

Screen Use and Health Habits of Youth

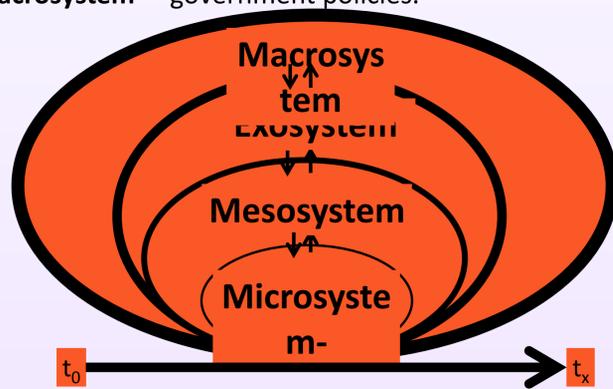
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Theory.

Uri Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological theory describes development of learned behavior:

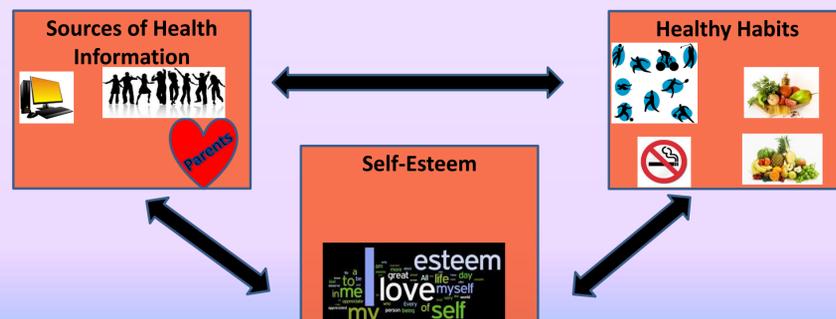
- ↑ frequency and intimacy of contact → ↑ influence on individual behavior
- Microsystem** - child develops/learns behavior from the parents includes child's temperament and personality
- Mesosystem** - less frequent direct contact e.g., peers
- Exosystem** - even less direct/frequent contact doctors/nurses
- Macrosystem** - government policies.



Study Goals.

Using Bronfenbrenner's Theory, this study examined influences on health habits (at least one serving/day of fruit and vegetables; no smoking; 30minutes/day exercise in youth) in youth (ages 15-18 years) by:

- identifying sources of health information (i.e., parents, screen use, others), and
- measuring the contribution of self-esteem on the relationship between sources of information and healthy habits.



Methods.

This poster presents preliminary results of the Youth Survey (3rd component) of a three-component study.

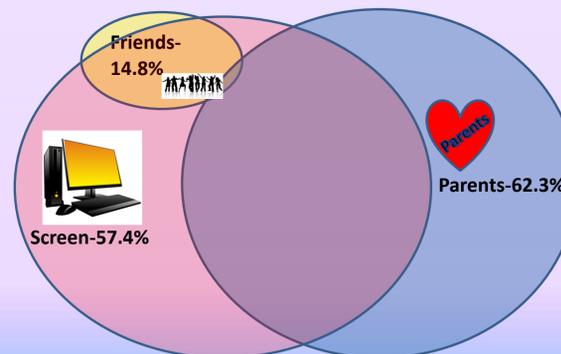
- Instruments were designed with Community Advisory Group assistance.
- Variables /Scales:
 - Demographic Characteristics
 - Rosenberg Self Esteem
 - Ethnicity Self-Identification
 - Hopefulness
 - Service Usage
 - Discrimination
- Sampling Frame - high schools.
- Sample - youth, ages 15-18 years.
- Ethics' Committee Approval (IRB) and Ministry of Education Approval

Results.

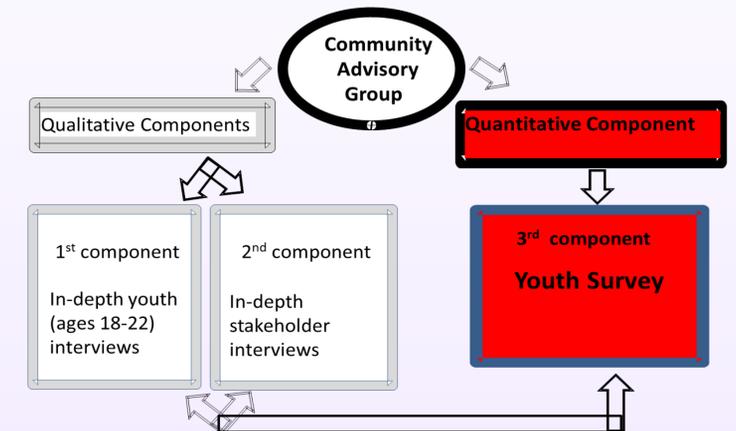
Preliminary Results

- Although the vast majority of youth (n=122) had access to the computer internet, television or cell phones (98%), the amount of screen use varied between 1-19 hours per day (mean=4.22, SD=2.99).
- Screen use was the most common source of health information for youth (57.4%). Among youth who obtained health information from friends (14.8%), 88.9% of them also obtained information from screen use, while among those who obtained health information from their parents (62.3%), only 56.6% of them also obtained health information from screen use.
- Neither screen use nor self-esteem were related to health habits.

Sources of Health Information Among Youth



Mixed-Methods Approach



Conclusions.

- Youth use health information from many sources.
- These preliminary data do not support previous studies' findings that longer hours of screen use or poorer self-esteem are associated with poorer health habits.
- For youth, screen use is so endemic that it qualifies as being part of the mesosystem; consequently, influence on youth is weak.
- Information dissemination must include parents and the internet, as youth glean information from all these sources.

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