

TV EXPOSURE AND PARENT-CHILD COMMUNICATION
ABOUT HEALTH ISSUES

By

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To the Faculty of Washington State University:

The members of the Committee appointed to examine the thesis of
MARIA F. ORTEGA find it satisfactory and recommend that it be accepted.

Chair

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Abstract

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Television content might influence how teens think about certain health issues in an indirect way through conversations with their parents. This study analyzed a matched sample of parents' (N = 410) and children's (N = 409) recollections of frequency of conversations about health issues (alcohol use, drug use, tobacco use, sex practices and eating habits) they had while the children were in high school. The goal was to examine parent-child conversations about health issues, gender-biased conversations and the influence of parents' TV exposure on the frequency of conversations they have with their children.

The results show that children report talking with their parents about eating habits more than any other health-related topic. When analyzed by gender, girls report having more conversations with their parents across most issues, except for alcohol, where boys report being talked to more frequently than their counterparts. Parents report talking with the same frequency to their sons and daughters across all issues except for sex, where they report talking more to their daughters. Regarding the parents' TV exposure and the influence this might have on conversations about health issues, this study found that the more TV parents are exposed to, the more they talk about drugs and alcohol to their children, while children of TV viewers report talking less about eating habits. TV news was the genre that showed the strongest relationship with the frequency of parent-child

conversations about alcohol, drugs and tobacco, the more TV news parents were exposed to, the more they reported having conversations about those issues. No significant correlation was found for the TV entertainment genre influencing health-related conversations.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Television content might influence what teens think about certain health issues in an indirect way through conversations with their parents. Parent-child communication is a recognized element in promotion of health messages (Kelly, Comello & Hun, 2002; Komo, Oerry, Williams, Stigler, Farbakhsh & Veblen-Mortenson, 2001). Although health campaigns do not necessary lead to a change in behavior, media campaigns can generate interpersonal communication about a topic (Boulay, Storey & Sood, 2002; Valente, Poppe & Merrit, 1996). It is through talking that parents can directly express to teens their feelings and concerns about their expectations for health-related behaviors (Ennet, Buman, Foshee, Pemberton & Hicks, 2001). Adolescents learn from the media some health-related behaviors (positive as well as negative) that can be reinforced through parental mediation (Fujioka & Austin, 2003), but most conversations about health might not be intentional efforts to change or encourage a child's behavior. It is not clear, however, how the media consumed by parents influences conversations about health issues between parents and their children. The goal of this research is to examine parent-child communication about health issues, gender differences in conversations and the influence of parents' TV use on the frequency of conversations they have with their children.

Research conducted by Busselle (2003) suggests that TV violence exposure influences the viewer as well as the people with whom the viewer communicates. This study elaborates on the same theory, applying it to health-related communication, specifically substance abuse (drug, tobacco products and alcohol use), safe sex practices

and eating habits. The results can help the field of health communication to better understand the relationship between parents' TV exposure and parent-child communication about health issues.

Parent-Child Communication About Health Issues

Parent-child communication is considered by scholars as just one of many variables that can affect children's attitudes, beliefs and, ultimately, behaviors (Kelly et al., 2002; Komo et al., 2001; Wertheim, Mee & Paxton, 1999). Parents often are cited by adolescents as a credible source of information (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2003; Kelly et al., 2002; Kelly, Swaim & Wayman, 1996) and are also identified as individuals who have talked to a child about health-related issues (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2003; Kelly et al., 2002). Many adolescents say they have had conversations with their parents about health-related issues as they were growing up (Miller-Day, 2002; Kelly et al., 2002; Ennet, Buman, Foshee, Pemberton & Hicks, 2001). Based on results like those above, media campaigns, such as the Partnership for a Drug-Free America anti-drug campaign, have targeted parents and encouraged them to talk to their children about health-related issues (Miller-Day, 2002; Ennet et al., 2001).

The nature of parent-child communication has been divided into four main domains where parents seem to make a difference: 1) establishing rules and disciplines about a behavior, 2) modeling, 3) talking about consequences of engaging in the unhealthy behavior and 4) conversations about media influences and presentations of unhealthy behaviors (Ennet et al., 2001; Fujioka & Austin, 2003). Additionally, parents

can talk about a health issue and reinforce a behavior by making comments about the child's appearance or habits during normal conversations (Wertheim et al., 1999).

Regarding health issues, it has been shown that media do, in fact, generate an increase in interpersonal communication about some topics. For example, Kelly et al. (1996) report that media have a priming effect that encourages parent-child communication. Lull (1980) observed that television was a "resource for the accomplishment of interpersonal objectives at home," serving as a communication facilitator and helping social learning. Collins, Elliot, Berry, Kanouse & Hunter (2003) found that a television program generated conversation between parents and teens about condom use and suggested that "television might be a catalyst to conversation, giving parents and children an entrée to topics they find difficult to broach with one another" (pp. 1115).

The goal of this study is not to determine parental mediation or family communication styles. It rather aims at describing how parents' television exposure influences the frequency of their conversations about health issues with their children, independently of their consciousness of TV influence.

In order to understand parent-child communication it seems important that both parents and children are asked similar questions. Among the studies reviewed, however, only 33% surveyed both parents and children to study parent-child communication. The majority of the research conducted surveyed only one of the two groups (44% children only, 22% parents only). This study will help fill in this gap in the parent-child communication in the field of health.

Substance Abuse

Despite the amount of research in this area, it is yet unclear the extent to which parents' conversations with their children cause a positive influence in the health-related behaviors of adolescents. Research about parent-child communication regarding substance abuse shows contradictory results. Some scholars find that parent-child communication is an effective way of reducing unhealthy behaviors in adolescents (Kelly et al., 2002; Komo et al., 2001; Kelly et al., 1996) but others do not find significant positive effects in adolescents' behaviors after parent-child conversations (Ennet et al., 2001). A third group has observed a weak but positive effect in parent-child communication about substance use and abuse in teens (Miller-Day, 2002; Austin, Pinkleton & Fujioka, 2000) although, sometimes, parents' influence can be negative and reinforce unhealthy behaviors (Austin et al., 2000), even encouraging "adolescents to find alcohol portrayals appealing" (Austin et al., 2003) or backfiring and resulting in teens doing the opposite of what they are being told to do (Ennet et al., 2001).

Past research shows that parents do, indeed, communicate with their children about substance use, although the amount and nature of the communication varies. Miller-Day (2002) found that 43% of adolescents interviewed indicated that they had communicated about substance use with their parents. From those, at least 60% suggested that parents mentioned prevention messages to them. Kelly et al. (2002) showed that parents are among the most important individuals whom teens would ask if they had questions about alcohol or other drugs (mother 27%, father 22%), with only friends being more important (31%). In the same study, most teens said their parents have talked to them about alcohol (74%), getting drunk (72%), tobacco (69%), marijuana (67%),

cocaine (64%) and sniffing substances such as glue (56%). Finally, Ennet et al. (2001) found that, in a six month period, most parents reported having conversations with their children about alcohol and tobacco consequences (88%), discouraging their use (73%), about peer pressures to use them (71 %) and rules (64%). Fewer parents talked about media's portrayal of alcohol and tobacco (54%), told their teens not to use substances (53%) or disciplined them for using them (46%).

Sexual Behavior

Although some parents report feeling uncomfortable talking to their children about sexual behavior (Jordan, Price & Fitzgerald, 2000), parents in general communicate their values and expectations about sexual behavior to their children (Collins et al., 2003; O'Sullivan, Meyer-Bahlburg & Watkins, 2001; Jordan et al., 2000). Jordan et al. (2000) reported that 94% of parents said they had talked about sex to their teens, but only 9% of parents believed they communicate about sex with their teens in an adequate manner. Adolescents, on the other hand, reported to have learned "a lot" or "some" from different sources, including parents (68%), friends (76%) and media (72%) (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2003). The same report shows that as children get older there is a change in the amount of communication among those sources: 15 to 17 years old teens reported learning something from parents more often (75%) than 18 to 24 year old young adults (64%).

The nature and content of conversations varies greatly across topics such as birth control methods, to reproduction, media presentation of sex, abortion, STDs, pornography, or the responsibilities of being a parent (Collins et al., 2003; Jordan et al., 2000). The frequency of conversations varies accordingly with the subject. Jordan et al.

(2000) surveyed parents of children in 7th to 12th grade and found that parents “talk a great deal” and “moderate amounts” about topics such as dating behaviors (83%), reproduction (78%), STDs (78%), how to resist pressures to have sex (73%), and media pressures to have sex (62%) while they do “not talk at all” and “not much” about topics such as masturbation (79%), prostitution (68%) or pornography (63%).

Although mass media presentation of sexual behaviors generates parent-child communication about media content (Collins et al., 2003; Jordan et al., 2000) little is known about how parents’ mass media consumption might influence their perceptions of reality and, thus, the frequency of talking to their teens about sex.

Eating Habits

There is little research into communication between parents and children regarding eating habits. Past research has focused instead on the nature of the parent’s attitude towards food and the role parents play at home as models regarding eating habits or by allowing children access to some types of food (Boutelle, Birnbaum, Lytle, Murray & Story, 2003; Martinez-Gonzalez, Gual, Lahortiga, Alonso, Irala-Estevez & Cervera, 2002; Wertheim et al., 1999). Although past research shows that parents exert the greatest influence in their children’s eating habits by modeling, scholars also include other variables that influence children’s behaviors regarding food, such as mass media use (Martinez-Gonzalez et al., 2003) or gender (Wertheim et al., 1999). Additionally, Wertheim et al. (1999) found that children’s eating habits are influenced by the type of communication they have with their parents. Their research focused on negative effects of parent-child communication in which parents transmit values about weight and body shape through direct encouragement of dieting or by complimenting or criticizing certain

physical appearances. Most parents reported that they “never” (mother 61%, father 58%) or “rarely” (14%, 17%) encouraged their daughters to lose weight, and some even reported encouraging them to eat more (mother 26%, father 22%). Approximately 40% of parents, however, reported encouraging their daughters to lose weight at some point in time. The same study found that compliments about physical appearances also are statistically related to girls’ eating behaviors.

