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**Review of Literature and Secondary Research on Generation Y
—Lessons to Apply in the Development of a Youth-targeted CDC Web Site—**

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OVERVIEW

In 1999, the CDC's Office of Communication initiated two separate task orders designed to support the development of a youth-targeted Web site. The first task order was for creative development of the site and was assigned to Porter-Novelli and a subcontractor, Just Kid, Inc.; two communications agencies, the latter of which specializes in youth communications. The second task order was for formative research to foster site development and was assigned to Aeffect, Inc., a marketing and communications research firm.

The following report, prepared by Aeffect, represents the by-product of the first major milestone under the evaluation task order; that is, completion of a review of literature and secondary research pertaining to topics relevant to site development. More specifically, this literature review focuses on developing a comprehensive profile of existing information on Generation Y, which is defined as youth ages 5 to 22. In particular, it provides information on subgroups which fall within Generation Y, including kids, tweens, and teens. To facilitate site development, the review focuses on:

- Creating a demographic and psychographic profile of Generation Y,
- Revealing what health topics will likely have perceived relevancy and impact for them,
- Understanding how to communicate with and market to them effectively,
- Profiling how they use the Internet and their expectations of it, and
- Identifying health education guidelines and standards.

Because of the speed at which youth and Internet trends are evolving, most of the sources selected for inclusion in this document cover the period of time from mid-1996 to late 1999. Sources span a broad range of books, articles, papers, and secondary research reports. Data presented is primarily taken from business, marketing, health and education trade press; newspapers; conference proceedings; and published government guidelines, standards, and documents. DIALOG, Lexis-Nexis, and Northwestern University's library system were electronic database tools used to search, identify and retrieve relevant information.

This literature review was developed under the direction of technical monitors Suzi Gates and Dottie Knight, of CDC's Office of Communication and Information Resource Management, respectively. Three Aeffect researchers conducted reviews of literature in specific topic areas relevant to this initiative: Maggie Jurgens (M.S.-IMC) profiled marketing to the target audience, Tamara Starke profiled Internet trends and behaviors, and Melissa Hall (M.P.H.) profiled health behaviors and opportunities for health content. Ms. Jurgens primarily authored the detailed findings section of this document. Aeffect's project director (Michelle Kuhn, M.S.) and task order leader (Ann Marie Buczek) prepared the executive summary and conclusions that follow.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Generation Y has immense potential as a market for many different products and services. Members of Generation Y are currently aged 5 to 22, and constitute approximately one-quarter of the U.S. population. In the next decade, they are expected to outnumber Boomers. They are already spending big money as well. In 1998, \$168 billion in consumer spending was attributed to youth aged 4 to 19.¹

This generation is an attractive market for more reasons than just sheer size though. They have grown up in an era of relative economic prosperity, stability, and decreasing crime. Therefore, they are much more motivated and optimistic about the future than previous generations.² They are very entertainment driven, and they are not afraid to spend money on items they desire. Due to these characteristics, marketers spend a lot of time and energy targeting these youths with items ranging from athletic shoes and hair clips to cars and computers. As a result, this generation is also the most marketing savvy and brand conscious generation in American history.³

Perhaps, the most significant defining characteristic of this generation is that it is the first to grow-up online. Youth today have never known a world without computers. They are extremely comfortable with technology. As a result of the "connected" environment in which they live, members of Generation Y have come to expect quick, easy connections and interactivity. They have high expectations of most products and services, and do not hesitate to discard items that do not meet those expectations.⁴

Despite their optimism and prosperity, members of Generation Y face worries and pressures their parents may have never encountered. They are concerned about not performing well in school, not having enough money, getting cancer or AIDS, violence (e.g. gangs and school shootings) and peer pressure (e.g. to engage in alcohol, drugs, and sexual behavior).⁵

It is not just older youth who are facing these issues either. The pressures faced by kids today are happening earlier than ever before, which reveals the need for interventions at even younger ages. For example, about one-quarter of high school students have smoked a cigarette before the age of 13, and about one-third say they tried alcohol before the age of 13. In addition, nearly half of boys and girls in high school have already had sexual intercourse, and 3 million have already been infected with a sexually transmitted disease. They are also experiencing increased pressures and worries about their appearance, often eating too much or too little. About 40% of high school students have tried to lose weight in the last month, often resorting to unhealthy methods of weight reduction such as crash dieting, vomiting, or use of laxatives. At the same time, today's youth are relatively inactive and often prefer to watch TV and surf the Internet rather than engage in physical activity.⁶ These statistics indicate an opportunity may exist to better educate and inform Generation Y about health issues and concerns in a way that improves their lives and futures.

Fortunately, many vehicles exist for communicating with today's youth about these issues. They are heavy users of traditional media such as television, radio, and magazines.⁷ Additionally, there are more youth-specific media outlets than ever before.⁸ This generation is also surfing the Internet in record numbers. Kids and teens are the fastest growing groups of Internet users. Today, approximately 17 million youth use the Internet, and this figure is expected to grow to 38.5 million by 2002. Sources estimate, by 2003, 27 percent of Internet users will be under the age of 18.⁹

The Internet is becoming more and more prevalent in both homes and schools. Sources reveal that 24 percent of children aged 6 to 12 have Internet access at home. By 2002, that number is expected to reach 50 percent.¹⁰ Sources also report that 52 percent of youths use the Internet at school, and almost 95 percent of them use computers.¹¹ Research indicates by 2002 there will be 20.2 million students with access to the Internet in the classroom. Additionally,

¹ Merrill, Cristina, "The Consumer Agenda," Forecast, October 1999.

² "Who Is the Millennial Generation?" Life Course Associates, 1999.

³ "Landmark Study Identifies Generation Y Preferences," Children's Business, March 1999.

⁴ Thompson, Bob, "The Selling of the Clickerati," The Washington Post, October 24, 1999.

⁵ Porter Novelli and Just Kid Inc., "Peeking Inside the Black Box: A Selection of Findings from the Kid Id & Youth Healthstyles Study," Kid Power Health & Safety Conference, 1999.

⁶ Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, 1997.

⁷ "Kids Use Media Nearly 40 Hours a Week," Advertising Age, November 29, 1999.

⁸ DeCew, Lynne, "Tailor Messages to Reach Subgroups," Strategy, July 8, 1996.

⁹ Jupiter/NFO Interactive Consumer Survey, April 1999.

¹⁰ Cheng, Kipp, "Netpreneurs Know That Kids Love the Web," Adweek, May 3, 1999.

¹¹ "Digital Marketing Services Launches Opinion Place Kids and Teen Omnibus Survey," PR Newswire, December 13, 1999.

by year-end 2000, 90 percent of public schools will have access to the Internet.¹² These numbers reveal what a powerful tool the Internet is to reach this audience.

The Internet also has a significant impact on this audience. Generation Y views the Internet as a natural and critical component of their future. Over half prefer the Internet to watching television, although usage penetration and time spent with this new medium still trails television by some distance. Some believe their preference for the Internet is driven by the idea that the Internet represents freedom and an escape from peer pressure. The Internet also reportedly caters to the preference for interactive entertainment over passive entertainment, which is traditionally delivered by other media.¹³

Today's youth are receptive to educational messages on the Internet as well. More than 50 percent of youth say they use the Internet for help with homework, and more than 90 percent use the Internet to learn. They also use the Internet for research and to read online magazines and newspapers. Members of Generation Y also turn to the Internet for information about hobbies and things of personal interest. Some of the most popular online activities among youth include playing games, sending e-mail, and chatting online.¹⁴

Although boys and girls spend roughly the same amount of time online, girls and boys have different Internet preferences. Girls prefer to use the Internet for shopping and chatting, while boys prefer online gaming and information gathering.¹⁵ More specifically, girls like to spend time enjoying collaborative online activities, such as exploring characters, and sharing activities with friends. They value story lines, characters, worthwhile goals, social interactions, and creative activities or challenges. On the other hand, boys prefer short, interactive games that focus on competition. They value entertainment, action, adventure, challenge, and violence.¹⁶

Both boys and girls are very demanding consumers of Web content. Many reveal they want substantive and appropriate content that changes frequently. In addition, they want personalization and respect on the Internet, often seeking sites designed just for them. In terms of site formats, youths often say they desire more images (pictures) and less text. In addition, they want sites that are simple to navigate, feature few layers or choices, and have large or easy to read type. This has led some experts to recommend that sites have only three or four featured sections with prominent type.¹⁷ Color appears to have equal significance; blue conjures images of "success," "intelligence," "trust," and "welcoming"; red represents "speed" and "warmth"; yellow depicts "playful" and "easy"; and black indicates "complicated," "outdated," and "high-tech."¹⁸

There are a lot of opportunities on the Web right now to develop relevant health content and partnerships for the youth market. Currently, America Online is the dominant youth service provider. The Kids Only channel on AOL has the largest audience of kids under 12 of any other online service provider. AOL is also the top online service provider for teens.¹⁹ Yet, AOL does not have a specific area for health information for kids and teens. This fact may point to a significant opportunity to reach a lot of youths with health messages and education. There may also be many other sites that want health information and links for youth, but do not want to develop their own content in this area.

Parents also represent a large audience for health-related Web content. Research indicates family households represent 42 percent of total online households or 18.5 million households.²⁰ This statistics indicates the Internet may be an effective method for reaching parents as well as their children. Parents today are also concerned about the health and safety of their kids. In 1977, 30 percent of parents feared for their child's safety at school. In 1999, that number had increased to 52 percent.²¹ Parents need resources to answer their questions about these issues, and to help them communicate with their children about them as well.

¹² "The Online Kids Report: Web Content, Development, and Revenue Models," Jupiter Communications, 1997.

¹³ "Teens and the Future of the Internet," Cheskin Research, August 1999.

¹⁴ "The Online Kids Report: Web Content, Development, and Revenue Models," Jupiter Communications, 1997.

¹⁵ "Kids and the Internet: Entertainment, Exploration, and Information," Selling to Kids, May 13, 1998.

¹⁶ "Girl-friendly Software Takes a Hard Line on Stereotypes," Herizons, Summer 1998.

¹⁷ Neray, Michel, "The ABC's of Building a Web Site for Kids," Strategy, October 13, 1997.

¹⁸ "Teens and the Future of the Internet," Cheskin Research, August 1999.

¹⁹ Conger, Peggy, "Marketing to Today's Kids," Cable World, November 1, 1999.

²⁰ "The Online Kids Report: Web Content, Development, and Revenue Models," Jupiter Communications, 1997.

²¹ "Gallup/CNN/USA Today Poll," PollingReport.com, <http://www.pollingreport.com/prioriti.htm>, January 7, 1999.

Teachers would benefit from relevant health and science education materials on the Internet as well. Youths are increasingly going online at school, and teachers need effective teaching resources on the Web to use in the classroom. There are currently tools teachers can use for health and science classes, but the national education standards for these subjects are aggressive.²² Additional tools could help teachers better meet the goals set for educating youth about health and science. Additionally, a lot of the current sites promoted to teachers are commercial sites developed by marketers to reach young consumers. An objective source of information and quality educational materials may be more credible and useful to this audience.

