth risk behavior surveillance: United States, 2009. *MMWR Surveill Summ.* 2010; 59(SS-5):1–148
- Strasburger VC. Adolescents, sex, and the media: oooo, baby, baby—a Q&A. *Adolesc Med Clin.* 2005;16(2):269–288, vii
- Stobbe M. US teen births rise for the first time in 15 years, renewing debate. *Associated Press.* December 5, 2007
- Weinstock H, Berman S, Cates W, Jr. Sexually transmitted diseases among American youth: incidence and prevalence estimates, 2000. *Perspect Sex Reprod Health.* 2004; 36(1):6–10
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National representative CDC study finds 1 in 4 teenage girls has a sexually transmitted disease [press release]. March 11, 2008. Available at: www.cdc.gov/stdconference/2008/press/release-11march2008.pdf. Accessed September 23, 2009
- Abma JC, Martinez GM, Mosher WD, Dawson BS. Teenagers in the United States: sexual activity, contraceptive use, and childbearing, 2002. *Vital Health Stat 23.* 2004;(24): 1–48
- Rideout VJ, Foehr UG, Roberts DF. *Generation M²: Media in the Lives of 8- to 18-Year-Olds.* Menlo Park, CA: Kaiser Family Foundation; 2010
- Kunkel D, Eyal K, Finnerty K, Biely E, Donnerstein E. *Sex on TV 4: A Biennial Report to the Kaiser Family Foundation.* Menlo Park, CA: Kaiser Family Foundation; 2005
- Kunkel D, Eyal K, Donnerstein E, Farrar KM, Biely E, Rideout V. Sexual socialization messages on entertainment television: comparing content trends 1997–2002. *Media Psychol.* 2007;9(3):595–622
- Kunkel D, Cope KM, Colvin C. *Sexual Messages on Family Hour Television: Content and Context.* Menlo Park, CA: Kaiser Family Foundation; 1996
- Zurbriggen EL, Morgan EM. Who wants to marry a millionaire? Reality dating television programs, attitudes toward sex, and

Gwenn S. O’Keeffe, MD
Kathleen G. Nelson, MD
Victor C. Strasburger, MD

CONTRIBUTING PAST EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Regina M. Milteer, MD
Donald L. Shifrin, MD

LIAISONS

Michael Brody, MD — *American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*