Gender Differences

The gender of parents and their children can play a role in the nature of communication between parents and children. Gender seems to be a key element in some aspects of parent-child communication, such as conversations about emotions (Fivush, Brotman, Buckner & Goodman, 2000), TV content (Fortman, Clarke & Austin, 1998), sex (Jordan et al., 2000), alcohol and tobacco use (Miller-Day, 2002), drug use (Miller-Day, 2002; Kelly et al., 1996) or eating behaviors (Wertheim et al., 1999). Mothers appear to be the most influential parent (Miller-Day, 2002; O’Sullivan et al., 2001; Jordan et al., 2000; Fivush et al., 2000). Mothers talk more frequently to children (Fortman et al., 1998), converse more about emotions than fathers (Fivush et al., 2000) and about a wider variety of topics, while fathers “talk about fewer topics and focus on rules, academic achievement, and instrumental tasks” (Miller-Day, 2002). In fact, mothers rank slightly higher than fathers (27% versus 22%) when adolescents say whom they would ask questions about alcohol or other drugs (Kelly et al., 2002; Miller-Day, 2002). Even when parents seem to talk about similar topics in similar frequencies to their children, mothers have a stronger influence in some cases, such in transmission of dieting

values to daughters (Wertheim et al., 1999). Jordan et al. (2000) explain that teens prefer to talk about sex with their mothers than with their fathers. When fathers discuss sexual topics, it is more likely that they do so with their sons.

The topics discussed with children might vary according to the gender of the teen. Some of the differences can be explained by gender role expectation in society (Werheim et al. (1999). For example, Kelly et al. (1996) suggest that the difference in the nature of communication between parent and teens about health issues might operate under a double-standard, “that is, if drinking alcohol is more acceptable for boys than for girls, discussions with boys might be less likely” (pp. 247).

It is important to understand the differences of at least three types of parent-child communication: conversations about media influences, described by Fujioka and Austin (2003) as parental mediation -the conversations originated by health campaigns-, and the health issues discussed among parents and their children where media might not necessarily be a component of the discussion. For this research, parents and their children were surveyed about the frequency in which parents mentioned or discussed health issues.

A main goal for this study is to describe how parents’ mass media consumption influences their perceptions of reality and the frequency of their conversations about health issues with their children. The surveys did not include questions to measure whether parents were discussing media content. Instead, at the end of the survey there ~~is~~ (was) a series of questions designed to measure the amount of TV exposure and other media use.

Priming and Heuristic Processing

Media priming was originally applied to the impact of mass media on political issues such as presidential campaigns (Severin & Tankard, 2001). Priming “refers to the effects of the content of the media on people’s later behavior or judgments related to the content” (Roskos-Ewoldsen, Roskos-Ewoldsen & Dillman Carpenter, 2002, pp. 97). In other words, content in mass media presents a series of issues that become more important or salient for media users than for non-media users. Media priming theory has been sanctioned by some health communication scholars in order to influence beliefs about negative or positive outcomes to health-related behaviors (Fishbein & Yzer, 2003).

Priming effects depend on how recently and how frequently related stimuli are encountered (Higgins, Bargh & Lombardi, 1985). The heuristic processing approach for judging probability of events explains that people use the ease with which relevant instances come to mind as a basis for judgment. This in turn is related to how recently the event was observed and the frequency of its occurrence (Tversky & Kahneman, 1973). Shrum and O’Guinn (1993) say that individuals use the most accessible information in memory for a variety of judgments. Their study shows that, based on heuristic processing, TV viewing is linked to the accessibility of information, or how easily information is retrieved from memory and that heavy media users tend to overestimate the frequency or probability of some social issues, because of increased accessibility.

It is important to remember that, based on cultivation theory (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, Signorelli & Shanahan, 2002), media present a distorted reality and those who are exposed more to mass media, specifically television, are more likely to perceive social reality in “terms of the images, values, portrayals, and ideologies that emerge

through the lens of television” (pp. 47). Busselle (2001) found that perceived realism of television content (people’s tendency to see media content as realistic) might influence the heuristic process linking television exposure and social judgments. Additionally, media’s role in heuristic processes seem to be more salient when people do not have direct personal experiences of some issues or events and less important when people have experienced them, especially when those issues or events are frequently portrayed on TV (Busselle & Shrum, 2003).

This study will explore whether parents’ television viewing influences communication with their children during high school years regarding health topics. Busselle (2003) studied if exposure to crime-related television influenced parents precautionary warnings to their children. He found that, initially parents go through a cultivation effect, by which television exposure influences their crime estimates. As a result, parents talk to their children more about crime-related issues. Those conversations, or precautionary warnings, influence children’s crime estimates. In the same study, Busselle (2003) found that the gender of the teens predicted some patterns in the communication, such as warnings about crime being reported more often to daughters than to sons.

Based on those results, parents’ exposure to TV might also influence their perception of what health related issues are important for teenagers and trigger conversations with their children about those subjects, which might vary depending on the gender of the teen.

TV News versus Entertainment TV

Contrary to cultivation research (Gerbner et al. 2002) which does not differentiate among different TV genre to determine television effects, this study follows the approach of other communication scholars who had found differences in the public's perception of the portrayals of different social issues depending on the TV genre they were exposed to. Busselle and Crandall (2002) found that perceptions of African Americans related differently to three different genres: TV news, situation comedy and drama. News viewing was related to a perceived lack of motivation for African Americans regarding employment, while situation comedy and drama were positively related to the perceived level of education of African Americans. Sotirovic (2001) also found that higher exposure to cable news and entertainment television introduced a negative perception towards welfare perception, in contrast to reading newspapers or watching thematic TV stories about welfare.

Health issues such as sexuality or substance abuse are also portrayed in ways that can affect viewers of different genres in unequal ways. Larson (1996) found that single mothers were perceived by soap operas viewers as well-educated, with good jobs and not living in poverty, while their babies were perceived as being as healthy as other babies. A more realistic presentation of the risks involved using condoms was remembered by two thirds of the audience of a Friends episode (Collins et al., 2003). A content analysis showed that alcohol and tobacco are also glamorized on music videos and even modest levels of exposure to this genre include a high percentage of portrayals of alcohol and tobacco use, along with sexual content (DuRant, Rome, Rich, Allred, Emmans & Woods 1997). Alcohol in entertainment television appears in many types of programming, from

soap operas to sports. Dorfman and Wallack (1998) found that television drinkers “tend to be upper class, attractive and glamorous. In soap operas, alcohol is used most frequently as a social lubricant, in a crisis, or to escape from reality. In general, the negative consequences of drinking are rarely depicted on television; if alcoholics do appear, they are ridiculed or quickly rehabilitated” (pp. 68). The same study concludes that alcohol rarely appears on national or local news. On network television, when alcohol appeared it was overshadowed by illegal-drug stories. Dorfman and Wallack (1998) also found that 77% of the time spent on substance abuse covered illicit drugs, 14% alcohol, and 10% tobacco. On local news, the most frequent topic that appeared was drinking and driving, followed by crime reports related to alcohol.

Sports on TV also have been found to include high frequencies of alcohol advertising. In their content analysis, Madden and Grube (1994) found that televised sports had more commercials about alcohol than any other beverage, and audiences were additionally exposed to tobacco and alcohol advertising through signs in the stadium and other on-site promotions, with infrequent moderation messages.

Since entertainment television either presents an altered reality about health issues or serves as an educator, an analysis of the possible influences of the exposure to televised news versus entertainment will help determine if the differences in content also influence the frequency of parent-child communication about health issues.

Research Questions

Based on previous studies, it is known that parents communicate with their children about health issues. There are few comparative studies where several health

issues are measured within the same pairs of parents-children. Fujioka and Austin (2003) studied parent-child pairs regarding parental mediation of television and the children's attitudes toward alcohol, but no other health issue was included in the study. Austin et al. (1999) also assessed patterns of television-related interaction between parents and children including issues such as sex and alcohol consumption, but only parents were surveyed. Therefore, the first research question will be:

RQ 1: What health issues are most frequently discussed between parents and children?

Busselle (2003) found the gender of the teen to be a significant variable regarding the nature of the precautionary warnings parents offer to their children. Research question number two will answer if that finding can be applied to health issues, including the gender of the parents too:

RQ 2: Is there a difference in the health topics chosen to discuss if the parent is male or female and if the child is male or female?

Additionally, media effects theories show that people's media diet influences the nature of the conversations they maintain with others, including their children. Research question number three is based on those previous findings from media effects literature:

RQ 3: Is there a relationship between parents' TV consumption and warnings they give about different health issues?

Finally, it is expected that different TV genres will produce different effects, so a final research question needs to be answered to determine what genres influence health issues conversations between parents and children:

RQ4: Is there a difference between viewers of TV news versus entertainment and the topics chosen to “discuss” with their children?

CHAPTER TWO

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The population being studied is composed of college students from a university in the Northwest and their parents. After discarding incomplete surveys, there were a total of 409 children, 41 % of which were male and 59% female. The sample for parents consisted of 410 individuals, 35 % male and 65% female. The average age for children was 19.23 years old and for the parents 47.87 years old. The mean for hours of television viewing was 17.28 hours per week for parents. There were five different ethnic groups represented across the sample, although 91.4 % were white (See Table 1 for a complete view of descriptive statistics).

Both groups (parents and children) were surveyed and asked similar questions about media use and about topics they have discussed while the children were in high school. Parents were surveyed over the phone, while students completed a written survey. Surveys were matched in pairs of parents and their children. There were three data sets available from three different years (2000, 2001, and 2003), which were combined into a single data set.