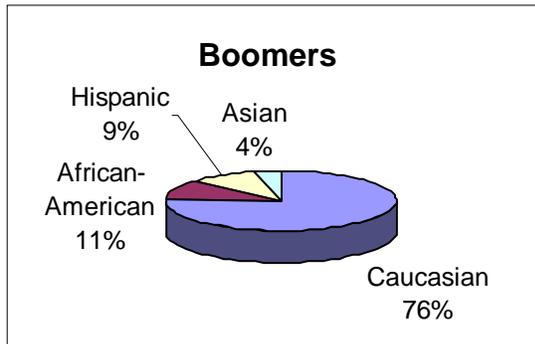
²² Research to Classroom Project,
<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/rtc/index.htm>, January 2000.

PROFILE OF GENERATION Y

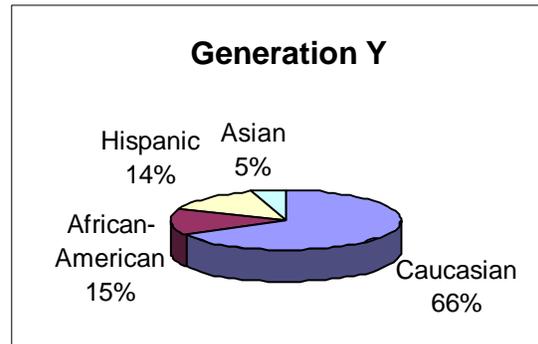
DEMOGRAPHICS

According to the US Census Bureau, Generation Y, people between the ages of 5 and 22, currently number 70 million, or 25.9 percent of the US population. This generation is expected to outnumber its Boomer parents sometime between 2010 and 2015.²³ This generation also has considerable buying power. In 1998, \$168 billion in consumer spending was attributed to youths between the ages of 4 and 19.²⁴

This is a very unique generation of American youth. One in four lives in a single parent household. Three in four have working mothers.²⁵ It is also the most racially diverse cohort in the United States. Only two-thirds of Generation Y is non-Hispanic Caucasian, compared to 76 percent of Baby Boomers. Additionally, fifteen percent of Generation Y is African American, while only 11 percent of Boomers are African American. Five percent of Generation Y is Asian American, and 14 percent is Hispanic, versus the 4 percent of Boomers who are Asian American, and the 9 percent who are Hispanic.²⁶ This greater diversity has helped create a more colorblind generation. Nine out of ten kids under age 12 say they have friends of different races.²⁷



Source: Drug Store News, November 29, 1999.



²³ Merrill, Cristina, "The Consumer Agenda," Forecast, October 1999.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Neuborne, Ellen, "Generation Y," Business Week, February 15, 1999.

²⁶ Griffin, Marie, "Why Court the New Generation," Drug Store News, November 29, 1999.

²⁷ Merrill, Cristina, "The Consumer Agenda," Forecast, October 1999.

PSYCHOGRAPHICS & ATTITUDES

This is also a very motivated and positive generation of American youth. According to a study conducted by Saatchi & Saatchi, today's youth is confident, self-reliant, optimistic, and positive. In a Harris poll, 88 percent say they have specific 5-year career goals, and 78 percent strongly agree they will someday get where they want to be in life.²⁸ Horatio Alger reports 68 percent of youth agree they should be optimistic about their chances of getting a good job.²⁹ According to Roper, they also feel they will be able to improve the future of America, and 89 percent say their life has generally been happy.³⁰

Members of Generation Y enjoy breaking traditional youth stereotypes as well. In general, students want challenging courses and high academic standards in their school curriculum, according to a poll conducted by Public Agenda.³¹ Contrary to popular belief, they value intelligence and kindness in their peers. Eighty percent report it is "cool" to be smart, according to the Roper Youth Report.³² Almost 90 percent of girls and 79 percent of boys think kindness makes a guy cool, and 86 percent of both boys and girls think kindness makes a girl cool.³³ Conversely, only 5 percent of girls and 7 percent of boys report drugs and alcohol make a person cool.³⁴ Appearance is still important to today's youth though. Both boys and girls say good looks make a person cool. Eighty percent of boys say good looks make a girl cool, and 76 percent of girls say good looks make a boy cool.³⁵

Raised in an era of strong brands, advertising clutter, and new technology, Generation Y is also a very demanding and unique group of consumers.³⁶ This generation has a very entertainment-driven lifestyle. They live for the moment, and stand for fun, fantasy, exploration, learning, and new experiences. They are also very image-driven, and use fashion, music, and "the street" to communicate their unique youth

culture.³⁷ Perhaps the most significant defining characteristic of this generation is that it was the first to grow-up online. The Internet has created a "pathway to identity" and produced a more sophisticated language for today's youth, both verbally and visually. They're used to connecting with each other and the world with a great deal of ease, and they're totally comfortable with computer technology. Therefore, they have come to expect quick, easy connection and interaction.³⁸ The digital connection kids experience at a young age has also increased the value this generation places on connection in general.³⁹

Even with the explosion of the Internet, the results of a survey conducted by Digital Marketing Services show that members of Generation Y still like to spend their time in fairly traditional ways. During after-school hours, 27 percent enjoy hanging out with friends, 15 percent watch TV, and 13 percent participate in sports. Almost 70 percent spend their allowance shopping at the mall, and the most popular purchase is CD's and tapes. More than 85 percent of 16 and 17 year-olds spend their allowance on music. Computer games are popular with boys, and fashion is still popular with girls.⁴⁰

²⁸ "Who Is the Millennial Generation?" Life Course Associates, 1999.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Porter Novelli and Just Kid, Inc., "Peeking Inside the Black Box: A Selection of Findings from the Kid Id & Youth Healthstyles Study," Kid Power Health & Safety Conference, 1999.

³¹ "Who Is the Millennial Generation?" Life Course Associates, 1999.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Porter Novelli and Just Kid, Inc., "Peeking Inside the Black Box: A Selection of Findings from the Kid Id & Youth Healthstyles Study," Kid Power Health & Safety Conference, 1999.

³⁶ "Landmark Study Identifies Generation Y Preferences," Children's Business, March 1999.

³⁷ "Marvel Unleashes a Three-Tier Brand Strategy," PR Newswire, June 9, 1998.

³⁸ "Landmark Study Identifies Generation Y Preferences," Children's Business, March 1999.

³⁹ Thompson, Bob, "The Selling of the Clickerati," The Washington Post, October 24, 1999.

⁴⁰ "Digital Marketing Services Launches Opinion Place Kids and Teen Omnibus Survey on American Online," PR Newswire, December 13, 1999.

MINDSET

Despite their positive attitudes, members of Generation Y have a lot of worries. The Nickelodeon/ Yankelovich Youth Monitor found the top worries of 9 to 17 year-olds include not doing well in school, not having enough money, and getting cancer.⁴¹ Additionally, 35 percent of teens say they experience a “great deal” or “some” pressure from peers to “break rules.”⁴² Powerful societal factors also have an influence on today’s teens. More than 50 percent of teens believe television, movies, and news may contribute to youth violence such as, gangs and school shootings.⁴³ Today’s youths have more serious issues to deal with than members of previous generations. Four percent of students missed 1 or more days of school last month because they felt unsafe at school.⁴⁴ In a study of 2,100 11-17 year-old girls, pressure to have sex was ranked as their top concern.⁴⁵ According to research conducted by Porter Novelli, youths worry a lot about getting bad grades, their parents getting divorced, getting hurt at school, the future, not having enough money, getting AIDS, and getting involved with drugs.⁴⁶

Top Teen Concerns

Getting bad grades	56%
Parents getting divorced	50%
Getting beat up/hurt at school	40%
The future	40%
Not having enough money	36%
Getting AIDS	33%
Getting involved with drugs	28%

Source: Porter Novelli and Just Kid, Inc., 1999.

Kids and teens need and look to authority figures for help with these issues. Eighty percent of youth admire their parents, and 51 percent say family is more important to them than friends. Parents rank highest as the principle role model in teens’ lives, followed by teachers, friends, television, and advertising.⁴⁷ They also feel their parents are there when they need them.

Principle Teen Role Model

Parents	49%
Teachers	22%
Friends	14%
Television	7%
Advertising	4%

Source: Roper Starch Youth Report, 1997.

According to a recent Porter Novelli study, youth say they get along with their parents and other family members, and 87 percent say their parents are there when they really need help.⁴⁸ Another study of 13 to 17 year-olds indicates parents are most influential in major life decisions, such as whether or not to drink; and friends are most influential in smaller decisions, such as what to wear and how to spend money.⁴⁹ Generally, they say their parents have discussed important issues with them, such as plans for the future, drugs, AIDS, and sex.⁵⁰ Even with parental support and involvement, kids and teens face serious threats to their health and safety.

⁴¹ Russakoff, Dale, “For Marketers, Youth Trend Is No Child’s Play,” The Washington Post, April 19, 1999.

⁴² “Teens Often Live in a Climate of Fear, Uncertainty, and Danger,” The Gallup Organization, April 28, 1999.

⁴³ “Roper Starch Youth Report Parents Grow in Influencing Teen Choices, Study Shows,” Business Wire, February 14, 1997.

⁴⁴ Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, 1997.

⁴⁵ Dodge, Susan, “Study: Sex Issues Are All the Rage,” Chicago Sun-Times, September 15, 1999.

⁴⁶ Porter Novelli and Just Kid, Inc., “Peeking Inside the Black Box: A Selection of Findings from the Kid Id & Youth Healthstyles Study,” Kid Power Health & Safety Conference, 1999.

⁴⁷ “Roper Starch Youth Report Shows Parents Grow in Influencing Teen Choices,” Business Wire, February 14, 1997.

⁴⁸ Porter Novelli and Just Kid, Inc., “Peeking Inside the Black Box: A Selection of Findings from the Kid Id & Youth Healthstyles Study,” Kid Power Health & Safety Conference, 1999.

⁴⁹ “Roper Starch Youth Report Shows Parents Grow in Influencing Teen Choices,” Business Wire, February 14, 1997.

⁵⁰ Porter Novelli and Just Kid, Inc., “Peeking Inside the Black Box: A Selection of Findings from the Kid Id & Youth Healthstyles Study,” Kid Power Health & Safety Conference, 1999.