Brian Wilcox, PhD — *American Psychological Association*

CONTRIBUTOR

Jane D. Brown, PhD

STAFF

Gina Ley Steiner
Veronica Laude Noland
vnoland@aap.org

- sexual behaviors. *Sex Roles.* 2006;54(1–2): 1–17
- Brown JD, Strasburger VC. From Calvin Klein to Paris Hilton and MySpace: adolescents, sex, and the media. *Adolesc Med State Art Rev.* 2007;18(3):484–507, vi–vii
- Ferris AL, Smith SW, Greenberg BS, Smith SL. The content of reality dating shows and viewer perceptions of dating. *J Commun.* 2007;57(3):490–510
- Pardun CJ, L’Engle K, Brown JD. Linking exposure to outcomes: early adolescents’ consumption of sexual content in six media. *Mass Commun Soc.* 2005;8(2):75–91
- Primack BA, Gold MA, Schwarz EB, Dalton MA. Degrading and non-degrading sex in popular music: a content analysis. *Public Health Rep.* 2008;123(5):593–600
- Strasburger VC, Wilson BJ, Jordan A. *Children, Adolescents, and the Media* 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; 2009
- Pardun CJ. Romancing the script: identifying the romantic agenda in top-grossing movies. In: Brown JD, Steele JR, Walsh-Childers K, eds. *Sexual Teens, Sexual Media.* Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum; 2002: 211–225
- Kelly J, Smith SL. *Where the Girls Aren’t: Gender Disparity Saturates G-Rated Films.* Duluth, MN: Dads & Daughters; 2006
- Walsh-Childers K, Gotthoffer A, Lepre CR. From “just the facts” to “downright salacious:” teens’ and women’s magazines’ coverage of sex and sexual health. In: Brown JD, Steele JR, Walsh-Childers K, eds. *Sexual Teens, Sexual Media.* Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum; 2002:153–171
- Walsh-Childers K. *A Content Analysis: Sexual Health Coverage in Women’s, Men’s, Teen and Other Specialty Magazines: A Current-Year and Ten-Year Retrospective.* Menlo Park, CA: Kaiser Family Foundation; 1997
- Spitzer AR. The Internet: a new medical problem or invaluable ally? *Pediatrics.* 2004;114(3):817–819
- Donnerstein E. The Internet. In: Strasburger VC, Wilson BJ, Jordan AB, eds. *Children, Adolescents, and the Media.* 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; 2009:471–498
- Wolak J, Mitchell K, Finkelhor D. Unwanted and wanted exposure to online pornography in a national sample of youth Internet users. *Pediatrics.* 2007;119(2):247–257
- Mitchell KJ, Wolak J, Finkelhor D. Trends in youth reports of sexual solicitations, harassment and unwanted exposure to pornography on the Internet. *J Adolesc Health.* 2007;40(2):116–126
- Ybarra ML, Mitchell KJ. How risky are social networking sites? A comparison of places online where youth sexual solicitation and harassment occurs. *Pediatrics.* 2008; 121(2). Available at: www.pediatrics.org/cgi/content/full/121/2/e350
- Braun-Courville DK, Rojas M. Exposure to sexually explicit Web sites and adolescent sexual attitudes and behaviors. *J Adolesc Health.* 2009;45(2):156–162
- Stern S. Sexual selves on the World Wide Web: adolescent girls’ home pages as sites for sexual self-expression. In: Brown JD, Steele JR, Walsh-Childers K, eds. *Sexual Teens, Sexual Media.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum; 2002:265–286
- Moreno MA, Parks MR, Zimmerman FJ, Brito TE, Christakis DA. Display of health risk behavior on MySpace by adolescents. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med.* 2009;163(1):27–34
- National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. *Sex and Tech.* Washington, DC: National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy; 2008
- Reichert T, Carpenter C. An update on sex in magazine advertising: 1983 to 2003. *J Mass Commun Q.* 2004;81(4):823–837
- Kilbourne J. *Deadly Persuasion: Why Women and Girls Must Fight the Addictive Power of Advertising.* New York, NY: Free Press; 1999
- Snowbeck C. FDA tells Levitra to cool it with ad. *Post-Gazette.* April 19, 2005. Available at: www.post-gazette.com/pg/05109/490334-28.stm. Accessed July 20, 2005
- Kaiser Family Foundation; Seventeen Magazine. *Sex Smarts: Birth Control and Protec-*