Measures

Both parents and children were asked to recall the frequency with which they had conversations with each other during the four years the students were in high school. Respondents were asked to indicate their answers with a five-point scale ranging from 1= “Never,” 2= “Very rarely,” 3= “Sometimes,” 4= “Often” and 5= “Very often.” Five of

the items for the children and four of the items in the case of the parents were selected for this study because of a specific relationship to health issues. The questions for the children's survey read: "Please estimate how often, if ever, either of your parents mentioned each issue below:

- 1- Healthy eating habits.
- 2- Drinking alcohol.
- 3- Friends drinking alcohol.
- 4- Using illegal drugs.
- 5- Using tobacco products.
- 6- Safe sex practices.
- 7- Drinking and driving."

The surveys for parents were similarly worded but did not include item number one, eating habits, for that reason relationships between parents' and children's answers regarding conversations about eating were not possible. The surveys also included questions about media use with the estimated number of hours for each media genre. Respondents were also asked about their demographic profiles. Additionally, parents were asked to indicate their household income. See Appendixes 1 to 6 to read the complete surveys.

Because some questions about alcohol conversations were not included across all data sets, two new scales for conversations about alcohol were created from three

different questions, resulting in a new scale for conversations about alcohol for parental reports (parents talk about alcohol) and another for children reports (children talk about alcohol). The questions gathered information from parents and children regarding past conversations about alcohol (data sets # 1, 2 & 3), about drinking and driving (data sets # 1, 2 & 3) and about friends drinking alcohol (data sets # 1 & 2). After the three items measuring conversations about drinking were clustered, a Cronbach's Alpha reliability analysis was computed with SPSS. The analyses yielded a reliability level of 0.84 for the children's new scale and 0.76 for the parents' (Table 2).

For the analysis of the relationships between conversations and TV use, new scales were created as well. A new scale was created to obtain the total amount of TV parents watch by calculating the mean of the amount of hours parents reported watching different genres (soap opera, local news, national news, news magazines, movies on TV, music on TV, comedy, reality TV, drama, day-talk shows, night-talk shows and TV game-shows). Two additional scales were created to measure parents' TV use by genre, one for total TV news consumed including local news, national news and TV news magazines and another for entertainment TV including soap operas, TV movies, comedy, reality TV, drama, talk shows, night talk shows and TV games.

Mean scores and correlations were used to answer the different research questions. Mean scores (t-test and ANOVA) allowed a comparison between males and females in order to investigate the effect of gender across issues. Correlation matrices between parents' and children's answers regarding different issues (alcohol, drugs, tobacco, sex and eating) and the use of different TV genres were conducted as well to find the strength and the direction of the possible relations among variables.

CHAPTER THREE

RESULTS

Research Question Number One

The first research question of this study was aimed at answering which of the health issues (alcohol, drugs, tobacco, sex and eating) was discussed more often between parents and children. A table of means (Table 3) shows that children report being talked to about issues in the following order: eating ($N = 291$, mean = 3.83, $SD = 1.06$), alcohol ($N = 395$, mean = 3.53, $SD = 1.09$), drugs ($N = 395$, mean = 3.14, $SD = 1.33$), tobacco ($N = 393$, mean = 3.10, $SD = 1.39$) and sex ($N = 395$, mean = 3.05, $SD = 1.33$). An ANOVA test of within-subjects effects indicated statistically significant differences ($F = 41.96$). After conducting t-tests of the different pairs, the data show that for the children's reports, means for alcohol and eating conversations have significantly different t values ($p < .01$) than the rest of the items. There is no statistical significance, however, among the means of the categories regarding drugs, tobacco and sex (Table 3).

Parents report talking about the different issues in this order: alcohol ($N = 409$, mean = 4.07, $SD = .82$), drugs ($N = 409$, mean = 3.89, $SD = 1.00$), sex ($N = 409$, mean = 3.68, $SD = 1.03$) and tobacco ($N = 409$, mean = 3.53, $SD = 1.23$). The ANOVA test of within-subjects indicated statistically significant differences ($F = 47.25$). The results from the t-test of the different pairs show that the means of the parents' reports across the four different scales have significantly different t values ($p < .01$) from each other (Table 3). Parents also report higher frequencies than children in their conversations across all issues at significantly statistical differences at the $p < .01$ level (Table 3).

Additionally, a correlation between the reports of conversations of parents and the reports of their children shows that there is a statistically significant positive correlation among all issues (alcohol $r = .20, p < .01$; drugs $r = .13, p < .01$; sex $r = .19, p < .01$) except for conversations about tobacco ($r = .07, p > .05$). The more parents report talking about those issues, the more the children also report having conversations about them (Table 4).

Research Question Number Two

Given that past research found the gender of the teen to be a significant variable regarding the nature of the precautionary warnings parents offer to their children (Busselle, 2003), the second research question asked whether there was a difference in the health topics discussed by the parents if the child was male or female and, additionally, if the gender of the parents giving the warnings was different.

The reports from the children show that sons and daughters report a difference in their conversations with their parents at statistically significant levels about alcohol (mean for boys = 3.39 vs. girls 3.26, $p < .05$) where boys report being talked to more often than girls. For conversations about drugs there is a statistically significant difference (mean for boys = 2.99 vs. girls 3.24, $p < .07$), as well as for tobacco (mean for boys = 2.87 vs. girls 3.26, $p < .01$) and eating habits (mean for girls = 3.95 vs. boys 3.67, $p < .05$) with girls reporting more conversations with their parents than boys. And, finally, there is no statistically significant difference between boys and girls for conversations about sex (means for boys = 2.94 and girls = 3.13; Table 5). The same table shows that there are no statistically significant differences between mothers and fathers regarding warnings to their children about health issues (Table 5).

It is important to highlight that when children are split by their gender, parents report talking more to daughters consistently across all issues (Table 6). A closer analysis shows, however, that the only statistically significant difference is in the conversations about sex, where parents report talking more often to their daughters than to their sons (mean for boys = 3.56, vs. girls = 3.78, $p < .05$).

When a correlation matrix of parent-child conversations was created controlling for gender of both groups, data show that fathers' warnings are not significantly correlated with either sons' or daughters', while mothers show a statistically significant positive correlation on conversations about alcohol ($r = .28, p < .01$) and sex ($r = .27, p < .01$) with their sons and alcohol ($r = .22, p < .01$) and sex ($r = .17, p < .05$) with their daughters (Table 7). Although the correlation for father/son pairs ($r = .25$ for conversations about alcohol and $r = .18$ for sex) is similar to that of mother/daughters pairs ($r = .22$ for conversations about alcohol and $r = .17$ for sex), the difference in N ($N = 58$ for father/son pairs, $N = 160$ for mother/daughter pairs) makes conversations about alcohol and sex statistically significant only in the mother/daughter pairs.

Research Question Number Three

Research question number three asked if there was a relationship between the amount of parents' TV consumption and the warnings about different health issues. In order to answer this research question, correlations were calculated to find any possible relationships. The correlation matrices show that there are statistically significant positive correlations for conversations about alcohol ($r = .11, p < .05$) and drugs ($r = .14, p < .01$) and the amount of TV parents watch (Table 8). In other words, the more TV parents watch, the more they talk to their children about those two issues.

Research Question Number Four

Finally, research question number four asked whether there was any relationship between viewers of TV news and entertainment and the topics chosen to be discussed with their children. The correlation matrix (Table 9) calculated shows that there is a relationship between TV news exposure and the parents' frequency of conversations with their children about alcohol ($r = .12, p < .05$), drugs ($r = .14, p < .05$) and tobacco ($r = .10, p < .05$) (Table 8). For entertainment, there is no significant correlation. When entertainment was analyzed by genre instead of as a single scale, only daytime talk-shows, showed a statistically significant correlation with conversations about alcohol ($r = .11, p < .05$) and sex ($r = .11, p < .05$).

How do children report their conversations based on the amount of TV their parents watch? Children of TV viewers report a negative correlation for conversations about eating habits ($r = -.13, p < .05$). The more TV the parents watch, the less the children recall having conversations about eating habits (Table 10).

As for the different TV genres parent watch, there is a positive correlation for parents' TV news watching and the conversations children recall having about alcohol ($r = .12, p < .05$) and tobacco ($r = .11, p < .05$). Therefore, children of TV news viewers report having more conversations about alcohol and tobacco with their parents. Based on the amount of entertainment TV watched by parents, children report a negative correlation for conversations about eating habits ($r = -.20, p < .05$). Therefore, the more entertainment TV the parents watch, the less the children report having conversations with their parents about eating habits.

Discussion

The goal of this study was to observe if parents' TV exposure affects the frequency of conversations about health issues with their children. Past research shows a relationship between parents' television exposure and precautionary warnings to their children regarding crime-related dangers as well as a direct positive influence of television messages on risky health behaviors of teenagers (Busselle, 2003). In order to analyze the influence of TV exposure on parent-child communication, this study first examined the health issues that were discussed between parents and children, including differences in communication patterns across gender. Then, this study examined how those patterns of parent-child communication correlated with the amount of TV parents watch, regardless of the amount of TV children are exposed to.

The results of this study show that children report a higher frequency of conversations with parents regarding eating habits than any other health issue. Results in earlier health communication research have generated communication campaigns designed to encourage conversations between parents and their children in order to help teenagers avoid or minimize the use of drugs or alcohol (Miller-Day, 2002; Ennet et al., 2001). These results suggest that, although parental modeling and their attitudes towards food are important indicators of children's eating habits (Boutelle et al., 2003; Martinez-Gonzalez et al., 2002) parent-child communication might be another important factor to influence children's behaviors (Wertheim et al., 1999). This possibility has been scarcely studied. These results suggest that future research in the field of health communication might be necessary to understand the influence of parent-child communication regarding the child's eating habits.