RELEVANT HEALTH TOPICS

VIOLENCE

Despite increased attention to violent behavior, unintentional injury is the leading cause of death for people aged 1 to 24.⁵¹ The leading cause of these unintentional injuries is car accidents. Almost 6,000 teenagers died from motor vehicle crash injuries in 1995.⁵² Contributing to this statistic is the fact that teens often exhibit reckless behavior in cars. Nineteen percent of high school students rarely or never wear seat belts when riding as a passenger. Additionally, at least once in the last 30 days, 36.6 percent of high school students rode in a car with someone who was drinking.⁵³ Despite this alarming behavior, teenage fatalities from motor vehicle accidents have declined 41 percent since 1980.⁵⁴

Violence is still a major concern for today's youth. During the previous year, 36.6 percent of students were involved in a physical fight at least once.⁵⁵ Eighteen percent of youth reported carrying a weapon in the last 30 days, and 5.9 percent had carried a gun.⁵⁶ Approximately 1 million students brought guns to school in 1998, and nearly 125,000 youths are arrested each year for violent crimes.⁵⁷ Death resulting from violence is also a major concern. Homicide is the second leading cause of death for people aged 15-24, and the fourth leading cause of death for people aged 1-14. Minority youth are at a greater risk than Caucasian youth of dying this way. Homicide is the leading cause of death for African-American and Hispanic youth aged 15-24.⁵⁸ These statistics may seem grim, but homicide rates are declining. Homicide offenses decreased 25 percent between 1993 and 1996, and dropped another 12.7

percent in 1996. Homicide deaths have decreased by 33 percent since 1993.⁵⁹

Youth violence is also a major concern of 58 percent of American adults.⁶⁰ Concerns about youth violence and safety at school are much more pronounced than they were a generation ago. In 1977, 70 percent of parents said they did not fear for their child's safety at school. In 1999, 52 percent of parents did fear for their child's safety, and only 47 percent did not.⁶¹

Teens are not only at risk of violence from other people, but also from themselves. Suicide is the third leading cause of death among youth aged 10-19. In the preceding 12 months, 20.5 percent of students seriously considered attempting suicide, 15.7 percent had a specific plan, and almost 8 percent actually attempted suicide one or more times.⁶²

⁵¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) annual mortality tapes.

⁵² "Teenage Motor Vehicle Deaths Fact Sheet," National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Web Site, <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/duip/teenmvh.htm>, accessed January 6, 2000.

⁵³ Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, 1997.

⁵⁴ "Teenage Motor Vehicle Deaths: Fact Sheet", National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention.

⁵⁵ Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, 1997.

⁵⁶ "Facts About Violence Among Youth and Violence in Schools," National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Last updated December 1999.

⁵⁷ "1999 Violence Fact Sheet," American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry .

⁵⁸ Porter Novelli and Just Kid, Inc., "Peeking Inside the Black Box: A Selection of Findings from the Kid Id & Youth Healthstyles Study," Kid Power Health & Safety Conference, 1999.

⁵⁹ "Youth Violence in the United States," National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention, Web site revised, 1999.

⁶⁰ Glassner, Barry, "Violence Declines, But Fears Rise," The Plain Dealer, August 16, 1999

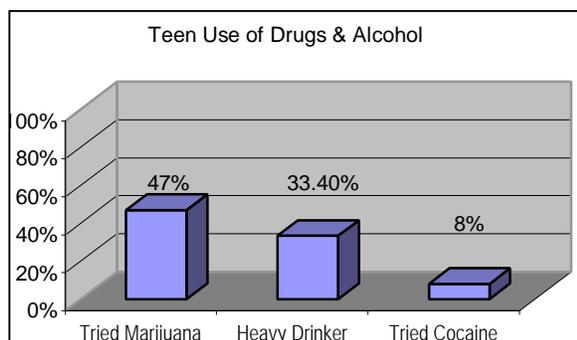
⁶¹ "Gallup/CNN/USA Today Poll," PollingReport.com, <http://www.pollingreport.com/prioriti.htm>, January 7, 1999.

⁶² Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, 1997.

DRUGS & ALCOHOL

Despite preventative efforts and health warnings, cigarette use is up among youth.⁶³ Nearly 3,000 begin smoking every day.⁶⁴ Seventy percent of high school students have tried cigarettes, 24.8 percent have smoked an entire cigarette before the age of 13. Youths are doing more than just trying cigarettes. Seventeen percent of high school students are frequent smokers.⁶⁵

Kids and teens are experimenting with drugs and alcohol as well. Thirty-one percent of high school students tried alcohol before the age of 13. Half of high school students have had a drink in the last thirty days, and 33.4 percent are heavy drinkers (5 or more drinks in the last 30 days). Forty-seven percent of high school students have tried marijuana, 9.7 percent before the age of 13. Twenty-six percent used it one or more times in the last 30 days. They are also sampling hard core drugs. Eight percent of high school students have tried cocaine, and 3.3 percent of them used cocaine at least once in the preceding 30 days.⁶⁶ The good news is this generation is using drugs less than the Boomer and X generations.⁶⁷



Source: Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, 1997.

SEX & PREGNANCY

Nearly half of boys and girls in high school have had sexual intercourse, 7.2 percent before the age of 13.⁶⁸ Thirty-five percent are currently sexually active, and 16 percent have had four or more sex partners during their lifetime.⁶⁹ Approximately 1 million youth get pregnant each year, and nearly 3 million are infected with a sexually transmitted disease.⁷⁰ Today's youth are getting smarter about sex though. There are increasing instances of abstinence with fewer youth initiating sex, 54 percent in 1990 versus 48 percent in 1997. Additionally, 28 percent of students are currently abstaining from sexual intercourse.⁷¹ There is also increased use of contraception among youth, and the teen birth rate decreased 12 percent between 1991 and 1996.⁷²

The majority of American adults is aware of these issues and recognizes the importance of educating today's youth about them. According to Hickman-Brown Research, 93 percent of Americans support teaching sex education in high schools, and 84 percent support teaching it in middle and junior high schools. Almost 90 percent of Americans think it is important for youth to have information about contraception and the prevention of STDs, HIV, and AIDS. Gallup recently asked people to recommend sex education topics for high school students. Ninety-two percent recommended STDs and AIDS, 90 percent said the biology of reproduction, 89 percent teen pregnancy, 87 percent birth control, 77 percent pre-marital sex, 72 percent the nature of sexual intercourse, 70 percent abortion, and 65 percent recommended homosexuality. There is less support for sex education in elementary schools. According to Peter D. Hart Research Associates, 66 percent of voters favor it, 12 percent are neutral, and 22 percent oppose sex education in elementary schools.⁷³ (See Figure 1.)

⁶³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) annual mortality tapes.

⁶⁴ "Study Reports Alarming Numbers of Smokers Among 11-20 Year-Olds," National Families in Action, 1999.

⁶⁵ Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, 1997.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ "Youth Violence in the United States," National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention, Web site revised 1999.

⁶⁸ "When Teens Have Sex: Issues and Trends," The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

⁶⁹ Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, 1997.

⁷⁰ "School Health Programs: An Investment in Our Nation's Future," At-A-Glance, 1999.

⁷¹ Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, 1997.

⁷² "When Teens Have Sex: Issues and Trends," The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

⁷³ "Issues and Answers Fact Sheet on Sexuality Education," Sexual Information and Education Council of the US, Contemporary Women's Issues, August 1999.

DIET & EXERCISE

About three-fourths of youths do not eat the recommended number of servings of fruits and vegetables.⁷⁴ They tend to worry about eating too much, not too little. Twenty-seven percent of high school students think they are overweight, and almost 40 percent have tried to lose weight during the last month.⁷⁵ This trend is more prevalent among girls than boys, especially since girls tend to worry more about their appearance as they age. Girls are more likely to describe themselves as slightly or very overweight than boys, 28 percent versus 19 percent. Girls are also more likely to exercise, diet, and vomit or take laxatives to lose weight.⁷⁶ Despite this constant concern over health, youths do not get as much exercise as they should. Daily enrollment in physical education classes dropped from 42 percent to 25 percent between 1991 and 1995. Nearly half of people aged 12-21 is not vigorously active on a regular basis, and 14 percent report no recent physical activity.⁷⁷

POTENTIAL TARGET MARKETS

While most members of Generation Y face these serious issues, they may be more or less at risk depending on their age. Different age groups have different characteristics so it is important to communicate with them separately and in an age appropriate manner. As a rule of thumb, one kid year equals five adult years, so targets must be defined narrowly. It is preferable to target segments of four years or fewer. Larger segments pose difficulty because of differences in cognitive levels, abilities, and interests.⁷⁸ It is also important to remember Generation Y is very fragmented. They form a much less homogenous group than any other in history. Their racial and ethnic diversity is one reason. Another is the fracturing of media. They have never known a world without hundreds of television channels and magazine titles. Additionally, the Internet is a medium of variety and change, which has encouraged even more diversity within this

⁷⁴ "School Health Programs: An Investment in Our Nation's Future," At-A-Glance, 1999.

⁷⁵ Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, 1997.

⁷⁶ Porter Novelli and Just Kid, Inc., "Peeking Inside the Black Box: A Selection of Findings from the Kid Id & Youth Healthstyles Study," Kid Power Health & Safety Conference, 1999.

⁷⁷ "Physical Activity and Health: Adolescents and Young Adults, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion," Web site updated November 1999.

⁷⁸ DeCew, Lynne, "What's Wrong with Advertising to Kids?" Strategy, March 1, 1999.

group.⁷⁹ Therefore, it is nearly impossible to market effectively to the group as a whole.⁸⁰

KIDS

Kids aged five to nine number 20 million, or 7.3 percent of the total population.⁸¹ This market has been growing more than 20 percent for the past five to seven years, and it shows no signs of slowing. By age 6, the typical child is shopping an average of two to three times a week. The number of shopping trips only increases with age. By age 10, kids shop an average of 11 to 12 times a month and visit five stores a week.⁸²

Kids represent a large market for a lot of different kinds of products. Their income has been growing at the rate of 20 percent each year for the past five years, and roughly 96 percent of their income is discretionary. By 2001, children will have \$35 billion in buying power, and they will influence almost \$200 billion in household spending.⁸³ (See Figures 2 and 3.) Kids' influence is widening as well. While they used to influence around 65 product categories, over the past decade, that number has increased to 75.⁸⁴ Kids even exert influence over big-ticket purchases like cars, vacations, and computers.⁸⁵ Additionally, today's kids are more brand aware than ever. About 90 percent of product requests made by children to a parent are by brand name.⁸⁶ Some of the largest influences on children's perceptions of brands come from the television programs and movies they watch.

Older kids are not the only ones who influence family spending. American Research Group found that while kids aged 4 to 8 do not have a substantial influence on their parents' larger purchases, they do have considerable influence over purchases of toys, food, and clothing.⁸⁷

⁷⁹ Neuborne, Ellen, "Generation Y," Business Week, February 15, 1999.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ "Population Projections Program," US Census Bureau, 1999.

⁸² Guynn, Jessica, "Within American Families, Kids Hold Adult-Like Amounts of Buying Power," Contra Costa Times, December 23, 1998.

⁸³ Merrill, Cristina, "The Consumer Agenda," Forecast, October 1999.

⁸⁴ McNeal, James, "Tapping the Three Kids' Markets," American Demographics, April 1998.

⁸⁵ Guynn, Jessica, "Within American Families, Kids Hold Adult-Like Amounts of Buying Power," Contra Costa Times, December 23, 1998.

⁸⁶ McNeal, James, "Tapping the Three Kids' Markets," American Demographics, April 1998.

⁸⁷ Corral, Cecile, "The Customer Connection," Discount Store News, October 25, 1999.