- tion. Menlo Park, CA: Kaiser Family Foundation; 2004
34. Bleakley A, Hennessy M, Fishbein M, Jordan A. How sources of sexual information relate to adolescents' beliefs about sex. *Am J Health Behav.* 2009;33(1):37–48
 35. Santelli J, Ott MA, Lyon M, Rogers J, Summers D, Schleifer R. Abstinence and abstinence-only education: a review of U.S. policies and programs. *J Adolesc Health.* 2006;38(1):72–81
 36. Brown JD, Halpern CT, L'Engle KL. Mass media as a sexual super peer for early maturing girls. *J Adolesc Health.* 2005;36(5):420–427
 37. Chia SC. How peers mediate media influence on adolescents' sexual attitudes and sexual behavior. *J Commun.* 2006;56(3):585–606
 38. Haag P. *Voices of a Generation: Teenage Girls on Sex, School, and Self.* Washington, DC: American Association of University Women Educational Foundation; 1999
 39. JD Brown, JR Steele, Walsh-Childers K, eds. *Sexual Teens, Sexual Media.* Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum; 2002
 40. Martino SC, Collins RL, Elliott MN, Strachman A, Kanouse DE, Berry SH. Exposure to degrading versus nondegrading music lyrics and sexual behavior among youth. *Pediatrics.* 2006;118(2). Available at: www.pediatrics.org/cgi/content/full/118/2/e430
 41. Brown JD, L'Engle KL. X-rated: sexual attitudes and behaviors associated with US early adolescents' exposure to sexually explicit media. *Commun Res.* 2009;36(1):129–151
 42. Martino SC, Collins RL, Elliott MN, Kanouse DE, Berry SH. It's better on TV: does television set teenagers up for regret following sexual initiation? *Perspect Sex Reprod Health.* 2009;41(2):92–100
 43. Corder-Bolz C. Television and adolescents' sexual behavior. *Sex Educ Coalition News.* 1981;3:40
 44. Peterson RA, Kahn JR. Media preferences of sexually active teens. Presented at: American Psychological Association meeting; August 26, 1984; Toronto, Ontario, Canada
 45. Brown JD, Newcomer SF. Television viewing and adolescents' sexual behavior. *J Homosex.* 1991;21(1–2):77–91
 46. Peterson JL, Moore KA, Furstenberg FF Jr. Television viewing and early initiation of sexual intercourse: is there a link? *J Homosex.* 1991;21(1–2):93–118
 47. Strouse JS, Buerkel-Rothfuss N, Long EC. Gender and family as moderators of the relationship between music video exposure and adolescent sexual permissiveness. *Adolescence.* 1995;30(119):505–521
 48. Pazos B, Fullwood EU, Allan MJ, et al. Media use and sexual behaviors among Monroe County adolescents. Presented at: the annual Society for Adolescent Medicine meeting; March 22, 2001; San Diego, CA
 49. Wingood GM, DiClemente RJ, Harrington K, Davies S, Hook EW 3rd, Oh MK. Exposure to X-rated movies and adolescents' sexual and contraceptive-related attitudes and behavior. *Pediatrics.* 2001;107(5):1116–1119
 50. Ward LM, Friedman K. Using TV as a guide: associations between television viewing and adolescents' sexual attitudes and behavior. *J Res Adolesc.* 2006;16(1):133–156
 51. Schooler D, Kim JL, Sorsoli L. Setting rules or sitting down: parental mediation of television consumption and adolescent self-esteem, body image, and sexuality. *Sex Res Soc Pol.* 2006;3(4):49–62
 52. Fisher DA, Hill DL, Grube JW, Bersamin MM, Walker S, Gruber EL. Televised sexual content and parental mediation: influences on adolescent sexuality. *Media Psychol.* 2009;12(2):121–147
 53. Primack BA, Douglas EL, Fine MJ, Dalton MA. Exposure to sexual lyrics and sexual experience among urban adolescents. *Am J Prev Med.* 2009;36(4):317–323
 54. L'Engle KL, Brown JD, Kenneavy K. The mass media are an important context for adolescents' sexual behavior. *J Adolesc Health.* 2006;38(3):186–192
 55. Collins RL, Elliott MN, Berry SH, et al. Watching sex on television predicts adolescent initiation of sexual behavior. *Pediatrics.* 2004;114(3). Available at: www.pediatrics.org/cgi/content/full/114/3/e280
 56. Ashby SL, Arcari CM, Edmonson MB. Television viewing and risk of sexual initiation by young adolescents. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med.* 2006;160(4):375–380
 57. Brown JD, L'Engle K, Pardun CJ, Guo G, Kenneavy K, Jackson C. Sexy media matter: exposure to sexual content in music, movies, television, and magazines predicts black and white adolescents' sexual behavior. *Pediatrics.* 2006;117(4):1018–1027
 58. Bersamin M, Todd M, Fisher DA, Hill DL, Grube JW, Walker S. Parenting practices and adolescent sexual behavior: a longitudinal study. *J Marriage Fam.* 2008;70(1):97–112
 59. Hennessy M, Bleakley, Fishbein M, Jordan A. Estimating the longitudinal association between adolescent sexual behavior and exposure to sexual media content. *J Sex Res.* 2009;46(6):586–596
 60. Chandra A, Martino SC, Collins RL, et al. Does watching sex on television predict teen pregnancy? Findings from a National Longitudinal Survey of Youth. *Pediatrics.* 2008;122(5):1047–1054
 61. Delgado H, Austin SB, Rich M, Bickham D. Exposure to adult-targeted television during childhood predicts earlier onset of first sexual intercourse. Abstract 4750.6. Presented at Pediatric Academic Societies annual meeting, Baltimore MD, May 7, 2009.
 62. Bersamin MM, Bourdeau B, Fisher DA, Grube JW. Television use, sexual behavior, and relationship status at last oral sex and vaginal intercourse. *Sexuality & Culture.* 2010;14:157–168
 63. Strasburger VC. "Clueless:" why do pediatricians underestimate the media's influence on children and adolescents? *Pediatrics.* 2006;117(4):1427–1431
 64. Peter J, Valkenburg PM. Adolescents' exposure to sexually explicit Internet material and notions of women as sex objects: assessing causality and underlying processes. *J Commun.* 2009;59(3):407–433
 65. Santelli JS, Lindberg LD, Finer LB, Singh S. Explaining recent declines in adolescent pregnancy in the United States: the contribution of abstinence and increased contraceptive use. *Am J Public Health.* 2007;97(1):150–156
 66. CNN. Teen births up for the first time in 15 years. December 5, 2007. Available at: www.cnn.com/2008/HEALTH/07/10/teen.pregnancy/index.html. Accessed September 23, 2009
 67. Kohler PK, Manhart LE, Lafferty WE. Abstinence-only and comprehensive sex education and the initiation of sexual activity and teen pregnancy. *J Adolesc Health.* 2008;42(4):344–351
 68. Kirby D, Laris BA. Effective curriculum-based sex and STD/HIV education programs for adolescents. *Child Dev Perspect.* 2009;3(1):21–29
 69. Wolk LI, Rosenbaum R. The benefits of school-based condom availability: cross-sectional analysis of a comprehensive high school-based program. *J Adolesc Health.* 1995;17(3):184–188
 70. Furstenberg FF Jr, Geitz LM, Teitler JO, Weiss CC. Does condom availability make a difference? An evaluation of Philadelphia's health resource centers. *Fam Plann Perspect.* 1997;29(3):123–127
 71. Guttmacher S, Lieberman L, Ward D, Freudenberg N, Radosh A, Des Jarlais D. Condom availability in New York City public high schools: relationships to condom use and sexual behavior. *Am J Public Health.* 1997;87(9):1427–1433