The results of this study also show that the correlation between parents and children regarding the frequency of conversations about different health issues is weak, albeit significant, except for conversations about tobacco, where there is no statistically significant difference between both groups. Since not many studies have asked the same questions to the same parent-child pairs, these results are important because they show that parents and children agree about the frequency of conversations they had on different health topics (i.e.: the more parents reported talking about the different issues, the more the children reported being talked to about them).

When the effect of children's gender on frequency of conversations was taken into consideration, the results show gender-biased communication based on whether the child reporting the conversations was male or female. Except for conversations about sex, where there was no statistically significant difference between either gender, girls reported having more conversations across all issues except for alcohol, while boys reported being talked to more about that. The results regarding eating habits might be explained by current social standards and pressures on female's body shape. Either parents worry more about their daughters' physical appearance and, thus, talk more about eating habits with them than with boys, or girls remember these conversations in a more salient way because of the social pressure to look thin. One of the limitations of this study was that a question for parents about conversations with their children regarding eating habits was not included and thus comparisons between both groups were not possible. Future studies could expand on this issue by asking parents and children the same questions about frequency of conversations regarding eating habits.

When parents reported the frequency of conversations with their children based on the gender of their children, there was no agreement between their reports and their children's reports. Parents reported talking with the same frequency to sons and daughters across all issues except sex, where children's results show that they talked more often to their daughters. The fact that parents report talking the same across all issues except sex to both sons and daughters might be explained by the desire of parents to treat their children equally regardless of their gender. The fact that parents, however, acknowledge talking more to their daughters about sex is partially consistent with earlier results on research of frequency of crime-related parental precautionary warnings (Busselle, 2003). To explain this result, we could divide conversations about health issues in two groups. The first one would include conversations regarding alcohol, tobacco and drugs, where parents might perceive children actively engaging in an unhealthy behavior, and the second one would include conversations about sex, where parents might perceive girls as victims of sexual violence, rather than active part of an unsafe sex practice. If conversations about sex with daughters tend to be parental warnings about victimization, then the results from this study would be consistent with crime-related precautionary warnings. Busselle's (2003) results highlighted that the amount of crime-related TV viewed and the crime estimates of parents are in a direct relationships with the conversations they have with their children. In this study, however, there are no parents' estimates for health-related risks and, therefore, no inferences can be made regarding health-related estimates by parents. Future research could look if the nature of parent-child conversations regarding sex is different for sons and daughters and if it involves

parents' perceptions of girls' victimization, as well as the parents' estimates for health-related harm happening to their kids.

The fact that parents report spending the same amount of time talking to sons and daughters about alcohol, tobacco and drugs, however, is inconsistent with research conducted by Kelly et al. (1996) who suggested that the difference in the nature of communication between parent and children about health issues might operate under a double-standard, in which if drinking alcohol is more acceptable for boys than for girls, "discussions with boys might be less likely" (pp. 247).

When the gender of the parents was taken into consideration, the results of this study also show that, although fathers' reports of frequency of conversations across all topics do not present any statistically significant correlation with either sons or daughters, mothers' reports did, specifically when conversations covered issues such as alcohol and sex. These findings are consistent with past research that shows that children tend to communicate more effectively with their mothers than with their fathers (Fortman et al., 1998; Miller-Day, 2002; O'Sullivan et al., 2001, Jordan et al., 2000, Fivush et al., 2000), as well as with research that indicates that mothers ranked higher than fathers when adolescents say with whom they will have conversations about alcohol and other drugs (Miller-Day, 2002).

One of the ideas this study wanted to analyze was if parents' exposure to TV will influence the amount of conversations they have with their children regarding health issues, as is the case with precautionary warning about crime. The results of this study show a correlation between the amount of TV parents watch and the conversations

parents report having about alcohol and drugs. In other words, the more TV parents watch, the more they talk to their children about alcohol and drugs.

Specifically, this relationship was more salient for TV news viewers, which was the group who talked the most about alcohol, drugs and tobacco to their children. For TV entertainment viewers there was no correlation with the conversations they have with their children. When the different genres of entertainment were analyzed separately, however, results show that TV daytime talk show viewers warn their children more about alcohol. The explanation for these results could lay in the nature of TV news that highlights alcohol and drugs as having negative effects on the youth (e.g.: car accidents) and also shown in crime-related stories. The lack of a relationship between television entertainment exposure and frequency of conversations about health issues can be explained by the multiple and contradictory presentations of health issues on television, where, sometimes reality is distorted such as on MTV videos (DuRant et al., 1997) and sometimes health issues are presented in an pedagogical way to help prevent health-related risks (Collins et al, 2003). The results regarding the correlation found with daytime talk shows viewers and conversations about alcohol could be a product of multiple non-independent analyses on the same data, which increases the chances of obtaining a significant result without correcting the level of significance.

One important difference between studies on precautionary warnings about crime and TV exposure and this study is that it is easier to identify crime-related TV content, while health-related TV content might be mingled with other stories in different programs and genres but not addressed specifically as a topic very often or by a single TV program.

This difference in the content of TV programming might also explain the difference in results.

The results of this study show that children of TV viewers report having conversations with their parents less often about eating habits, specifically children of TV entertainment viewers. Additionally, the level of agreement between parents and children was analyzed. Children of TV news viewers agree with their parents about the frequency of conversations held regarding alcohol and tobacco, but there is no statistical correlation for conversations about drugs.

Past research suggests TV exposure affects viewers and the people with whom they interact. Data from this study add to our understanding of the influence of TV exposure on parent-child communication regarding health issues. It is important to acknowledge, however, that the relationship found through a correlation matrix does not determine which variable influences which. In other words, TV exposure might influence the frequency of conversations about health issues, or people who talk more about health issues are exposed to more TV. This second option means that people who think health issues are important might seek health-related content on TV and talk more about it with their children. A third possible explanation with this kind of cross-sectional data is the possibility that the whole process is a circular one. In this case, parents seek certain information from TV and, because of its priming effect, they seek more information from TV and tend to talk more about what they are exposed to and the things that worry them the most.

This study has an exploratory nature, and does not investigate if the consequences of the communication between parent and children, influenced by TV or not, translate

into a change of the children's perceptions of health-related issues or a change in their behaviors. Fujioka and Austin (2003) suggested that children's reports are more useful than parent's reports for predicting a child's behavior towards alcohol, but it is yet to be seen if similar conclusions can be drawn regarding other health issues. Future research could expand on the results of this study to see if children change their health-related behaviors and attitudes based on conversations with their parents, and will give a deeper understanding of the indirect effects of TV health-content in children's behaviors.

The surveys used for this research were initially designed with a different purpose than to measure health-related parent-child communication. Future studies could benefit by including a wider range of items in the survey and adding more questions about eating habits including both parents and their children. Additionally, the surveys asked respondents to recall conversations that happened at least four years ago. As past research using the same method (Busselle, 2003) suggests, it is possible that parental warnings are remembered more vividly once the children leave the house. It is also possible, however, that a survey conducted with children still living with their parents might give different results, since parents and children would remember more accurately what their conversations are about. In this last scenario the answers of respondents could be influenced by a conversation they might have had the day before the survey.

A final limitation of this study is the lack of ethnic diversity in the sample, which makes the results less generalizable across different ethnic groups. Future research would benefit of a more heterogeneous sample.

The data from this study provide some insight in parent-child communication about health issues. For example, children report a higher frequencies of conversations

about eating habits than alcohol, tobacco, drugs and sex. Parents also report talking to their daughters more about sex than to their sons. This study also found that the more TV parents are exposed to the more they tend to talk about drugs and alcohol to their children. When parents are exposed to more TV news they report higher frequencies of conversations with their children about alcohol, drugs and tobacco. These findings are additional evidence that TV might influence parent-child communication.

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TABLES

Table 1. Descriptives and Frequencies

Age

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Children	409	19.23	2.07
Parents	409	47.87	4.93

Gender

	Gender	N	Valid Percent
Children	Male	168	41.1
	Female	241	58.9
Total		409	100.00
Parents	Male	142	34.6
	Female	268	65.4
Total		410	100.00

Ethnicity

Ethnicity	N	Valid Percent
White	371	91.4
African American	12	3.0
Hispanic	5	1.2
Asian	6	1.5
Other	12	3.0
Total	406	100

Parents' Income

Income	N	Valid Percent
Less than \$40,000	45	11.6
\$40,000-\$70,000	123	31.8
More than \$70,000	219	55.6
Total	387	100

Parents' Total Hours of TV Per Week

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
TV Hours Per Week	409	0	67	17.28	11.31

Table 2. Reliability Analyses

Three-Item Reliability for Children's Conversations About Alcohol

Children	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cases	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
Drinking	3.56	1.19	291	.79	.70
Drinking and Driving	3.64	1.40	291	.57	.92
Friends Being Drunk	3.42	1.24	291	.77	.71

N of Cases = 291

N of Items = 3

Alpha = .84

Three-Item Reliability for Parents' Conversations About Alcohol

Parents	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cases	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
Drinking	3.90	.91	305	.65	.68
Drinking and Driving	4.28	1.01	305	.55	.79
Friends Being Drunk	4.01	.96	305	.68	.64

N of Cases = 305

N of Items = 3

Alpha = .78

Table 3. Table of Means

Frequency of Health Issues Discussed Between Parents and Children

		Alcohol	Drugs	Tobacco	Sex	Eating	F
Children	Mean	3.53 ^{a**}	3.14 ^{b**}	3.10 ^{b**}	3.05 ^{b**}	3.83 ^c	41.96
	N	395	395	393	395	291	
	Std. Dev.	1.09	1.33	1.39	1.33	1.06	
Parents	Mean	4.07 ^{a**}	3.89 ^{b**}	3.53 ^{c**}	3.68 ^{d**}	--	47.25
	N	409	409	409	409		
	Std. Dev.	.82	1.00	1.23	1.03		

^{abcd} Rows: Means with different superscripts have significantly different t values at the p<.01 level. Differences between groups were tested with post hoc t-tests.