Kids today also face the hassles and stresses that come with being busier than ever. Roughly 75 percent of a child's weekday is scheduled with school and structured activities, up from just 41 percent in 1981.⁸⁸ Personal time for children aged 3 to 12 decreased from 63 to 51 hours between 1981 and 1997, and unstructured personal time from 52 to 33 hours. During the same time period, time spent at school increased 38 percent, time spent studying increased 58 percent, and time spent doing household work increased 138 percent.⁸⁹

TWEENS

Tweens are the 19.6 million kids aged 10 to 14.⁹⁰ Today's tweens are quite a distinctive group. For most of their lives, the economy has been strong. Therefore, they have optimistic attitudes about the future and money, and think nothing of spending it. Tweens spend close to \$14 billion a year, and directly influence over \$128 million in family spending.⁹¹ (See Figures 4 and 5.)

There are some important distinctions between younger and older tweens that marketers should keep in mind. Younger tweens have a sense of solidarity with each other and a strong joiner instinct. They are finally the big kids that little kids admire, and they enjoy playing the part. They are also starting to distance themselves from their parents, which means they look to peers for validation and advice. These characteristics point to several marketing tactics that are especially effective with younger tweens. For example, they respond well to invitations to join a club with special privileges. They like contests, collecting, and receiving mail. This audience also responds well to wacky creative formats with animation, special effects, humor, and clever details.⁹² (See Figures 6 and 7.)

While younger tweens still identify with kids, older tweens are starting to act more like teenagers. According to Peter Zollo of Teenage Research Unlimited, most teenagers dislike the label "teen" because it refers to someone young and immature. Tweens, on the other hand, embrace the term "teen"

because it has an aspirational quality for them.⁹³ They are starting to adopt teenage tastes and attitudes. They like teenage music, television, and magazines. The tween years are also a time of major transition and uncertainty for most kids. Their sense of self is shifting dramatically. Instead of feeling like self-confident, experienced kids, they feel like self-conscious, inexperienced teens. Tweens at this age experience tremendous peer pressure.⁹⁴ Even though family is important to them, their primary motivation is the desire to fit in with their peer group.⁹⁵

This information is especially disturbing given the fact that today's tweens are faced with difficult issues and decisions at a young age. According to a study published in *Pediatrics* in October 1999, most Caucasian girls show signs of puberty before the age of 10 (African American girls before age 9), compared with the age of 15 at the turn of the 20th century. Another recent study found that 39 percent of girls in grades five to eight said they were dieting. Thirteen percent of those girls said they had binged and purged, which are symptoms of bulimia. Decisions about sex, drugs and alcohol are also being made earlier. According to a 1997 Centers for Disease Control study, 6.5 percent of ninth-grade girls – compared with 2.9 percent of 12th graders – said they had sex before the age of 13.⁹⁶ Seven in 10 girls who had sex before age 13 say it was unwanted or involuntary.⁹⁷ A 1998 University of Maryland study of eighth-graders found 29 percent had tried some illegal drug, 52.5 percent had used alcohol, and 24.7 percent said they had been drunk at least once.⁹⁸ A lot of kids have faced decisions about whether or not to take drugs even before junior high school. In 1997, three out of ten 4-6th graders had been offered drugs already. According to a 1998 Center for Addiction and Abuse survey, more kids start using marijuana at age 13 than any other age between 10 and 17.⁹⁹ (See Figures 8, 9, and 10.)

Tweens themselves are worried about health issues as well. When asked about their concerns, tweens as

⁸⁸ Merrill, Cristina, "The Consumer Agenda," Forecast, October 1999.

⁸⁹ "Who Is the Millennial Generation?" Life Course Associates, 1999.

⁹⁰ "Population Projections Program," US Census Bureau, 1999.

⁹¹ Kantrowitz, Barbara and Pat Wingert, "The Truth About Tweens," Newsweek, October 18, 1999.

⁹² DeCew, Lynne, "Tailor Messages to Reach Subgroups," Strategy, July 8, 1996.

⁹³ Zollo, Peter, "Wise Up to Teens: Insights into Marketing and Advertising to Teenagers," New Strategist Publications, Inc., 1999.

⁹⁴ DeCew, Lynne, "Tailor Messages to Reach Subgroups," Strategy, July 8, 1996.

⁹⁵ Zollo, Peter, "Wise Up to Teens: Insights into Marketing and Advertising to Teenagers," New Strategist Publications, Inc., 1999.

⁹⁶ Kantrowitz, Barbara and Pat Wingert, "The Truth About Tweens," Newsweek, October 18, 1999.

⁹⁷ "Teen Sex and Pregnancy," The Alan Guttmacher Institute, September 1999.

⁹⁸ Kantrowitz, Barbara and Pat Wingert, "The Truth About Tweens," Newsweek, October 18, 1999.

⁹⁹ "ONDCP Project Now," Center for Addiction and Substance Abuse, 1998.

young as 10 mention violence, AIDS, STDs, and peer pressure regarding sex.¹⁰⁰ According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, youths benefit when they are informed early about tough issues, especially by their parents. These youths are more likely to talk with their parents first when faced with these issues and decisions. The Kaiser Family Foundation has also identified a window of opportunity between the ages of 10 and 12 for educating youth about issues like sex, drugs, and violence. Ten to 12 year-olds report they learn the most about these issues from their mothers and schools/teachers. By the time a child is aged 13 to 15, the top sources for information are friends and entertainment media, i.e. television and movies.¹⁰¹ (This study did not include the Internet in this classification.)

TEENS

According to the US Census Bureau, there are 19.8 million teens in the US aged 15 to 19.¹⁰² The teen population is growing almost twice as fast as the total population, which means by the year 2010 there will be about 35 million teens in the US. The fastest growth, 7.5 percent, will take place between 2000 and 2005.¹⁰³

Additionally, teen income is increasing at a higher rate than overall income. Collective teen income rose 11 percent between 1996 and 1997, compared to 5.7 percent in overall income. Teenage Research Unlimited estimated that total teen income in the United States reached \$111 billion in 1997. These large numbers have been attributed to several important trends in the lives of today's teens. First of all, more teens are earning their own money, which means they can spend more than their allowances. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates the number of working teens has increased 15 percent in the last 5 years.¹⁰⁴ Additionally, more than one-quarter of all teens earn more than \$100 per week.¹⁰⁵ Secondly, most of them come from dual-income households with fewer children. Therefore, parents have more money to spend on their teens. Forty percent of teens receive a regular allowance, and the median teen allowance is \$50 per week.¹⁰⁶ Finally, a lot of teens have access to family credit cards. The Rand Youth Poll found that 22 percent of teenagers

have access to a credit card, 11 percent to a bankcard, and 13.5 percent to a department store credit card.¹⁰⁷

These trends lead to big spending by teens. In 1998, \$141 billion in consumer spending was attributable to teenagers. That figure is expected to reach \$153 billion in 1999, according to Teenage Research Unlimited.¹⁰⁸ (See Figures 11 and 12.) Teens have tremendous influence over all types of purchases made by their parents as well, and 77 percent of teens ask for specific brands.¹⁰⁹ (See Figures 13 and 14.) Even so, marketing to teens is not easy. They are difficult to reach because they are on the go and away from home so much. They are also very cynical about advertising, and the only way to get through to them is to understand what is important to them. Freedom, friendship, being loved, and having choices are extremely important to teens. Peer relationships are the focal point of their lives. Friends become a teen's new family, providing respect, love, and a sense of independence.¹¹⁰ It is also important to speak to them more like adults than children, especially since one major teen complaint is being treated like a child when expected to act like an adult.¹¹¹ Additionally, half of teens feel they get too little respect from adults.¹¹²

Cheskin Research has identified five distinct teen segments based on attitude, behavior, and conformity. The first group is Explorers. Explorers are very creative, independent teens who tend to differ from the norm. This segment is relatively small (about 10 percent of teens), but very influential within teen culture. Many teen trends begin within this segment. They are passionate and committed to the interests and issues around which they build their identities, but these interests can change rapidly. Visibles are the next group of teens. Visible teens constitute 30 percent of the teen population. These teens are widely well known and popular because of their looks, personality, or athletic ability.¹¹³

Status Quo teens are the third segment within teen culture. Status Quo teens display the traditional

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ "Talking with Kids about Tough Issues," The Kaiser Family Foundation and Children Now, March 1, 1999.

¹⁰² "Population Projections Program," US Census Bureau, 1999.

¹⁰³ "Wired to Spend," Women's Wear Daily, February 19, 1998.

¹⁰⁴ Newsday, December 23, 1999.

¹⁰⁵ "Wired to Spend," Women's Wear Daily, February 19, 1998.

¹⁰⁶ Associated Press, December 21, 1999.

¹⁰⁷ "Wired to Spend," Women's Wear Daily, February 19, 1998.

¹⁰⁸ Heller, Laura, "The Customer Connection," Discount Store News, October 25, 1999.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ DeCew, Lynne, "Tailor Messages to Reach Subgroups," Strategy, July 8, 1996.

¹¹¹ "Who Is the Millennial Generation?" Life Course Associates, 1999.

¹¹² "Teens Often Live in a Climate of Fear, Uncertainty, and Danger," The Gallup Organization, April 28, 1999.

¹¹³ "Teens and the Future of the Internet," Cheskin Research, August 1999.

values of moderation and achievement, and seek mainstream acceptance. These teens are almost always well liked by both their peers and adults. Thirty-eight percent of teens fall into the Status Quo segment. Roughly 13 to 15 percent of the teen population can be classified as Non-Teen. Non-Teens tend to behave more like adults or young children, due to a lack of social skills, an intense interest in academics, or an indifference to teen culture and style. Isolators are the final group of teens. These teens exhibit behavior that is psychologically isolating from both their peers and adults. They are approximately 5 to 10 percent of the teen population, and are most commonly associated with societal problems.¹¹⁴

Understanding these segments and their relationships with each other can help reveal and predict trends in teen culture. New trends usually start with Explorers because of their tendency toward experimentation. Visible teens adopt some of these trends and spread them more widely, due to their presence and popularity with other teens. Then, Status Quo teens will adopt a trend once it becomes mainstream. Once the parents of Non-Teens notice a trend and encourage their kids to adopt it, it is usually starting to go out of style.¹¹⁵

Teenagers today are concerned about more than popularity and cliques. They also think and care about social issues. When asked about their top social concerns, 29 percent say AIDS, 25 percent say education, and 25 percent say child abuse.¹¹⁶

Top Teen Social Concerns

AIDS	29%
Education	25%
Child Abuse	25%
Drinking and driving	24%
Racism	23%
Abortion	21%
Drug abuse	18%
Violence	15%
Sexual assault	13%
Environment	12%
Cigarette smoking	12%
Nuclear war	11%
Animal rights	11%
Unplanned pregnancy	10%

Source: Peter Zollo, Teenage Research Unlimited, 1999.