72. Jemmott JB III, Jemmott LS, Fong GT. Abstinence and safer sex: HIV risk-reduction interventions for African American adolescents. *JAMA*. 1998;279(19):1529–1536
73. Schuster MA, Bell RM, Berry SH, Kanouse DE. Impact of a high-school condom availability program on sexual attitudes and behaviors. *Fam Plann Perspect*. 1998;30(2):67–72
74. Kirby D, Brener ND, Brown NL, Peterfreund N, Hillard P, Harrist R. The impact of condom distribution in Seattle schools on sexual behavior and condom use. *Am J Public Health*. 1999;89(2):182–187
75. Blake SM, Ledsky R, Goodenow C, Sawyer R, Lohrmann D, Windsor R. Condom availability programs in Massachusetts high schools: relationships with condom use and sexual behavior. *Am J Public Health*. 2003;93(6):955–962
76. Sellers DE, McGraw SA, McKinlay JB. Does the promotion and distribution of condoms increase sexual activity? Evidence from an HIV prevention program for Latino youth. *Am J Public Health*. 1994;84(12):1952–1959
77. Strasburger VC. Risky business: what primary care practitioners need to know about the influence of the media on adolescents. *Prim Care*. 2006;33(2):317–348
78. Newman AA. Pigs with cellphones, but no condoms. *New York Times*. June 19, 2007: B1. Available at: www.nytimes.com/2007/06/18/business/media/18adcol.html. Accessed June 23, 2010
79. Kristof N. Beyond chastity belts. *New York Times*. May 2, 2006:A25. Available at: select.nytimes.com/2006/05/02/opinion/02kristof.html?_r=1. Accessed June 23, 2010
80. Brodie M, Foehr U, Rideout V, et al. Communicating health information through the entertainment media. *Health Aff (Millwood)*. 2001;20(1):192–199
81. Collins RL, Elliott MN, Berry SH, Kanouse E, Hunter SB. Entertainment television as a healthy sex educator: the impact of condom-efficacy information in an episode of *Friends*. *Pediatrics*. 2003;112(5):1115–1121
82. Rideout V. *Television as a Health Educator: A Case Study of Grey's Anatomy*. Menlo Park, CA: Kaiser Family Foundation; 2008
83. Tannen T. Media giant and foundation team up to fight HIV/AIDS. *Lancet*. 2003;361(9367):1440–1441
84. DuRant RH, Wolfson M, LaFrance B, Balkrishnan R, Altman D. An evaluation of a mass media campaign to encourage parents of adolescents to talk to their children about sex. *J Adolesc Health*. 2006;38(3):298.e1–298.e9
85. Gruber EL, Wang PH, Christensen JS, Grube JW, Fisher DA. Private television viewing, parental supervision, and sexual and substance use risk behaviors in adolescents [abstract]. *J Adolesc Health*. 2005;36(2):107
86. Barkin SL, Finch SA, Ip EH, et al. Is office-based counseling about media use, timeouts, and firearm storage effective? Results from a cluster-randomized, controlled trial. *Pediatrics*. 2008;122(1). Available at: www.pediatrics.org/cgi/content/full/122/1/e15
87. Dalton MA, Adachi-Mejia AM, Longacre MR, et al. Parental rules and monitoring of children's movie viewing associated with children's risk for smoking and drinking. *Pediatrics*. 2006;118(5):1932–1942
88. Jackson C, Brown JD, L'Engle KL. R-rated movies, bedroom televisions, and initiation of smoking by white and black adolescents. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med*. 2007;161(3):260–268
89. Mitchell KJ, Ybarra M. Social networking sites: finding a balance between their risks and their benefits. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med*. 2009;163(1):87–89
90. McCannon B. Media literacy/media education: solution to big media? In: Strasburger VC, Wilson BJ, Jordan A. *Children, Adolescents, and the Media*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; 2009:519–569
91. Pinkleton BE, Austin EW, Cohen M, Chen YC, Fitzgerald E. Effects of a peer-led media literacy curriculum on adolescents' knowledge and attitudes toward sexual behavior and media portrayals of sex. *Health Commun*. 2008;23(5):462–472
92. Trenholm C, Devaney B, Fortson K, Quay L, Wheeler J, Clark M. *Impacts of Four Title V, Section 510 Abstinence Education Programs: Final Report*. Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research Inc; 2007
93. Kirby D. *Emerging Answers 2007*. Washington, DC: National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy; 2007
94. Kantor LM, Santelli JS, Teitler J, Balmer R. Abstinence-only policies and programs: an overview. *Sex Res Soc Pol*. 2008;5(3):6–17
95. Levin DE, Kilbourne J. *So Sexy So Soon: The New Sexualized Childhood and What Parents Can Do to Protect Their Kids*. New York, NY: Ballantine; 2009
96. Wright PJ, Malamuth NM, Donnerstein E. Research on sex in the media: what do we know about effects on children and adolescents. In: Singer DG, Singer JL. *Handbook of Children and the Media*, 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2012; In press