** Columns: Means with an asterisk have significantly different t values at the p<.01 level.

Question for Children: Below is a list of things you may remember your parents mentioning to you or discussing with you over the past four or five years. Please estimate how often. 1= Never; 2= Very Rarely; 3= Rarely; 4= Often; 5= Very Often.

Question for Parents: How often did you talk with your son or daughter about each issue while they were at high school? 1= Never; 2= Very Rarely; 3= Rarely; 4= Often; 5= Very Often.

Table 4. Correlation Matrix

Parents' and Children's Reports on Conversations About Health Issues

		Parents talk about Alcohol	Parents talk about Drugs	Parents talk about Tobacco	Parents talk about Sex	Children talk about Alcohol	Children talk about Drugs	Children talk about Tobacco	Children talk about Sex
Parents talk about Alcohol	Pearson Correlation	1							
Parents talk about Drugs	Pearson Correlation	.70 **	1						
Parents talk about Tobacco	Pearson Correlation	.47**	.64**	1					
Parents talk about Sex	Pearson Correlation	.57**	.54**	.44**	1				
Children talk about Alcohol	Pearson Correlation	.20**	.16**	.12**	.20**	1			
Children talk about Drugs	Pearson Correlation	.11*	.13**	.07	.17**	.72**	1		
Children talk about Tobacco	Pearson Correlation	.06	.07	.07	.09	.63**	.70**	1	
Children talk about Sex	Pearson Correlation	.05	.08	.06	.19**	.60**	.57**	.19**	1

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

N varies between 394 and 409

Table 5. Table of Means

Parents' and Children's Reports on Conversations About Health Issues by Gender

Children		Alcohol	Drug	Tobacco	Sex	Eating
Son	Mean	3.39*	2.99 [†]	2.87**	2.94	3.67*
	N	158	158	157	158	122
	Std. Dev.	1.34	1.23	1.34	1.33	1.02
Daughter	Mean	3.26*	3.24 [†]	3.26**	3.13	3.95*
	N	235	236	235	236	168
	Std. Dev.	1.39	1.38	1.39	1.33	1.07
F		4.53	3.30	7.28	1.89	4.79
Sig.		.03	.07	.007	.17	.03

Parents		Alcohol	Drug	Tobacco	Sex	Eating
Father	Mean	4.07	3.85	3.52	3.68	--
	N	142	142	142	142	
	Std. Dev.	.74	1.02	1.24	1.06	
Mother	Mean	4.07	3.91	3.53	3.69	--
	N	267	267	267	267	
	Std. Dev.	.85	.99	1.22	1.02	
F		.009	.39	.003	.02	--
Sig.		.93	.53	.96	.90	--

** Means have significant different t values at $p < .01$

* Means have significant different t values at $p < .05$

[†] Means have significant different t values at $p < .10$

Question for Children: Below is a list of things you may remember your parents mentioning to you or discussing with you over the past four or five years. Please estimate how often. 1= Never; 2= Very Rarely; 3= Rarely; 4= Often; 5= Very Often.

Question for Parents: How often did you talk with your son or daughter about each issue while they were at high school? 1= Never; 2= Very Rarely; 3= Rarely; 4= Often; 5= Very Often.

Table 6. Table of Means

Parents' Reports on Conversations About Health Issues by Children Gender

Child Gender		Alcohol	Drug	Tobacco	Sex	Eating
Male	Mean	4.07	3.85	3.47	3.56**	--
	N	167	167	167	167	
	Std. Dev.	.81	1.02	1.23	1.08	
Female	Mean	4.08	3.93	3.56	3.78**	--
	N	241	241	241	241	
	Std. Dev.	.81	1.00	1.23	.99	
	F	.02	1.01	.59	4.45	--
	Sig.	.88	.32	.44	.04	--

** Means have significant different t values at $p < .01$

Question for Parents: How often did you talk with your son or daughter about each issue while they were at high school? 1= Never; 2= Very Rarely; 3= Rarely; 4= Often; 5= Very Often.

Table 7. Correlation Matrix

Parent-Child Reports on Conversations Controlling for Gender of Both Groups

		Father/Son ¹	Father/Daughter ²	Mother/Son ³	Mother/Daughter ⁴
Alcohol	Pearson Correlation	.25	-.02	.28**	.22**
Drugs	Pearson Correlation	.21	.14	.12	.09
Tobacco	Pearson Correlation	.07	.09	.05	.05
Sex	Pearson Correlation	.18	.06	.27**	.17*

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

¹ N = 58

² N = varies between 75 and 76

³ N = varies between 98 and 99

⁴ N = 160

Table 8. Correlation Matrix

Parents' Reports of Total TV hours, News & Entertainment Viewing and Conversation With Their Children

		Total TV Viewing	TV News Viewing	TV Ent. Viewing	Alcohol	Drugs	Tobacco	Sex
Total TV Viewing	Pearson Correlation	1						
TV News Viewing	Pearson Correlation	.80**	1					
Entertainment Viewing	Pearson Correlation	.27**	.27**	1				
Alcohol	Pearson Correlation	.11*	.12*	-.01	1			
Drugs	Pearson Correlation	.14**	.14**	.00	.71**	1		
Tobacco	Pearson Correlation	.09	.10*	-.00	.47**	.64**	1	
Sex	Pearson Correlation	.09	.09	.02	.57**	.54**	.44**	1

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

N = 409

Table 9. Correlation Matrix

Parents' Reports on Conversations by Different Entertainment Genres

		Alcohol	Drugs	Tobacco	Sex	Soap Opera	TV Movies	TV Music	Comedy	Reality TV	Drama	Talk Shows	Night Talk Shows	TV Games
Alcohol	Pearson Correlation N	1												
Drugs	Pearson Correlation N	.71** 409	1											
Tobacco	Pearson Correlation N	.75** 409	.64** 409	1										
Sex	Pearson Correlation N	.57** 409	.54** 409	.41** 409	1									
Soap Opera	Pearson Correlation N	-.04 409	-.03 409	-.03 409	.01 409	1								
TV Movie	Pearson Correlation N	-.01 408	.01 408	-.02 408	-.01 408	.06 408	1							
TV Music	Pearson Correlation N	.12 232	.08 232	.05 232	.12 232	-.07 232	.10 232	1						
Comedy	Pearson Correlation N	.04 409	.02 409	.02 409	.02 409	.03 409	.28** 408	.08 232	1					
Reality TV	Pearson Correlation N	.04 104	.06 104	-.04 104	.16 104	.05 104	.32** 104	.19* 104	.26** 104	1				
Drama	Pearson Correlation N	-.04 409	-.02 409	.03 409	.06 409	.10 409	.28** 408	-.06 232	.19** 409	.34** 104	1			
Talk Shows	Pearson Correlation N	.11* 409	.08 409	.07 409	.11* 409	.12* 409	-.03 408	.00 232	.09 409	.07 104	.08 409	1		
Night Talk Shows	Pearson Correlation N	-.06 231	-.01 231	-.09 231	-.03 231	.01 231	.04 .231	.04 231	.01 231	.29** 104	.16* 231	.19** 231	1	
TV Games	Pearson Correlation N	.05 231	.09 231	.04 231	.02 231	.06 231	.13 231	.07 231	.06 231	.22* 104	.07 231	.12 231	-.05 231	1

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

Table 10. Correlation Matrix

Children's Reports on Conversations Based on How Much TV Their Parents Watch

		Parents TV News Viewing	Parents Entertainment Viewing	Parents Total TV Viewing	Children Talk Alcohol	Children Talk Drugs	Children Talk Tobacco	Children Talk Sex	Children Talk Eating
Parents TV News Viewing	Pearson Correlation N	1							
Parents Entertainment Viewing	Pearson Correlation N	.27** 409	1						
Parents Total TV Viewing	Pearson Correlation N	.80** 409	.69** 409	1					
Children Talk Alcohol	Pearson Correlation N	.12* 394	-.05 394	.08 394	1				
Children Talk Drugs	Pearson Correlation N	.05 394	-.07 394	.01 394	.72** 395	1			
Children Talk Tobacco	Pearson Correlation N	.11* 392	-.06 392	.05 392	.63** 395	.57** 395	1		
Children Talk Sex	Pearson Correlation N	.07 394	-.09 394	.01 394	.60** 395	.57** 395	.49** 393	1	
Children Talk Eating	Pearson Correlation N	-.07 290	-.20** 290	-.13* 290	.30** 291	.21** 291	.24** 290	.22** 291	1

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Data set one: Survey for students

COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL ISSUES SURVEY

We are conducting a study of family communication and awareness about social issues. By completing this survey you will help us better understand how families communicate about important issues. Your participation in this study is voluntary. This questionnaire will take you no more than 15 minutes to complete. The questions are not of a personal or embarrassing nature. Still, all of your answers are completely confidential. This study has been approved by the WSU Institutional Review Board (IRB # 4921).

So that we may record your participation and extra-credit, please provide your name and student number.

Please print your name here: _____

Please print your student number here: _____

Because we are interested in family communication we would like for one or both of your parents or guardians also to complete this survey. If you have no objection we would like to ask your parents the same questions you just answered. To help us reach them, please provide your parents' name, phone number and mailing address.

Thank you.

Parent 1

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Zip Code: _____

Parent 2

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Zip Code: _____

If you have any questions about this questionnaire, please call Prof. Busselle at 335-2390.

SOCIAL ISSUES

First, we would like your judgements about different concerns in our society. Please, answer the following questions.

