



CMCH Accomplishments in 2007

The Center on Media and Child Health (CMCH) made substantial progress in 2007 in our efforts to build and translate knowledge about the effects of media on children's health.

KNOWLEDGE BUILDING

Research

- While maintaining our breadth by continuing to compile all of the research that has been done on the effects of media on child health, CMCH committed to focusing our research program on three primary outcomes of interest: **violence, overweight and brain development/academic function.**
- CMCH welcomed to our staff Dr. Ariel Chernin. Ariel is a post doctoral research fellow who completed her graduate training at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania. Her research interests include children's understanding of food advertising and the efficacy of media literacy.
- Our Video Intervention/Prevention Assessment (VIA) researchers completed data collection on a seven year study of young people with cystic fibrosis, sickle cell disease, spina bifida, and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and their transition to adulthood.
- Using data from a nation-wide survey of children and adolescents, CMCH researchers investigated the relationship between viewing reality television, character identification, and issues pertaining to body image.
- VIA began a second study of overweight in children and adolescents, collecting digital video data that is being analyzed in Transana, a multi-user software program for collaborative analysis of video.
- CMCH researchers working with the Measuring Youth Media Exposure (MYME) pilot study investigated the social and emotional states in which television viewing occurs for young people.
- Our researchers completed a nationwide survey of pediatric residency training programs, describing how information about media effects is integrated into the education of pediatricians.
- CMCH researchers established a collaborative relationship with Project Viva at Children's Hospital Boston and Harvard Medical School. This nationally known project has collected annual data on a cohort of children beginning before birth and following them through their developmental stages. The children are currently 7 years old and CMCH researchers will be analyzing relationships between their media exposure and cognitive development.

CMCH Publications and Presentations

- CMCH researchers and affiliated collaborators published original research in a wide range of professional journals, representing the leading publications in child and adolescent health, psychology, and communication, including *Pediatrics*, *Journal of Adolescent Health*, *Media Psychology*, and *Health Promotion Practice*.
- CMCH researchers had multiple chapters featured in the prestigious *Children and Television: 50 Years of Research*, a comprehensive overview of the research that has been conducted on the effects of television on children's development.
- VIA methods and projects featured prominently as examples in *Using Software in Qualitative Research: A Step-by-Step Guide*, a book focused on the comparison and use of qualitative data analysis software packages, written by internationally known experts in the field.
- Our researchers had their findings accepted for presentation at professional academic conferences across the world, including the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, the Society for Research on Child Development, the International Visual Sociology Association, the International Communication Association, the Special Libraries Association, Advances in Qualitative Computing, and the Society for Adolescent Medicine.
- CMCH researchers were also invited to serve as experts on panels for the National Institutes for Health (NIH), National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the area of media effects on children.

Collaborations

- For a second year, CMCH collaborated with MediaSmart, a program of Child Health Services in Manchester, NH, to implement and evaluate a media literacy intervention on violence, substance use, and obesity as part of the health curricula in Manchester elementary schools. Fifth grades of three schools participated in the study with two receiving the curriculum and one acting as a control. Participants enjoyed the program, demonstrated learning of key media literacy concepts, and increased their belief that they can understand and resist media messages.
- CMCH designed an evaluation of IKeepSafe.com, a parent resource designed by the Internet Keep Safe Coalition to educate parents about strategies for protecting their children on the Internet, was implemented through a nationwide online survey. Analyses are currently underway to determine if the resource center was successful in shifting parents' beliefs about the Internet and behaviors
- The CMCH designed research project evaluating the in-school Connect with Kids (CWK) curriculum created by to increase the pro-social behaviors of children and young adolescents was implemented in DC area schools. Data were collected from approximately 1,000 students, and analyses are currently underway to determine if participants in the program increased their positive behaviors more than the control group. Focus groups of parents in the same location were also conducted in order to determine the feasibility of an intervention model that combines broadcast television with in-school learning.