SIMILARITIES

While these three age groups are radically different in some respects, it is important to note that they do have one thing in common: they all want to be slightly older and more independent than they are. As a result, kids, tweens, and teens respond positively to slightly older role models and spokespeople. Therefore, it is beneficial to communicate with them at a slightly higher level than their current age, usually about two to three years.¹¹⁷

MARKETING TO GENERATION Y

It takes more than selective targeting to market effectively to Generation Y. Members of Generation Y seek products that create an ambiance and community experience, rather than just provide a function. They like brands to express a reality in which they are involved, interconnected, and interactive. To be successful, build a brand with them, not for them.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Zollo, Peter, "Wise Up to Teens: Insights into Marketing and Advertising to Teenagers," New Strategist Publications, Inc., 1999.

¹¹⁷ DeCew, Lynne, "Tailor Messages to Reach Subgroups," Strategy, July 8, 1996.

¹¹⁸ "Landmark Study Identifies Generation Y Preferences," Children's Business, March 1999.

A recent Saatchi & Saatchi study says:

“Computers have made knowledge cool through a fusion of fun and learning. Merchandise concepts that make exploring the unknown fun, bring information to life, or challenge consumers to design their own products will be a sure-fire hit. Also, look for cause-related tie-ins, lifestyle sponsorships, interactive promotions, etc. to become more important means by which brands can provide memorable experiences and build community.”¹¹⁹

Some very large brands are struggling to learn these lessons. Therefore, they are having difficulty earning the loyalty of today's youth. Labels that defined popular tastes when Baby Boomers were young are no longer fashionable. Names such as Nike and Levi-Strauss are battling falling sales and eroding market share. This generation is still very brand-conscious, but the hottest brand names tend to be newcomers, or are unknown to older consumers. When asked about “cool” brands, members of Generation Y mention Mudd, Paris Blues, In Vitro, and Cement, not dominant, mass market brands.¹²⁰ These brands are popular with today's youth because they reflect their values, not the values of their parents or the values of marketers.

“Having grown up in an even more media-saturated, brand-conscious world than their parents, they respond to ads differently, and they prefer to encounter those ads in different places. The marketers that capture Gen Y's attention do so by bringing their messages to the places these kids congregate, whether it's the Internet, a snowboarding tournament, or cable TV. The ads may be funny or disarmingly direct. What they don't do is suggest that the advertiser knows Gen Y better than these savvy consumers know themselves.”¹²¹

Authenticity is extremely important to today's youth, which is why word of mouth is a powerful way to build a brand with Gen Y. Mountain Dew is a good example of a brand that achieved “authenticity” in this way. The drink's success had little to do with official advertising. Instead, it became popular among kids and teens because they “discovered” it contains a lot of caffeine, and they spread the word amongst themselves. Marketers are also gaining

authenticity via grassroots marketing that is more subtle and localized. As with Mountain Dew, the idea is to let them stumble onto the brand in unexpected places so they feel a sense of discovery and ownership. Community events, concerts, sports events, movie theaters, and malls are good venues for grassroots marketing.¹²²

Successful models of doing business with this generation get them involved with each other as well as the brand and the company. It is also important to fuse verbal and visual communications techniques. Layout, media, design, copy, video, etc. should work together to create an environment which reinforces youth values and the values of the brand.¹²³

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Even with relevant marketing and sound branding, delivering messages that a brand is fun and cool is a big challenge when developing youth campaigns.¹²⁴ One thing contributing to this difficulty is the sheer amount of marketing messages to which today's kids and teens are exposed. According to Competitive Media Reporting, from 1993 to 1996, advertising in youth-specific media rose more than 50 percent to \$1.5 billion.¹²⁵ Additionally, youths are exposed to around 3,000 to 5,000 messages each week. This is a significant increase from the 1,000 messages they were exposed to a generation ago.¹²⁶ The only way to break-through to today's youth is to make sure the message and the media are relevant to their lifestyle.¹²⁷

One way to increase effectiveness is to experiment with alternative media mixes. Even marketing giants like Levi-Strauss are changing their media mixes and marketing tactics to become more relevant to this new generation. Levi Strauss & Co. recently began aggressively marketing to younger consumers with a media mix that includes movies, music, print, and documentary style TV ads on targeted channels like MTV, ESPN, Comedy Central, WB, and Fox. Levi's also used outdoor teasers to get consumers talking, and sponsorships of movies and concerts to reach the

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Neuborne, Ellen, “Generation Y,” Business Week, February 15, 1999.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ “Landmark Study Identifies Generation Y Preferences,” Children's Business, March 1999.

¹²⁴ Kirchdoerffer, Ed, “Keeping Up With Today's Kids,” Kidscreen, January 1, 1999.

¹²⁵ Leonhardt, David, “Hey Kid, Buy This,” Business Week, June 30, 1997.

¹²⁶ Vaczek, David, “Problem Children,” Promo, July 1998.

¹²⁷ DeCew, Lynne, “Tailor Messages to Reach Subgroups,” Strategy, July 8, 1996.

target audience.¹²⁸ Point-of-purchase displays and cross-promotions also have to be altered to appeal to kids and teens. To be effective, these efforts should create an environment that is fun and trendy, and where everything is coordinated to reinforce the brand's core image. Multi-media displays and 3-D tactics are very effective since interaction is of the utmost importance.¹²⁹

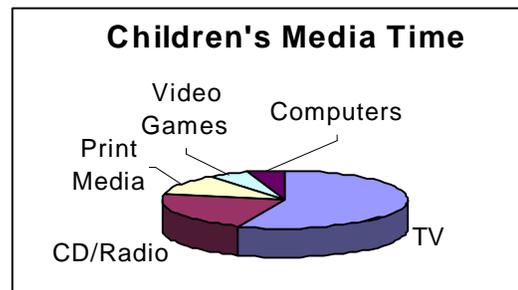
When communicating with today's youth, it is also important to remember they process information differently than previous generations. Since they are highly visual, they respond better to visually oriented communication techniques and tactics. Members of Generation Y are not willing to put a lot of time and effort into understanding what is being said to them.¹³⁰ In order to communicate effectively with them, it is necessary to tailor communication efforts to meet their unique information processing needs, instead of relying on them to do the work.

MEDIA USAGE

Another step toward ensuring effective communication is to understand how members of Generation Y interact with and use media. Today's kids and teens spend a large amount of their free-time consuming media. A study of youth aged 2 to 18 conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation found they spend an average of 38 hours per week watching TV, listening to music, surfing the Internet, and using other forms of media outside of school. The study also found older kids and teens spend almost twice as much time with media as younger kids. Youth aged 8 to 18 spend 6.43 hours per day using media, while those aged 2 to 7 spend about 3.5 hours per day.¹³¹

It is also necessary to understand how new media alternatives affect traditional media consumption patterns. Nielsen recently reported the amount of time youth spend per week watching television has declined from 23.5 hours in 1998 to 21 hours in 1999. Despite the growing popularity of the Internet, television still dominates Generation Y's use of media time. On average, Generation Y spends almost three hours a day watching television, compared to 20 minutes playing video games and

eight minutes using the Internet.¹³² Video games and the Internet only account for a small portion of total media time. TV represents about 56 percent of total media time, CD's or radio account for 22 percent, print media, 12 percent, and video games and computers account for 5 percent each.¹³³



Source: Kaiser Family Foundation, November 1999.

One of the reasons behind such heavy usage is that members of Generation Y are growing up surrounded by media. The average home contains three TV's, three radios, three tape players, two VCR's, two CD players, one video game player, and one computer. Their rooms are also full of various media devices. Seventy percent of all youths have a radio in their rooms, 64 percent have a tape player, 53 percent have a TV, and 51 percent have a CD player in their rooms.¹³⁴ It is also estimated that 21 percent of youth aged 8 and older have computers in their rooms.¹³⁵

The Kaiser study also found that parental control over media usage is fairly minimal. Almost half of all youths have no TV-watching rules, and 58 percent have the TV on during mealtime. Shared TV time with parents accounted for 19 percent of total viewing time for those aged 2 to 7 and only 5 percent for those aged 8 to 18.¹³⁶

POPULAR MEDIA OUTLETS

Youth magazines are especially popular right now. Publishers are developing a lot of titles in an attempt to attract new readers. There are currently 160 youth titles, twice as many as existed in the mid-1980's.¹³⁷ Some of these magazines are experiencing unprecedented success as well. Launched in 1998,

¹²⁸ Knight, Molly, "Levi's to Acquire, Develop Youth Brands," Daily News Record, November 23, 1998.

¹²⁹ Azoulay, Julia Fein, "Cross-Merchandising to Tweens," Children's Business, August 1, 1999.

¹³⁰ Kuhn, Michelle and Wayne Eischen, "Leveraging the Aptitude and Ability of Eight Year-Old Adults," ESOMAR Seminar on Youth Research, October 22-24, 1997.

¹³¹ "Kids Use Media Nearly 40 Hours a Week," Advertising Age, November 29, 1999.

¹³² Wang, Karissa, "For Kids, TV Still Tops Media," Electronic Media, November 22, 1999.

¹³³ "Kids Use Media Nearly 40 Hours a Week," Advertising Age, November 29, 1999.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ "Kids and Media," Kaiser Family Foundation, November 1999.

¹³⁶ "Kids Use Media Nearly 40 Hours a Week," Advertising Age, November 29, 1999.

¹³⁷ DeCew, Lynne, "Tailor Messages to Reach Subgroups," Strategy, July 8, 1996.

Teen People has 10 million readers per issue. Its circulation has grown from 500,000 to 1.2 million, making it one of the fastest-growing magazines in American publishing history.¹³⁸ Sales are also rising for teen magazines that have been around for years. In the first half of 1998, single-copy sales rose for the three oldest teen titles. *Seventeen's* were up 8.1 percent, and *YM's* and *Teen's* each rose more than two percent.¹³⁹

It is difficult to find a magazine title that appeals to all youths though. Boys and girls spend their time in increasingly different ways as they enter their teen years, and these differences are visible in the magazines that boys and girls read. For youth aged 8 to 12, six of the same magazines appear on boys' and girls' top ten lists, according to Roper. By ages 13 to 17, the lists differ sharply in favor of sports titles for boys and fashion/lifestyle titles for girls. Only *TV Guide*, *People*, and *Jet* rank high for both sexes.¹⁴⁰

Members of Generation Y still favor traditional media outlets, and recommend marketers use these outlets to communicate with them. They identify radio, cable TV, and magazines as most effective at reaching them. Only one in five recommends using the Internet, while 29 percent say before movies, 26 percent say in school, 24 percent say broadcast TV, and 23 percent say through the mail. Newspaper ranks lowest on the list with only 9 percent. They also say they pay the most attention to advertising in cable TV, magazines and radio. The Internet ranks lowest on the list with only 12 percent saying they pay the most attention to advertising on the Internet.¹⁴¹

¹³⁸ Clark, Andrew, "How Teens Got the Power," *Maclean's*, March 22, 1999.

¹³⁹ Guynn, Jessica, "Within American Families, Kids Hold Adult-Like Amounts of Buying Power," *Contra Costa Times*, December 23, 1998.