What percent of Americans are poor (less than \$20,000 annual family income)? ____ %

What percent of American teenagers drop out of high school? ____ %

What percent of Americans are mugged each year? ____%

What percent of American adults earn less than \$8 per hour? ____ %

What percent of Americans receive some form of government financial assistance, often referred to as welfare? ____ %

What percent of police officers use their gun each year in the line of duty? ____ %

What percent of Americans die of a stroke each year? ____ %

What percent of Americans die of heart disease each year? ____ %

What percent of burglaries result in someone being injured? ____ %

Do you ever avoid certain areas because they are dangerous?

(Circle One) Very Often Often Sometimes Rarely Never

What percent of Americans will be victims of gun shot in their lifetime? ____ %

What percent of Americans are overweight? ____ %

What percent of Americans are injured in traffic accidents each year? ____ %

What percent of women are sexually assaulted by a stranger in their lifetime? ____ %

What percent of American teenagers die of drug overdose each year? ____ %

Does your family own a dog for protection? Yes / No

Do you or would you consider owning a gun for protection? Yes / No

Would you consider owning a gun for protection? Yes / No

Should more police officers be hired to fight crime? Yes / No

What percent of Americans die in traffic accidents each year? ____ %

What percent of Americans have been victims of violent crime in the past year? ____ %

What percent of American teenagers use illegal drugs each year? ____ %

PLEASE CONTINUE ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE.

FAMILY DISCUSSION CHECKLIST

We are interested in how often different issues are mentioned or discussed between parents and children. Below is a list of things you may remember your parents discussing over the past four or five years. Please estimate how often, if ever, either of your parents mentioned each issue below.

Never	Very Rarely	Some- times	Often	Very Often	
___	___	___	___	___	Someone in another car having a gun.
___	___	___	___	___	Avoiding dangerous neighborhoods.
___	___	___	___	___	Keeping car doors locked while driving in certain areas.
___	___	___	___	___	Keeping house/apartment doors locked when at home.
___	___	___	___	___	Healthy eating habits.
___	___	___	___	___	Self-defense strategies.
___	___	___	___	___	Curfew.
___	___	___	___	___	Not walking alone at night.
___	___	___	___	___	Not talking to strangers.
___	___	___	___	___	Not being alone with someone you don't know well.
___	___	___	___	___	Not making eye contact with strangers.
___	___	___	___	___	Someone putting something in your drink.
___	___	___	___	___	Drinking alcohol.
___	___	___	___	___	Friends drinking alcohol.
___	___	___	___	___	Using illegal drugs.
___	___	___	___	___	Using tobacco products.
___	___	___	___	___	Safe sex practices.
___	___	___	___	___	Someone bringing a gun to a party.
___	___	___	___	___	Driving safely.
___	___	___	___	___	Drinking and driving.
___	___	___	___	___	Criminal gangs.

PLEASE CONTINUE ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE.

FAMILY REMINDER CHECKLIST

Sometimes we don't have a "conversation" with our parents about an issue. But maybe they mention an issue in the form of a warning or reminder. Please estimate how often your parents mentioned each issue below.

Never	Very Rarely	Some- times	Often	Very Often	
___	___	___	___	___	Someone in another car having a gun.
___	___	___	___	___	Avoiding dangerous neighborhoods.
___	___	___	___	___	Keeping car doors locked while driving in certain areas.
___	___	___	___	___	Keeping house/apartment doors locked when at home.
___	___	___	___	___	Healthy eating habits.
___	___	___	___	___	Self-defense strategies.
___	___	___	___	___	Curfew.
___	___	___	___	___	Not walking alone at night.
___	___	___	___	___	Not talking to strangers.
___	___	___	___	___	Not being alone with someone you don't know well.
___	___	___	___	___	Not making eye contact with strangers.
___	___	___	___	___	Someone putting something in your drink.
___	___	___	___	___	Drinking alcohol.
___	___	___	___	___	Friends drinking alcohol.
___	___	___	___	___	Using illegal drugs.
___	___	___	___	___	Using tobacco products.
___	___	___	___	___	Safe sex practices.
___	___	___	___	___	Someone bringing a gun to a party.
___	___	___	___	___	Driving safely.
___	___	___	___	___	Drinking and driving.
___	___	___	___	___	Criminal gangs.

PLEASE CONTINUE ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE.

MEDIA USE SURVEY

The following questions are concerned with media usage. They are intended to assess the degree to which you use various forms of media, as well as the time periods in which you use them. Please give careful thought to each answer, and be as accurate as possible. Your answers are and will remain completely confidential

Please indicate in the average week, including weekends, how many hours of television you watch in the following categories. These estimates should include cable programming (including pay-per-view movies) as well as network programming, but you should not include videotapes.

- SOAP OPERAS: (All My Children, Days of Our Lives, etc.) Hours per week: _____
- NEWS (Local, Network or Cable): Hours per week: _____
- NEWS MAGAZINE: (60 Minutes, 48 Hours, 20/20, etc.) Hours per week: _____
- SPORTS ON TV: Hours per week: _____
- MOVIES ON TELEVISION (Including Pay-per-view)..... Hours per week: _____
- COMEDIES: (Frasier, Friends, Drew Carey, etc.) Hours per week: _____
- DRAMA: (Melrose Place, 90210, Titans, etc.) Hours per week: _____
- CRIME DRAMA (Homicide, NYPD Blue, etc.)..... Hours per week: _____
- EMERGENCY DRAMA (ER, Chicago Hope, etc.)..... Hours per week: _____
- MUSIC TELEVISION: (MTV, VH1, CT, etc.)..... Hours per week: _____
- DAYTIME TALK SHOWS: (Oprah, Ricki Lane, etc.) Hours per week: _____
- LATE NIGHT TALK SHOWS: (Leno, Letterman, etc.) Hours per week: _____
- GAME SHOWS: (Wheel of Fortune, Jeopardy, etc.) Hours per week: _____

- Thinking back carefully, how many hours of television did you watch yesterday? _____ hrs. yesterday
- On the average, how many hours of television do you watch each day? _____ hrs. per day
- On the average, how many hours per week do you spend reading newspapers? _____ hrs. per week
- How many times have you gone to the movie theater in the past month? _____ times / month
- How many times in the past month have you watched a movie on videotape? _____ times / month
- How many hours per week do you spend reading magazines? _____ hrs. per week

Thank you for your help

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please provide the following information to the best of your knowledge. This information will be kept strictly confidential, and will in no way be made public.

Male _____ Female _____ (check one)

Current GPA _____

In what year were you born? _____

What is your race? White _____ Black _____ Hispanic _____ Asian _____
Other _____ (Please indicate)

What is the approximate (give your best guess) annual household income of your family?

- _____ \$0-\$10,000
- _____ \$10,001-\$20,000
- _____ \$20,001-\$30,000
- _____ \$30,001-\$40,000
- _____ \$40,001-\$50,000
- _____ \$50,001-\$60,000
- _____ \$60,001-\$70,000
- _____ \$70,001-\$80,000
- _____ \$80,001-\$90,000
- _____ \$90,001-\$100,000
- _____ more than \$100,000

Native (first) Language _____

In what state and city do you live? State _____ City _____

Have you ever been a victim of a violent crime? YES NO (Circle one answer)

What other communication courses have you taken or are you taking currently? Please list them below.

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE SURVEY.

Appendix 2. Data set 1: Survey for Parents

Family Cultivation Phone Survey

Hello, my name is _____. I am calling from the Murrow School of Communication at Washington State University. We are conducting a study about family communication. Earlier this semester your child completed a questionnaire for us and said it would be okay for us to call you. Do you have about 10 minutes to answer some questions?

Great. Before we start I must tell you that your answers, as well as your child's answers, are strictly confidential. Legally we cannot share your answers with your child or anyone else. Nor will we share your child's answers with you or anyone else.

This study has been approved by WSU's Institutional Review Board. If you have any questions, you can call Professor Busselle at WSU or the Research Office. I can give you those phone numbers now later. (*Busselle: 509-335-2390 ... IRB: 509-335-9661*)

Okay, first, we want your impressions about a series of social issues. You probably won't know the answer to these questions, but please give your best estimate. All of your answers should be in the form of a percentage, ranging from 1-percent to 100-percent. Again we want only your estimate.

1. About what percent of Americans are poor (< \$20,000 annual family income)? ____ %
2. What percent of American teenagers drop out of high school? ____ %
3. What percent of Americans are mugged each year? ____%
4. What percent of Americans die as a result of traffic accidents? ____ %
5. What percent of Americans receive some form of government financial assistance, often referred to as welfare? ____ %.
6. What percent of police officers use their gun each year in the line of duty? ____ %
7. What percent of American teenagers use illegal drugs each year? ____ %
8. What percent of burglaries result in someone being injured? ____ %
9. What percent of Americans will be victims of a gun shot in their lifetime? ____ %
10. What percent of Americans are injured in traffic accidents each year? ____ %
11. **There a just a few more of these...**
13. What percent of women are sexually assaulted by a stranger in their lifetime? ____ %
14. What percent of Americans have been victims of violent crime in past last year? ____ %
15. What percent of American teenagers die of drug overdoses each year? ____ %
16. Should more police officers be hired to fight crime? Yes / No
17. *How often – very often, often, sometimes, rarely, never – do you avoid certain areas or neighborhoods because they are dangerous?*

(Circle One) Very Often Often Sometimes Rarely Never

Now I'm going to ask you some questions about conversations you may have had with your child. I'm going to read a list of concerns people often have. Please indicate how often you talked with your son or daughter about each issue while they were in high school. The choices are never, very rarely, sometimes, often, and very often.

Would you say you never, very rarely, sometime, often or very often mentioned to that he or she should be careful that someone in another car might have a gun?