Database of Research

- CMCH continued to add to our Database of Research, including
 - All existing articles on media and sexual behavior (with the help of a grant from the Aerosmith Foundation)
 - 90% of existing articles on media and overweight
 - 80% of existing articles on media and substance use
 - 75% of existing articles on Internet use

KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION

Information Provision

- We continued to build www.cmch.tv as an online resource for parents, teachers, researchers, and policy makers looking for information on media and their influence. With the help of a grant from the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, we added over 100 pages of web resources for parents and teachers. Traffic to the CMCH website has increased 330% over last year.
- With the help of a grant from the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, and assistance from BBDO Worldwide and Resolution Media, we marketed CMCH online resources to parents and teachers using Google AdWords and 5,000 printed postcards.
- We continued to maintain a blog that keeps subscribers up to date on research and events in the area of media effects on children.
- With the help of a grant from the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, we established a contract with the ExactTarget email newsletter service. We now publish newsletters each month for parents, teachers, and researchers.
- CMCH continued to be a “go to” resource for the national and international press on the subject of media effects on child health. Prominent stories were featured in print/on-line (CNN.com, MSNBC.com, ABCNews.com, Forbes.com, Newsweek.com, WashingtonPost.com, *Chicago Tribune*, *The Seattle Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *Business Week*, *Parents*, WebMD.com, United Press International and HealthDay News) and broadcast (CNN, New England Cable News, CBS 4 Boston, Canadian Broadcasting Company) outlets. Our unique media hits increased 15% from FY06 and totalled more than FY05 and FY06 combined.
- CMCH researchers did additional outreach to a wide range of organizations across the globe including Google in Mountain View, California, Microsoft Research in Bangalore India, the Annenberg Public Policy Center in Rancho Mirage, California, Yale University School of Medicine, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, University of the Andes in Bogota, Columbia, the National League of Cities in Indianapolis, Indiana, the University of Alabama at Birmingham, Marblehead Massachusetts Middle Schools, Sharon Massachusetts Middle School on topics including reducing the effects of violent media on children, media use and body image, media literacy and the effects of media use on children’s health.

Programs

- With the help of a grant from the Cabot Family Charitable Trust, we developed the third workshop in the Mastering Media Messages series, an educational program for Boston area middle schools on the health influences of media. This year's topic was substance use.

Organizational Development

- CMCH devoted a substantial portion of the past year to strategic planning. We continued to work with Jeff Olson, a volunteer from Accenture Consulting, and our Advisory Board members to finalize our vision and mission statements. With additional support from New Sector Consulting, the Boston Consulting Group and a highly productive summer internship program, we were able to derive an organizational model for the functions of CMCH as well as identify 1, 2 and 3 year goals for the organization. We will continue to work with Jeff, as well as New Sector Consulting in FY08, to improve our strategic objectives and operational model and continue to bring them line with the strategic work that was done in FY07.

Financial Development

- CMCH secured \$565,829 in philanthropic funds in FY07
- CMCH researchers secured \$235,916 in grants/contracts in FY07
- CMCH researchers secured one grant and philanthropy for FY08 totaling \$550K
- We continued to work to broaden our funding base, with guidance from our Advisory Board and the Children's Hospital Boston Trust. We increased our focused outreach to individuals, corporations, and foundations, and presented to several groups of prospective supporters.

Goals for FY08

CMCH has an ambitious agenda for FY08. In our Knowledge Building efforts, we intend to align our projects with our new outcomes of interest and continue building these core areas. We will also continue to build the CMCH website and database of research by providing resources for clinicians and access to research on substance use, sexual behavior, learning and body image.

Our primary focus for 2008 will be in our Knowledge Translation efforts. Here, we intend to launch a local public awareness campaign designed to make parents of all age groups aware of the effects of media on their children's health. Complimenting these efforts, we will support Michael Rich, MD, MPH through the submission of his book manuscript. We will also continue exploring possibilities for creating a scientific-based rating system that crosses media formats and content and we seek to create a feature video of Dr. Rich's presentation.