Policy Statement—Sexuality, Contraception, and the Media
THE COUNCIL ON COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA
Pediatrics; originally published online August 30, 2010;
DOI: 10.1542/peds.2010-1544

Updated Information & Services	including high resolution figures, can be found at: /content/early/2010/08/30/peds.2010-1544
Citations	This article has been cited by 5 HighWire-hosted articles: /content/early/2010/08/30/peds.2010-1544#related-urls
Permissions & Licensing	Information about reproducing this article in parts (figures, tables) or in its entirety can be found online at: /site/misc/Permissions.xhtml
Reprints	Information about ordering reprints can be found online: /site/misc/reprints.xhtml

PEDIATRICS is the official journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics. A monthly publication, it has been published continuously since 1948. PEDIATRICS is owned, published, and trademarked by the American Academy of Pediatrics, 141 Northwest Point Boulevard, Elk Grove Village, Illinois, 60007. Copyright © 2010 by the American Academy of Pediatrics. All rights reserved. Print ISSN: 0031-4005. Online ISSN: 1098-4275.

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



PEDIATRICS®

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS

Policy Statement—Sexuality, Contraception, and the Media
THE COUNCIL ON COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA
Pediatrics; originally published online August 30, 2010;
DOI: 10.1542/peds.2010-1544

The online version of this article, along with updated information and services, is located on the World Wide Web at:
[/content/early/2010/08/30/peds.2010-1544](http://content.early/2010/08/30/peds.2010-1544)

PEDIATRICS is the official journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics. A monthly publication, it has been published continuously since 1948. PEDIATRICS is owned, published, and trademarked by the American Academy of Pediatrics, 141 Northwest Point Boulevard, Elk Grove Village, Illinois, 60007. Copyright © 2010 by the American Academy of Pediatrics. All rights reserved. Print ISSN: 0031-4005. Online ISSN: 1098-4275.

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