Never	Very Rarely	Some-times	Often	Very Often	
___	___	___	___	___	
___	___	___	___	___	<u>Avoiding certain areas or neighborhoods.</u> Did you mention that <u>never, very rarely, sometime, often or very often?</u>
___	___	___	___	___	Keeping car doors locked while driving in certain areas.
___	___	___	___	___	Keeping house doors locked when at home.
___	___	___	___	___	Self-defense strategies (<i>any kind</i>).
___	___	___	___	___	Obeying a curfew.
___	___	___	___	___	Not walking alone at night.
___	___	___	___	___	Not talking to strangers.
___	___	___	___	___	Not being alone with someone they don't know well.
___	___	___	___	___	Not making eye contact with strangers.
___	___	___	___	___	Drinking alcohol.
___	___	___	___	___	Someone putting something in their drink.
___	___	___	___	___	Friends drinking alcohol.
___	___	___	___	___	Using illegal drugs.
___	___	___	___	___	Using tobacco products.
___	___	___	___	___	Safe sex practices.
Just a few more of these...					
___	___	___	___	___	Someone bringing a gun to a party.
___	___	___	___	___	Driving safely.
___	___	___	___	___	Drinking driving (alcohol).

Is there anything you talked about of that nature that I missed?

As far as crime is concerned, I want to ask you how much do you worry about the safety of your family members.

Would you say that, with respect to crime, you are not at all concerned, Not ery concerned, somewhat concerned or very concerned about the safety of...

Yourself	Not at all...	Not very...	Somewhat...	Very...(N/A)
Spouse or companion	Not at all...	Not very...	Somewhat...	Very...(N/A)
...Oldest son	Not at all...	Not very...	Somewhat...	Very...(N/A)
...Oldest daughter	Not at all...	Not very...	Somewhat...	Very...(N/A)
...2 nd Oldest son...	Not at all...	Not very...	Somewhat...	Very...(N/A)
...2 nd oldest daughter	Not at all...	Not very...	Somewhat...	Very...(N/A)

We're about 2-thirds of the way done. Now I am going to ask about your media habits. Please be as accurate as you can.

In the average week, including weekends, how many hours of television do you watch in the following categories (*including cable programming (pay-per-view movies), but not including videotapes.*)

- SOAP OPERAS: (All My Children, Days of Our Lives, etc.) _____ hours per wk.
- LOCAL TV NEWS: (Local) _____ hours per wk.
- NATIONAL TV NEWS: (Network or Cable) _____ hours per wk.
- NEWS MAGAZINES: (60 Minutes, 48 Hours, 20/20, etc.) _____ hours per wk .
- MOVIES ON TELEVISION, including Pay Per View; (Excluding VCR) _____ hours per wk
- COMEDIES: (Frasier, Drama & Greg, Drew Carey, etc.) _____ hours per wk
- CRIME DRAMA (Homicide, NYPD Blue, Law and order, etc) _____ hours per wk
- DRAMA: (Melrose Place West Wing, or Titans) _____ hours per wk
- EMERGENCY DRAMA (ER, Chicago Hope, etc.) _____ hours per wk
- DAYTIME TALK SHOWS: (Oprah, Jenny Jones, etc.) _____ hours per wk

Thinking back carefully, how many hours of television did you watch yesterday? _____ hours
 What did you watch? Do you remember what you watched? _____

How many times have you gone to the movie theater in the past month? _____ times

How many times in the past month have you watched a movie on video tape? _____ times.

Do you read the news over the Internet. No Yes → about how many hours a week? _____hrs.

Now just a few demographic questions...

In what year were you born? _____ (write in year)

How many other children do you have? _____ How many are girls? _____

Would you say your annual family income is (check one)

- ____ 1. less than 40-thousand dollars a year,
____ 2. between 40-thousand and 70-thousand, or
____ 3. more than 70 thousand dollars a year?

This is the last question... Have you ever been the victim of a violent crime? YES NO

Thank you very much for helping us. Do you have any questions?

Thanks again. We appreciate your time.

Male _____ Female _____ (check one **Don't ask them!**)

Appendix 3. Data set 2: Survey for Students

COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL ISSUES SURVEY

We are conducting a study of family communication about social issues. By completing this survey you will help us better understand how families communicate about important issues. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may stop answering questions at any time, but we would appreciate your help. This questionnaire will take you no approximately 15 minutes to complete. The questions are not of a personal or embarrassing nature. Still, all of your answers are completely confidential. This study has been approved by the WSU Institutional Review Board (IRB # 4922).

So that we may record your participation and extra-credit, please provide your name and student number.

Please print your name here: _____

Please print your student number here: _____

Please list any communication related courses you have taken or are taking.

SOCIAL ISSUES

Please answer the following questions about Social Issues.

What percent of Americans are poor (less than \$20,000 annual family income)? ____ %

What percent of American teenagers drop out of high school? ____ %

What percent of American adults earn less than \$8 per hour? ____ %

What percent of Americans receive some form of government financial assistance, often referred to as welfare? ____ %.

What percent of burglaries result in someone being injured? ____ %

What percent of police officers use their gun each year in the line of duty? ____ %

What percent of Americans will be victims of gun shot in their lifetime? ____ %

What percent of women are sexually assaulted by a stranger in their lifetime? ____ %

What percent of Americans have been victims of violent crime in the past year? ____ %

What percent of Americans are mugged each year? ____%

Does your family own a dog for protection? Yes / No

Do you or would you consider owning a gun for protection? Yes / No

Do you ever avoid certain areas because they are dangerous? Yes / No

Should more police officers be hired to fight crime? Yes / No

How many Americans die as a result of traffic accidents each year? ____ %

What percent of American teenagers use illegal drugs each year? ____ %

What percent of American teenagers die of drug overdose each year? ____ %

With respect to crime, how concerned are you that you might become the victim of a violent crime?

(Please circle one answer)

Not at all concerned Not very concerned Somewhat concerned Very concerned

PLEASE CONTINUE ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE.

FAMILY COMMUNICATION CHECKLIST

We are interested in how often different issues are mentioned or discussed between parents and children. Below is a list of things you may remember your parents mentioning to you or discussing with you over the past four or five years. Please estimate how often, if ever, either of your parents mentioned each issue below.

Never	Very Rarely	Some- times	Often	Very Often	
___	___	___	___	___	Someone in another car having a gun.
___	___	___	___	___	Avoiding dangerous neighborhoods.
___	___	___	___	___	Keeping car doors locked while driving in certain areas.
___	___	___	___	___	Keeping house/apartment doors locked when at home.
___	___	___	___	___	Healthy eating habits.
___	___	___	___	___	Self-defense strategies.
___	___	___	___	___	Curfew.
___	___	___	___	___	Not walking alone at night.
___	___	___	___	___	Not talking to strangers.
___	___	___	___	___	Not being alone with someone you don't know well.
___	___	___	___	___	Not making eye contact with strangers.
___	___	___	___	___	Someone putting something in your drink.
___	___	___	___	___	Drinking alcohol.
___	___	___	___	___	Friends drinking alcohol.
___	___	___	___	___	Using illegal drugs.
___	___	___	___	___	Using tobacco products.
___	___	___	___	___	Safe sex practices.
___	___	___	___	___	Someone bringing a gun to a party.
___	___	___	___	___	Driving safely.
___	___	___	___	___	Drinking and driving.
___	___	___	___	___	Criminal gangs.

PLEASE CONTINUE ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE.

MEDIA USE SURVEY

The following questions are concerned with media usage. They are intended to assess the degree to which you use various forms of media, as well as the time periods in which you use them. Please give careful thought to each answer, and be as accurate as possible.

Please indicate in the average week, including weekends, how many hours of television you watch, and whether you watched yesterday, in the following categories. These estimates should include cable programming as well as network programming, but not videotapes.

- SOAP OPERAS: (All My Children, Days of Our Lives, etc.) _____ hours per week
- NATIONAL NEWS: _____ hours per week
- LOCAL NEWS: _____ hours per week
- NEWS MAGAZINE: (60 Minutes, 48 Hours, 20/20, etc.) _____ hours per week
- SPORTS ON TV: _____ hours per week
- MOVIES ON TELEVISION (Excluding Videotapes)..... _____ hours per week
- COMEDIES: (Frasier, Friends, Drew Carey, etc.) _____ hours per week
- DRAMA: (Melrose Place, Providence, etc.) _____ hours per week
- EMERGENCY DRAMA (ER, Chicago Hope)..... _____ hours per week
- CRIME DRAMA (Homicide, NYPD Blue, Law & Order)..... _____ hours per week
- MUSIC TELEVISION: (MTV, VH1, CMT, etc.)..... _____ hours per week
- DAYTIME TALK SHOWS: (Oprah, Ricki Lake, etc.) _____ hours per week
- LATE NIGHT TALK SHOWS: (Leno, Letterman, etc.) _____ hours per week
- GAME SHOWS: (Wheel of Fortune, Jeopardy, etc.) _____ hours per week

- Thinking back carefully, how many hours of television did you watch yesterday? _____ hrs. yesterday
- On the average, how many hours of television do you watch each day? _____ hrs. per day
- On the average, how many hours per week do you spend reading newspapers? _____ hrs. per week
- How many times have you gone to the movie theater in the past month? _____ times / month
- How many times in the past month have you watched a movie on videotape? _____ times / month
- How many hours per week do you spend reading magazines? _____ hrs. per week

PLEASE CONTINUE ANSWERS THE QUESTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please provide the following information to the best of your knowledge. This information will be kept strictly confidential and will in no way be made public

Male _____ Female _____ (check one)

Current GPA _____

In what year were you born? _____

What is your race? White _____ Black _____ Hispanic _____ Asian _____
Other _____ (Please indicate)

Native (first) Language _____

State in which you grew up? State _____ Country _____

Because we are interested in family communication we would like for one or both of your parents or guardians also to complete this survey. If you have no objection we would like to ask your parents the same questions you just answered. To help us reach them, please provide your parents' name, phone number and mailing address. Thank you.