¹⁴⁰ Crispell, Diane, "Fruit of the Boom," *Marketing Tools*, April 1998.

¹⁴¹ Zollo, Peter, "Wise Up To Teens: Insights Into Marketing and Advertising to Teenagers," *New Strategist Publications*, 1999.

HOW GEN Y USES THE INTERNET

INTERNET USAGE

The Internet is still popular among Generation Y. Teens and kids are the two fastest-growing groups of Internet users. There are approximately 8.6 million kids (5- to 12-year olds) and 8.4 million teens (13- to 18-year olds) online in 1998, according to Jupiter Communications. By 2002, those numbers will increase to 21.9 million kids (a 155 percent increase) and 16.6 million teens (almost a 100 percent increase). In 2003, 27 percent of total online users will be under the age of 18.¹⁴² There is a lot of money associated with kids and teens on the Internet as well. Jupiter estimates that by 2002 teens will spend \$1.2 billion online, and kids will spend \$100 million.¹⁴³ Currently, 67 percent of online teens and 37 percent of online kids have researched and bought products online.¹⁴⁴

The parents of these children also represent a large audience for health-related Web content. Jupiter Communications estimates family households represent 42 percent of total online households or 18.5 million households.¹⁴⁵ This statistics indicates the Internet may be an effective method for reaching parents as well as their children.

Yet, not all households have equal access to the Internet. Youth accessing the Internet from home tend to come from affluent households. In 2000, Jupiter estimates the average income of online households will be \$57,000, while the average household income for the total US is \$30,000.¹⁴⁶ Internet access is expanding though. By 2003, 56 percent of all kids (12 and under) and 72 percent of all teens will be online.¹⁴⁷ Forester Research states that 24 percent of children aged 6 to 12 have Internet access at home. By 2002, that number is expected to reach 50 percent.¹⁴⁸ Digital Marketing Services reports that 52 percent of youths use the Internet at school, and almost 95 percent of them use computers.¹⁴⁹ Jupiter Communications estimates by

2002 there will be 20.2 million students with access to the Internet in the classroom. Jupiter also estimates by year-end 2000, 90 percent of public schools will have access to the Internet.¹⁵⁰ In some areas of the country, youths spend more time online. Digital Marketing Services also recently reported the results of a survey that determined the top ten most "junior wired" cities in America based on the amount of time spent online by youth aged 2 to 17. The results were:

Top 10 "Junior Wired" Cities in America¹⁵¹

1.	New York
2.	Philadelphia
3.	Tampa/St. Petersburg/Sarasota
4.	Los Angeles
5.	Cleveland
6.	Boston
7.	Detroit
8.	Washington D.C.
9.	Chicago
10.	Seattle

Source: Business Wire, August 17, 1999.

Youths tend to spend more time online as they get older, according to Digital Marketing Services. Kids aged 2 to 5 spend 3 hours online each week, while kids ages 6 to 11 spend 4 hours. Teens aged 12 to 14 spend 6 hours and those aged 15 to 17 spend 7 hours online per week.¹⁵² According to Jupiter Communications, 13 to 17 year olds account for the majority of children's online usage. By 2002, 50 percent of online youths will be between the ages of 13 and 17, 20 percent will be 10 to 12, 23 percent will be 5 to 9, and 7 percent will be 2 to 4 years old. It is believed these statistics result from technical challenges that are difficult for younger children to overcome, and parents' discomfort with allowing young kids free access to the Internet.¹⁵³ In a recent survey conducted by Greenfield Online, parents reported they take a strict approach to monitoring Internet access for children under 11. Once kids are 12 and older, most are allowed more freedom. In families with kids under 11, 85 percent of parents oversee every click of the mouse. In families with 16 year-olds, only five percent of parents take steps to

¹⁴² Jupiter/NFO Interactive Consumer Survey, April 1999.

¹⁴³ Kirchner, Jake, "The Web's Hip-Hop Future," PC Magazine, August 1, 1999.

¹⁴⁴ "Jupiter Communications," Business Wire, June 7, 1999.

¹⁴⁵ "The Online Kids Report: Web Content, Development, and Revenue Models," Jupiter Communications, 1997.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Thompson, Bob, "The Selling of the Clickerati," The Washington Post, October 24, 1999.

¹⁴⁸ Cheng, Kipp, "Netpreneurs Know That Kids Love the Web," Adweek, May 3, 1999.

¹⁴⁹ "Digital Marketing Services Launches Opinion Place Kids and Teen Omnibus Survey on American Online," PR Newswire, December 13, 1999.

¹⁵⁰ "The Online Kids Report: Web Content, Development, and Revenue Models," Jupiter Communications, 1997.

¹⁵¹ "Top Ten 'Junior Wired' Cities in America," Business Wire, August 17, 1999.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ "The Online Kids Report: Web Content, Development, and Revenue Models," Jupiter Communications, 1997.

monitor online activities.¹⁵⁴ Parents, not children, gave this information so there may be some variation in the actual numbers.

POPULAR ONLINE ACTIVITIES

Youths enjoy using computers and the Internet for entertainment purposes. According to the Roper Youth Report, almost three in four computer users aged 8 to 17 say they play computer games, followed by 53 percent who word process, and 39 percent who use educational software titles. Thirty percent of youths who surf the Internet obtain information about hobbies and personal interests, 15 percent look for information about things they'd like to buy, and 15 percent read online magazines or newspapers.¹⁵⁵ Forrester Research recently reported the most popular areas for kids online were activities, games, email, and chat.¹⁵⁶ Elementary school kids also enjoy searching the Internet for their favorite characters, and contests and games.¹⁵⁷ According to Jupiter, 40 percent of online kids under 13, and 60 percent of online teens, use e-mail. Over 35 percent of online kids "surf" the Internet, and 40 percent play games online, while only three percent shop online.¹⁵⁸ Jupiter Communications also reports kids rank help with homework as a popular activity as well. More than 50 percent of kids say they use the Internet for homework help, and more than 90 percent say they use the Internet to learn.¹⁵⁹

Top 10 Online Activities

Top Teen Activities ¹⁶⁰	Top Kid Activities ¹⁶¹
E-mail	Homework
Search Engines	Games
Music Sites	Chat
General Research	Instant Messaging
Games	Research (boys)
TV/Movie Sites	Music Sites (girls)
Chat Rooms	Local Content
Personal Web Page	Audio
Sports Sites	Greetings (girls)
	Sports (boys)

Source: Newsweek, May 10, 1999.

Source: Jupiter/NFO Interactive Consumer Survey, April 1999.

GENDER DIFFERENCES

According to the 1997 Online Kids Report, boys and girls spend about the same amount of time online, and are online in equal numbers (54 percent male and 46 percent female). The top three online activities, chat, surfing, and having fun, are the same for both boys and girls. Despite these similarities, boys and girls have different wants and needs online. Shopping and chatting are typical girls' activities, and gaming and information gathering are for boys.¹⁶² Additionally, girls like to word process, socialize via email, and use art or music programs. Girls also spend more time enjoying activities, exploring characters, and sharing activities with friends. Boys prefer to play short, interactive games, and focus on competition. In terms of video games and online entertainment, girls value story lines, characters, worthwhile goals, social interactions, and creative activities and challenges. On the other hand, boys value entertainment, action, adventure, challenge, and violence.¹⁶³ These preferences mimic children's play patterns where boys tend to see winning and vanquishing as objectives and girls value narrative and community. Jupiter research corroborates these findings. Girls tend to be drawn to collaborative activities, such as chat, while boys prefer to play games and download stuff.¹⁶⁴ Boys and girls tend to shop for different things online as

¹⁵⁴ "Children Surfing Unattended," CyberAtlas, 1999.

¹⁵⁵ Kirchner, Jake, "The Web's Hip-Hop Future," PC Magazine, August 1, 1999.

¹⁵⁶ Venes, Robert, "Doing IT for the Kids," New Media Age, September 9, 1999.

¹⁵⁷ Saperstein, Patricia, "Log In, Toon In, Sop Out: Kids Entertainment Sites Become New Programming Frontier," Daily Variety, July 1998.

¹⁵⁸ NFO Interactive, 1998.

¹⁵⁹ "The Online Kids Report: Web Content, Development, and Revenue Models," Jupiter Communications, 1997.

¹⁶⁰ Kantrowitz, Barbara and Pat Wingert, "How Well Do You Know Your Kid?" Newsweek, May 10, 1999.

¹⁶¹ Jupiter/NFO Interactive Consumer Survey, April 1999.

¹⁶² "Kids and the Internet: Entertainment, Exploration, and Information," Selling to Kids, May 13, 1998.

¹⁶³ "Girl-friendly Software Takes a Hard Line on Stereotypes," Herizons, Summer 1998.

¹⁶⁴ "The Online Kids Report: Web Content, Development, and Revenue Models," Jupiter Communications, 1997.

well. Girls shop for clothing, books, tickets, and health and beauty items. Boys shop for software, PC's, electronics, and sporting goods.¹⁶⁵

NAVIGATION

As with other products, members of Generation Y are demanding consumers of web content. Research done by the American Cancer Society reveals they want personalization and respect on the Internet. They want to feel like a site was made just for them. They demand substantive and appropriate content, and a dynamic, ever-changing environment. They also want a lot of activities, color, movement, sights, and sounds on web sites. Youths want to socialize with peers and establish friendships on the web. They also want less text and more images, which is consistent with this generation's visual orientation. More pictures should not lead to more clutter though. They want easy navigation, speed, less advertising, and pages that are easy to read.¹⁶⁶ Most importantly, youths want to see the site respond to their input, and they love to see their names or work posted on the site. Other tactics they respond well to include contests, wacky and simple animations, and loud and colorful layouts.¹⁶⁷

Recent research also reveals what Generation Y does not like on the web. They do not like to have to wait for a site to load (no more than 30 seconds). They do not like too many navigational choices or too many layers that might cause them to get lost. It is recommended that a site have no more than three or four featured sections from which to choose. These sections should be large and prominent on the site because youths also dislike small print. Finally, if the site is educational, make it fun as well to get them involved with and attached to the content.¹⁶⁸

Youths surf the Internet differently than adults. They have less of a sense of what they are looking for and are more interested in being led than directing their own search. They tend to follow links that simplify navigation.¹⁶⁹ Jupiter Communications reports they predominantly use search engines and directory services to find sites, followed by links and recommendations from friends and parents.¹⁷⁰

Members of Generation Y also make very few distinctions between different types of media. For example, they think nothing of using multiple media simultaneously, and will watch TV and surf the web at the same time.¹⁷¹

THE KIDSPACE

"The Kidspace" is the name given to the growing area of kids' content providers on the Internet. America Online dominates this arena. In 1997, the Kids Only channel on AOL generated an average of 500,000 usage hours per month. The Kids Only channel has the largest audience of children under 12 of any other online service provider.¹⁷² AOL is also the top online service for teens.¹⁷³ (See Figure 15.)

