

viewed from a number of platforms at any given time on mobile devices (Strasburger, Jordan, and Donnerstein, 2012), thus potentially increasing access. The increased mobility of devices and wireless Internet allows teens to participate in social media or explore the Internet independently, which has the potential for positive or negative ramifications. Strasburger, Jordan, and Donnerstein (2012) found that half of all 16- and 17-year-olds admitted to talking on their cell phones while driving, and one third of them have texted while driving.

What is the effect of this media on children and adolescents? Research has demonstrated that media can be quite influential, impacting attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. There may be a “displacement effect” whereby the time that is spent interacting with media competes with time the child could be running, playing, or participating in a sport or creative activity. Three additional theories that conceptualize how children and teens experience media are: (1) social learning theory, which emphasizes learning through observation and imitation; (2) script theory, which posits that media provide youth with a “script” or directions for how to behave in new situations; and (3) “super-peer” theory, which describes media as an extreme source of peer pressure on youth to participate in what is shown to be normal behavior (i.e., adolescents not practicing safe sex).

Both old and new media are thought to play a role in various health issues that are particularly relevant to youth. Table 2-2 describes these in greater detail. Media also has great potential to exert a positive effect upon children and their families. Properly used, media can introduce young children to learning and promote school-readiness (i.e., *Sesame Street*), can serve as an outlet for adolescent expression of individuality, can connect youth who may otherwise feel isolated (i.e., those with specialized health care needs), or can be a source of exercise and activity (i.e., video games, exercise videos).

TABLE 2-2
Media Effects on Children and Adolescents

Media Effect	Potential Consequences
Violence	Government, medical, and public health data show exposure to media violence as