

#260 Lydia Fu

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Computer screen time and sexual behavior in adolescents

The objective of the study is to investigate how computer screen-time influences sexual initiation and number of sexual partners among US adolescents aged 13 to 18. Data was drawn from the 2019 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey. It includes national, state, territorial, tribal government and local school-based surveys, conducted by CDC, of representative samples from 9th to 12th grade students. Chi-square analysis of independence was done to determine association. Crude and further multivariate analyses were conducted with Poisson regression to account for covariate influences such as race, depression, ecstasy (substance) use, age and sex. There was a significant multivariate relationship by gender: 41.4% of females who had over 5 hours of computer screen time had ever had sex versus 28.5% who only had 1 hour of screen time ($p < 0.0001$), whereas 38.5% of males who had over 5 hours of computer screen time had ever had sex versus 40.7% of those only had 1 hour of screen time ($p = 0.05$). After adjusting for covariates, youth with increased amounts of screen time would have significant increased tendency to have ever had sex. Computer screen-time appears to be a protective factor for sexual activity among females, but a marker for increased sexual activity among older adolescents and male adolescents. Additionally, for those who had 5 hours or more of screen-time; females appeared to exceed their male peers in proportion of those who had ever had sex. On the other hand, there was a significant protective effect with adolescent females who on average had 35% fewer partners for every additional hour of screen time. However, depression as a modifier increased the number of partners on average by 40% more for each hour of screen time ($OR = 1.40$). Additionally, there was a drastic increase by 300% more partners with each hour of screen time if students had ever used ecstasy. African American students had on average 62% more partners ($OR = 1.62$) with each hour of screen time.