One growing brand in the kidspace is MaMaMedia. It is different from other community web sites for kids because it is based on a formal theory of how they learn. It is called "constructionism" and was developed at MIT's Media Lab. According to this theory, children learn best when they are in the active role of the designer and constructor, when they can share ideas and work with others. This site helps children develop the survival skills they will need as they grow older: exploring or learning how to discover things alone, expressing or figuring out how to build things, and exchanging ideas.¹⁷⁴ (See Figure 16 for the Hottest Kid Sites.)

TEENS ONLINE

A recent study conducted by Cheskin Research and Cyberteens.com revealed that teens think of the Internet as a critical component of their future. More than half of teens surveyed said the Internet was not only a natural, but critical, part of their future lives. This study revealed several other important insights into teens online. First, when online, teens tend to focus on social activities. Both boys and girls named e-mailing friends, instant messaging, and chat rooms as top activities. The Internet provides teens with a new tool to keep in touch and interact with friends, as well as information gathering capabilities, and educational and e-commerce opportunities. Thirty-nine percent of respondents have shopped online, and 27 percent have actually made a purchase. (See Figure 17 for Top Teen Web Sites.) Second, most

¹⁶⁵ Jupiter/NFO Interactive Consumer Survey, April 1999.

¹⁶⁶ "Cancer Isn't Child's Play, But ACS Hopes Its Web Site Is," *Selling to Kids*, June 10, 1998.

¹⁶⁷ Neray, Michel, "The ABC's of Building a Web Site for Kids," *Strategy*, October 13, 1997.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁰ "The Online Kids Report: Web Content, Development, and Revenue Models," Jupiter Communications, 1997.

¹⁷¹ Weissman, Rachel, "The Kids Are All Right, They're Just a Little Converged," *American Demographics*, December 1998.

¹⁷² "The Online Kids Report: Web Content, Development, and Revenue Models," Jupiter Communications, 1997.

¹⁷³ Conger, Peggy, "Marketing to Today's Kids," *Cable World*, November 1, 1999.

¹⁷⁴ Thompson, Bob, "The Selling of the Clickerati," *The Washington Post*, October 24, 1999.

teens find online advertising annoying and uninformative (49 percent). A significant number of teens (79 percent) have clicked on an Internet ad, but they are more immune to marketing messages than other online populations. Eighty-six percent of teens said they pay less attention to ads on the Internet than to ads in other media.¹⁷⁵

Just as in the offline world, teens on the Internet value friends, fun, and freedom. Sixty-nine percent of teens said the Internet represents freedom to them. The Internet provides them with a wide-open space away from adult eyes and pressures. Fifty-five percent of teens think that surfing the Web is better than watching television. Instead of the passive entertainment provided by TV, today's teens seek interactive entertainment. A significant percentage of teens have their own site (43 percent), and many of them are interested in pursuing a career in the online arena. Additionally, teens with their own web sites tend to be on the leading edge of online trends.¹⁷⁶

The Cheskin study also revealed what colors and graphic format teens prefer. Teens seemed to like 3D illustrations, which were described as "modern," "futuristic," and "higher quality." Cartoons are viewed as playful and fun. In terms of color, blue was most preferred by respondents, and black was least preferred. Teens have different perceptions of various colors. Blue means "success," "intelligent," "trusted," and "welcoming." Red represents "speed" and "warmth." Yellow is "playful" and "easy," and black indicates "complicated," "outdated," and "high-tech."¹⁷⁷

EMERGING CONSIDERATIONS

For the first time in history, a generation of youth is overtaking its parents in the use of new technology. This development has many positives and negatives for the new Internet generation. On the plus side, there is easy access to information, fast communication, and global community opportunities. On the minus side, there are serious concerns about safety and inappropriate content. There are also serious questions about using the Internet to market and sell directly to kids.¹⁷⁸ According to Jupiter Communications, there was a sharp rise between 1998 and 1999 in parents saying they were concerned about direct marketing and privacy issues (55 percent

to 68 percent). There was also an increase in those concerned about online advertising aimed at youth, from 18 to 45 percent.¹⁷⁹

Kids and teens have some concerns about the Internet themselves. The biggest fear of teens is a loss of privacy on the Internet. However, teens and adults view loss of privacy on the Internet very differently. Whereas adults think of privacy in terms of e-commerce security and the protection of personal information, teens view loss of privacy as a loss of personal freedom. Teens are also concerned about ill-intentioned people who disguise themselves on the Internet.¹⁸⁰

IMPROVING GENERATION Y'S FUTURE

TEACHER RESOURCES

The Internet is also a powerful tool for information and resources to help adults improve the future for Generation Y. Teachers have access to numerous resources on the Internet. For example both Microsoft¹⁸¹ and IBM¹⁸² host web sites with lesson plans, articles, and software products to improve educational experiences. Other popular sites for teachers are Highlights TeacherNet (<http://www.teachernet.com/>), A to Z Teacher Stuff (<http://www.atozteacherstuff.com/>), The Lesson Stop (<http://www.leasonstop.org/>), and Columbia Education Center Lesson Plans (<http://col-ed.org/cur/>). These sites provide teachers with lesson plans on a variety of subjects and for various grade levels. The Highlights TeacherNet also gives teachers the opportunity to post messages on a bulletin board and to interact with other teachers. This site is also a great resource for links to other education-related material on the Internet.

With all of these sites on the Internet aimed at teachers, it is sometimes difficult to discern what makes an educational site or online resource truly effective. According to *Technology & Learning* magazine, there are several things developers of education-related Web sites should do to meet teachers' needs. First, the site should be narrowly focused and concentrate on a specific age group. Teachers have different needs depending on which grade level they teach, and need customized, age-

¹⁷⁵ "Teens and the Future of the Internet," Cheskin Research, August 1999.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Thompson, Bob, "The Selling of the Clickerati," The Washington Post, October 24, 1999.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ "Teens and the Future of the Internet," Cheskin Research, August 1999.

¹⁸¹ Encarta Learning Zone, <http://learn.msn.com/teachers/>, January 18, 2000.

¹⁸² IBM K-12 Education, <http://www/solutions.ibm.com/k12/>, January 18, 2000.

appropriate content in each area. Relevant partnerships and links are also a vital part of developing a good education site. With trusted names and organizations behind a Web site, teachers can quickly and easily identify high-quality content and information. Yet, it is important to remain focused when adding new links and information to a site. *Technology & Learning* recommends adding additional elements only if they are truly relevant to the subject and audience.¹⁸³ These guidelines suggest several important considerations for any site attempting to truly serve teachers on the Internet.

A number of resources are already available from the CDC to guide teachers in the development of health and science curricula. These resources are designed to promote healthy behavior among children and adolescents by providing strategies and recommendations for incorporating health and science content into the classroom. While these resources are designed for teachers, many of the guidelines are also appropriate for family members and community health services. The Division of Adolescent School Health (DASH) provides the following resources:

CDC Curricula Resources¹⁸⁴

Guidelines for School and Community Programs Promoting Lifelong Physical Activity

Guidelines for School and Health Programs Promoting Lifelong Healthy Eating

Guidelines for School Health Programs to Prevent Tobacco Use and Addiction

Guidelines for Effective School Health Education To Prevent the Spread of AIDS

Source: Research to Classroom Project, January 2000.

Another program called “Research to Classroom” helps identify health curricula grounded in scientific evidence. These curricula are designed to effectively reduce risks for a variety of health-related behaviors, i.e. behaviors that contribute to HIV, STDs, unintended pregnancy, and tobacco use.¹⁸⁵

The CDC also hosts a web site and classroom tool called EXCITE (Excellence in Curriculum Integration through Teaching Epidemiology) that

allows students to learn more about scientific inquiry using examples from real world health and disease problems and situations. These methods help demonstrate basic principles of the scientific method used in public health practice. Teachers can integrate EXCITE into their current health and science curriculum in a variety of ways, and use it to encourage students to consider careers in public health.¹⁸⁶

HEALTH EDUCATION

Education and government officials are working hard to improve the health status of today’s youth in other ways as well. In 1996, 35 states were surveyed about school health education. Nearly all of the schools in these states required health education in grades 6 to 12, and most offered a separate health education class. More than 72 percent of schools taught about relevant topics like prevention of tobacco, alcohol and other drug use, pregnancy, HIV, other sexually transmitted diseases, violence, suicide, dietary behaviors and nutrition, and physical activity and fitness. Moreover, greater than 69 percent of schools work to improve students’ skills in communication, decision making, goal setting, resisting social pressures, nonviolent conflict resolution, stress management, and analysis of media messages. Information about HIV is a required part of nearly all state (94.3%) and local (98.1%) health education. There are also programs in place to sufficiently train health teachers. At the state level, 51.4 percent of health teachers receive in-service training on HIV prevention, and 15.6 percent on suicide prevention. At the city level, health teachers receive more in-service training on these issues. Seventy-six percent have gotten training for HIV prevention, and 26.6 percent have received training for suicide prevention.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸³ McLester, Susan, “Profiling Portals: Web Portals for Students and Teachers,” *Technology & Learning*, November 1, 1999.

¹⁸⁴ Research to Classroom Project, <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/rtc/index.htm>, January 2000.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ Excellence in Curriculum Integration through Teaching Epidemiology, <http://www.cdc.gov/excite/Default.htm>, January 2000.

¹⁸⁷ “Characteristics of Health Education Among Secondary Schools -- School Health Education Profiles, 1996,” <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/MMWRFile/ss4704.htm>, September 11, 1998 / 47(SS-4);1-31.

HEALTH EDUCATION GUIDELINES

NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS

There are also national standards that help ensure today's youth are properly educated about health issues and concepts. The National Health Education Standards established broad goals for educating youth about health. There are seven health education standards that facilitate comprehensive health education at school.¹⁸⁸

National Health Education Standards

Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention

Students will demonstrate the ability to access valid health information and health-promoting products and services

Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks

Students will analyze the influence of culture, media, technology, and other factors on health

Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health

Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health

Students will demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting and decision-making skills to enhance health

Source: American Cancer Society, January 2000.

These standards are further tailored by grade level to meet students' cognitive abilities and education requirements. Kindergarten to fourth grade standards are based primarily on identifying problems, describing relationships, and basic demonstration and application of information. Fifth to eighth grade standards are more advanced. They draw on students' abilities to explain and analyze complex relationships between health and various social and environmental influencers, as well as their abilities to demonstrate and apply fundamental health principals. Ninth to twelfth grade standards focus on analysis of problems, development of problem solving strategies, evaluation of information, and demonstration of strategies that prevent, promote or reduce health risks.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁸ "National Health Education Standards," American Cancer Society, Comprehensive School Health Education, <http://www.cancer.org/cshe/cshestud.html>, accessed January 4, 2000.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

One aspect of the National Science Education Standards also deals with health and health issues. This standard teaches students to put science in personal and social perspective. It draws upon health and science that students encounter in their everyday social and environmental experiences, and is divided into two grade clusters, 5th to 8th and 9th to 12th.¹⁹⁰

NATIONAL SCIENCE EDUCATION STANDARDS GRADES 5 TO 8

Students in this group thrive on hands-on practice of concepts, and "real world" examples. They understand the fundamental elements of an experiment such as, background knowledge, theory, design, types of observations, and data analysis. However, they have difficulty identifying variables and controlling for multiple variables in experiments. Kids in this group are beginning to understand that health is influenced by a variety of factors such as, individual habits/behaviors, environment, genetics, microorganisms, etc. However, while 5th-8th graders have developed a health vocabulary, they may not be able to link science to health terms.¹⁹¹

The challenge to teachers is to teach these kids about the social and environmental health factors that are within their control, as well as the benefits and risks associated with various actions. There are several principal concepts that are a fundamental part of teaching 5th to 8th graders about health.

