

HEALTH ISSUES IN ADOLESCENTS' INTERNET USE - BENEFITS AND RISKS.

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Source

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Abstract

The Internet has turned during the past decade into a major information resource in various domains of life and a communication venue among adolescents who seek health information via the net. The increasing availability of computers in homes, as well as wireless Internet access, means that adolescents today can go online anywhere, at any time. The media are not the leading cause of any major health problem, but they do contribute significantly to a variety of adolescent health problems, including aggressive behavior, sexual activity, drug use, obesity, sleep disorders, eating disorders, depression, suicide and self harm. This paper focuses on 3 major health issues in adolescents' Internet use: Body image and eating behaviors; sexuality and reproductive health behaviors; and self harm and suicidal behavior. This paper also demonstrates Internet venues where reliable health information is provided to young people by health professionals. Health professionals need to recognize the hazards of adolescents Internet use, and to address potential Internet abuse when encountering adolescents in clinical settings.

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