Health Education Standards (5–8th Grade)

- Personal health – i.e. content that addresses physical fitness, prevention of unintentional and intentional injury, tobacco use, substance abuse, nutrition, sexual development, and environmental health
- Population, resources, and environments – i.e. concepts of environmental health as it relates to overpopulation, environmental degradation, and resource depletion
- Risks and benefits – i.e. risk analysis, exposure to and consequences of risks, strategies for reducing and eliminating risks, critical thinking skills for comparing benefits and risks on a personal and social level

Source: National Academy Press, February 1998.

¹⁹⁰ "National Science Education Standards," National Academy Press, Washington D.C., February 1998.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

NATIONAL SCIENCE EDUCATION STANDARDS GRADES 9-12

Standards of science and health education at this level focus on teaching students how to understand the concepts underlying scientific inquiry. Most students understand that certain concepts are used to guide experiments, however, they have a less developed understanding of variables and controlled experiments. They may also have difficulty with data synthesis, logic-based explanations, and proposing evidence.¹⁹²

It is important to remember teens already have personal beliefs and experiences that influence how receptive they are to science and health education. Furthermore, it is important that science and health be relevant to students. Active participation can serve as an effective method of investigating questions and issues that are important to this age group. The “science in personal and social perspective” education standard is made up of six health concepts that aim to address local and global phenomena.

Health Education Standards (9–12th Grade)

- Personal and community health
- Population growth
- Natural resources
- Environmental quality
- Natural and human-induced hazards
- Science and technology and local, national, and global challenges

Source: National Academy Press, February 1998.

By high school, most students have developed a basic understanding of, for example, the function of human systems or populations of organisms. They may have a less developed understanding of the specific mechanisms, processes, and/or relationships among systems or populations, and their connections to health. Students need to develop their conceptual and reasoning skills in relation to the mechanisms, processes and/or relationships between health and society.¹⁹³ (See Figure 18.)

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

Figure 1 – Support for Teaching Sex Education Topics at Different Grade Levels¹⁹⁴

	Grades 7-8	Grades 9-10	Grades 11-12
Puberty	82%	94%	96%
Abstinence	79	91	95
HIV and AIDS	76	92	96
STD's	74	91	96
Love and dating	63	86	92
Contraception	59	84	91
Condoms	58	82	90
Sexual orientation	56	76	85
Abortion	40	68	79

Source: Sexual Information and Education Council of the US, 1999

Figure 2 – Spending by Children Aged 4 to 12, in millions, 1997¹⁹⁵

	Aggregate Spending	Per-Child Spending
Food and Beverages	\$7,745	\$220
Play Items	6,471	184
Apparel	3,595	102
Movies/Sports	1,989	56
Video Arcades	1,326	38
Other	2,302	65
Total	\$23,429	\$665

Source: Census Bureau

Figure 3 – Spending Influenced by Children Aged 4 to 12, in millions, 1997¹⁹⁶

	Aggregate Spending	Per-Child Spending
Food and Beverages	\$110,320	\$3,131
Entertainment	25,620	727
Apparel	17,540	498
Automobiles	17,740	503
Electronics	6,400	182
Health and Beauty	3,550	101
Other	5,570	158
Total	\$187,740	5,328

Source: Census Bureau

¹⁹⁴ "Issues and Answers Fact Sheet on Sexuality Education," Sexual Information and Education Council of the US, Contemporary Women's Issues, August 1999.

¹⁹⁵ McNeal, James, "Tapping the Three Kids' Markets," American Demographics, April 1998.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

Figure 4 – Personal Weekly Spending, 8- to 12-year olds¹⁹⁷

	1989	1994	1997
Income	\$6.13	\$13.46	\$15.64
Spending	\$3.70	\$8.90	\$11.52
Saving	\$2.43	\$4.56	\$4.12

Figure 5 – National Yearly Spending, 8- to 12-year olds, in billions¹⁹⁸

	1989	1994	1997
Income	\$6.4	\$13.9	\$16.3
Spending	\$3.8	\$9.3	\$11.9
Saving	\$2.5	\$4.6	\$4.4

Figure 6 – What’s hot with 12- to 15-year old boys, 1998¹⁹⁹

Coolest Brands	Favorite TV Shows	Most-Read Magazines
Nike	The Simpsons	Gamepro
Adidas	Home Improvement	Nintendo Power
Tommy Hilfiger	Seinfeld	Electronic Gaming Monthly
Sony	South Park	Sports Illustrated for Kids
Pepsi	Sports Center	Sport

Figure 7 – What’s hot with 12- to 15-year old girls, 1998²⁰⁰

Coolest Brands	Favorite TV Shows	Most-Read Magazines
Nike	Dawson’s Creek	Teen Beat
Adidas	Home Improvement	Super Teen
Tommy Hilfiger	Friends	Teen
Gap	The Simpsons	All About You
Cover Girl	Beverly Hills 90210	Twist

¹⁹⁷ Kantrowitz, Barbara and Pat Wingert, “The Truth About Tweens,” Newsweek, October 18, 1999.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

Figure 8 – Social Concerns, 12- to 15-years olds²⁰¹

Boys	Girls
AIDS	Child Abuse
Education	AIDS
Drug Abuse	Abortion
Prejudice/Racism	Education
Violence/Gangs	Prejudice/Racism

Figure 9 – Influential Sources, Percent of 10- to 15-year-olds who learn “a lot” from:²⁰²

TV/Movies	49%
Friends	48%
School	41%
Mother	38%
Internet	35%
Father	31%
Magazines	26%

Figure 10 – Concerns, percent of 10- to 12-year olds interested in learning more about:²⁰³

Being safe from violence	80%
Violence prevention	71
AIDS	73
STD's	66
Peer pressure (sex)	58
Knowing when (sex)	54

Sources (Figures 3 to 9): Teenage Research Unlimited, James McNeal, Kaiser Family Foundation, Trends in the Well-being of America’s Children and Youth, The Commonwealth Fund

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid.

Figure 11 – Average Weekly Income and Expenditures, 1997²⁰⁴

	Income	Expenditures
Total Teens	\$73	\$53
Male Teens	\$79	\$53
Female Teens	\$67	\$53

Source: Teenage Research Unlimited

Figure 12 – Teen Share of Spending by Category, 1996²⁰⁵

Clothing	34%
Entertainment	21.7%
Other	10.7%
Reading Materials	3.4%
Sporting Goods & Apparel	6.2%
Personal Care	8.5%
Food	15.5%

Source: FIND/SVP

Figure 13 – The Importance of Brand Names to Teens, 1996²⁰⁶

Yes, brand name is important 70%

Why...

Gives impression product is better	62%
Feel that company stands behind product	48%
Instant recognition	39%
It's been around longer	15%

Source: Rand Youth Poll

²⁰⁴ "Wired to Spend," Women's Wear Daily, February 19, 1998.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

Figure 14 – What Makes a Brand Cool to Teens?²⁰⁷

Quality	63%
If it's for people my age	30%
Advertising	23%
If cool friends or peers use it	23%
If everyone uses it	18%
If a celebrity I admire uses it	9%
Packaging	7%

Source: Teenage Research Unlimited

Figure 15 – Top Aggregators in Children's Online Area, January 1997²⁰⁸

Service	Traffic
AOL	1.9 million children 6-17
Prodigy	500,000 children
MSN	750,000 subscribers with children

Source: Jupiter Communications

Figure 16 – The Top 25 Kid Web Sites, December, 29, 1999²⁰⁹

25 Hot Kid Sites	
EToys	Kidsdomain.com
PBS Online	Sports Illustrated for Kids
Bolt.com	The Smithsonian Institution
Discovery Online	Sega
Headbone Zone	Marvel.com
Yahooligans	Cartoonnetwork.com
Nintendo Power Source	McDonald's
Gurlpages.com	Gurl.com
BONUS.com	Universal Studios
United Media	Teen.com
GO Network	Pathfinder.com
LEGO	Barbie Collectibles
Nickelodeon	

Source: Go2Net, 1999

²⁰⁷ Merrill, Cristina, "The Consumer Agenda," Forecast, October 1999.

²⁰⁸ "The Online Kids Report: Web Content, Development, and Revenue Models," Jupiter Communications, 1997

²⁰⁹ "The Web's Popularity Guide," Go2Net, December 29, 1999.

Figure 17 – Top Teen Web Sites, 1999²¹⁰

Boys	Girls
Yahoo!	Yahoo!
Hotmail.com	Hotmail.com
Cyberteens.com	Cyberteens.com
Starwars.com	Mtv.com
Wwf.com	Seventeen.com
Angelfire.com	Gurl.com
Zone.com	Bolt.com
Mtv.com	Teen.com
Espn.com	Nsync.com
E-bay	Teenmag.com
Nba.com	Angelfire.com
Korn.com	Backstreetboys.com
Icq.com	Excite
Geocities	Geocities
Excite	Delias.com
Download.com	Icq.com
Bolt.com	Gap.com
Alta Vista	Bluemountain.com
Wbs.net	Cdnw.com
Comedycentral.com	Talkcity.com

Source: Cheskin Research, 1999

²¹⁰ “Teens and the Future of the Internet,” Cheskin Research, August 1999.

Figure 18 – 9th to 12th Grade Health Concept Standards, National Science Education²¹¹

Personal & Community Health

- Hazards do exist. Yet, humans have a variety of mechanisms, sensory, motor, emotional, social, and technological, to reduce and modify hazards.
- Diseases can be prevented, controlled, or cured. The severity of symptoms is relies on many factors. Some diseases, like cancer, result from a body dysfunction and can't be transmitted.
- Many factors like personal goals, peer and social pressures, ethnic and religious beliefs, and knowledge of consequences influence personal choices concerning fitness and health.
- Substances modify mood and behavior. This modification may be beneficial or detrimental depending on motive, substance, and duration and pattern of use. Students should understand that drugs cause physical dependence and increase the risk of injury, accidents, and death.
- Selection of foods and eating patterns determine nutritional health. Nutritional balance has an effect on growth, development, and well being. Several factors like habits, family income, ethnicity, body size, advertising, and peer pressure, influence nutrition choices.
- Sexuality is basic to the physical, mental, and social development of humans. Sexuality involves biological functions, motives, and cultural, religious, and technological influences. Students should understand methods and consequences of controlling reproduction.

Source: National Academy Press

²¹¹ “National Science Education Standards,” National Academy Press, Washington D.C., February 1998.

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