Parent 1

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Parent 2

Name: _____

Phone: _____ (If different)

Finally, have you ever been a victim of a violent crime? YES NO (Circle one answer)

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY!!!

Appendix 4. Data Set 2: Survey for Parents

Hello, my name is _____. I am calling from the Murrow School of Communication at Washington State University. We are conducting a study about family communication. Earlier this semester your child completed a questionnaire for us and said it would be okay for us to call you. Do you have about 10 minutes to answer some questions?

Great. Before we start I must tell you that your answers, as well as your child's answers, are strictly confidential. Legally we cannot share your answers with your child or anyone else. Nor will we share your child's answers with you or anyone else.

This study has been approved by WSU's Institutional Review Board. If you have any questions, you can call Professor Busselle at WSU or the Research Office. I can give you those phone numbers now later. (*Busselle: 509-335-2390 ... IRB: 509-335-9661*)

Okay, first, we want your impressions about a series of social issues. You probably won't know the answer to these questions, but please give your best estimate. All of your answers should be in the form of a percentage, ranging from 1-percent to 100-percent. Again we want only your estimate.

1. About what percent of Americans are poor (< \$20,000 annual family income)? ____ %
2. What percent of American teenagers drop out of high school? ____ %
3. What percent of Americans are mugged each year? ____%
4. What percent of Americans die as a result of traffic accidents? ____ %
5. What percent of Americans receive some form of government financial assistance, often referred to as welfare? ____ %.
6. What percent of police officers use their gun each year in the line of duty? ____ %
7. What percent of American teenagers use illegal drugs each year? ____ %
8. What percent of burglaries result in someone being injured? ____ %
9. What percent of Americans will be victims of a gun shot in their lifetime? ____ %
10. What percent of Americans are injured in traffic accidents each year? ____ %
11. **There a just a few more of these...**
13. What percent of women are sexually assaulted by a stranger in their lifetime? ____ %
14. What percent of Americans have been victims of violent crime in past last year? ____ %
15. What percent of American teenagers die of drug overdoses each year? ____ %
16. Should more police officers be hired to fight crime? Yes / No
17. Does your family own a dog for protection? Yes / No
18. Do you or would you consider owning a gun for protection? Yes / No
19. How often – very often, often, sometimes, rarely, never – do you avoid certain areas or neighborhoods because they are dangerous?
(Circle one) Very Often Often Sometimes Rarely Never

Now I'm going to ask you some questions about conversations. INCLUDING BRIEF CONVERSATIONS you may have had with your child WHILE SHE OR HE WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL. I'm going to read a list of concerns people often have. Please indicate how often you DISCUSSED WITH OR MENTIONED TO your son or daughter ANYTHING about OF THE FOLLOWING ISSUES.

The choices are never, very rarely, sometimes, often, and very often.

Would you say you never, very rarely, sometime, often or very often mentioned to that he or she should be careful that someone in another car might have a gun?

Never	Very Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often	
___	___	___	___	___	
___	___	___	___	___	<u>Avoiding certain areas or neighborhoods.</u> Did you mention that <u>never, very rarely, sometime, often or very often?</u>
___	___	___	___	___	Keeping car doors locked while driving in certain areas.
___	___	___	___	___	Keeping house doors locked when at home.
___	___	___	___	___	Self-defense strategies (<i>any kind</i>).
___	___	___	___	___	Obeying a curfew.
___	___	___	___	___	Not walking alone at night.
___	___	___	___	___	Not talking to strangers.
___	___	___	___	___	Not being alone with someone they don't know well.
___	___	___	___	___	Not making eye contact with strangers.
___	___	___	___	___	Drinking alcohol.
___	___	___	___	___	Someone putting something in their drink.
___	___	___	___	___	Friends drinking alcohol.
___	___	___	___	___	Using illegal drugs.
___	___	___	___	___	Using tobacco products.
___	___	___	___	___	Safe sex practices.
Just a few more of these...					
___	___	___	___	___	Someone bringing a gun to a party.
___	___	___	___	___	Driving safely.
___	___	___	___	___	Drinking driving (alcohol).

Is there anything you talked about of that nature that I missed?

As far as crime is concerned, I want to ask you how much do you worry about the safety of your family members.

Would you say that, with respect to crime, you are not at all concerned, Not ery concerned, somewhat concerned or very concerned about the safety of...

Yourself	Not at all...	Not very...	Somewhat...	Very...(N/A)
Spouse or companion	Not at all...	Not very...	Somewhat...	Very...(N/A)
...Oldest son	Not at all...	Not very...	Somewhat...	Very...(N/A)
...Oldest daughter	Not at all...	Not very...	Somewhat...	Very...(N/A)
...2 nd Oldest son...	Not at all...	Not very...	Somewhat...	Very...(N/A)
...2 nd oldest daughter	Not at all...	Not very...	Somewhat...	Very...(N/A)

We're about 2-thirds of the way done. Now I am going to ask about your media habits. Please be as accurate as you can.

In the average week, including weekends, how many hours of television do you watch in the following categories (*including cable programming (pay-per-view movies), but not including videotapes.*)

- SOAP OPERAS: (All My Children, Days of Our Lives, etc.) _____ hours per wk.
- LOCAL TV NEWS: (Local) _____ hours per wk.
- NATIONAL TV NEWS: (Network or Cable) _____ hours per wk.
- NEWS MAGAZINES: (60 Minutes, 48 Hours, 20/20, etc.) _____ hours per wk
- SPORTS ON TV _____ hours per wk
- MOVIES ON TELEVISION, including Pay Per View; (Excluding VCR) _____ hours per wk
- COMEDIES: (Frasier, Drama & Greg, Drew Carey, etc.) _____ hours per wk
- CRIME DRAMA (Homicide, NYPD Blue, Law and order, etc) _____ hours per wk
- DRAMA: (Melrose Place West Wing, or Titans) _____ hours per wk
- EMERGENCY DRAMA (ER, Chicago Hope, etc.) _____ hours per wk
- DAYTIME TALK SHOWS: (Oprah, Jenny Jones, etc.) _____ hours per wk

Thinking back carefully, how many hours of television did you watch yesterday? _____ hours

What did you watch? Do you remember what you watched? _____

How many times have you gone to the movie theater in the past month? _____ times

How many times in the past month have you watched a movie on video tape? _____ times.

How many hours per week do you spend reading a news paper? _____hrs

How about a magazine? How many hours? _____hrs

Do you read the news over the Internet. No Yes → about how many hours a week? _____hrs.

Now just a few demographic questions...

In what year were you born? _____ (write in year)

How many other children do you have? _____ How many are girls? _____

Would you say your annual family income is (check one)

- ____ 1. less than 40-thousand dollars a year,
- ____ 2. between 40-thousand and 70-thousand, or
- ____ 3. more than 70 thousand dollars a year?

This is the last question... Have you ever been the victim of a violent crime? YES NO

Thank you very much for helping us. Do you have any questions?

Thanks again. We appreciate your time.

Male _____ Female _____ (check one **Don't ask them**)

Appendix 5. Data set 3: Survey for Students

COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL ISSUES SURVEY

We are conducting a study of family communication about social issues. By completing this survey you will help us better understand how families communicate about important issues. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may stop answering questions at any time, but we would appreciate your help. This questionnaire will take you no more than 15 minutes to complete. The questions are not of a personal or embarrassing nature. Still, all of your answers are completely confidential. This study has been approved by the WSU Institutional Review Board (IRB # 4922).

Please notice that on the last page of this questionnaire we ask for the name and phone number of the parent or parents you lived with while you were in high school. We would like to contact them to ask some questions. Your parent will not be told that you completed this survey. Nor will they be told any of the answers you provide, even if they ask. They will only know you took the survey, if you tell them.

We will not be selling anything or asking for money when we call. We simply would like the opportunity to speak with them.

Thank you for helping with this important communication research.

Please list any communication related courses you have taken or are taking.

CONCERNS ABOUT SAFETY

Please indicate how concerned you are about each the following things happening to you within the next five years? (Circle one from each line.)

Being mugged...	NOT AT ALL / A LITTLE / SOMEWHAT / QUITE / EXTREMELY
Getting a serious illness...	NOT AT ALL / A LITTLE / SOMEWHAT / QUITE / EXTREMELY
Being in a car accident...	NOT AT ALL / A LITTLE / SOMEWHAT / QUITE / EXTREMELY
Being sexually assaulted...	NOT AT ALL / A LITTLE / SOMEWHAT / QUITE / EXTREMELY
Being unemployed...	NOT AT ALL / A LITTLE / SOMEWHAT / QUITE / EXTREMELY
Being robbed at gunpoint...	NOT AT ALL / A LITTLE / SOMEWHAT / QUITE / EXTREMELY

SOCIAL ISSUES

Now please answer the following questions about Social Issues.

What percent of American adults earn less than \$8 per hour? ____ %

What percent of Americans receive some form of government financial assistance, often referred to as welfare? ____ %.

What percent of home break-ins result in someone being injured? ____ %

What percent of police officers use their gun each year in the line of duty? ____ %

What percent of women are sexually assaulted by a stranger in their lifetime? ____ %

What percent of women are sexually assaulted by someone they know in their lifetime? ____ %

What percent of Americans have been victims of violent crime in the past year? ____ %

What percent of Americans are mugged each year? ____ %

What percent of Americans are shot with a gun in their lifetime? ____ %

Do you or would you consider owning a gun for protection? Yes / No

Do you ever avoid certain areas because they are dangerous? Sometimes / Rarely / Never

Should more police officers be hired to fight crime? Yes / No

What percent of Americans are injured in traffic accidents each year? ____ %

PLEASE CONTINUE ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE.

FAMILY COMMUNICATION CHECKLIST

We are interested in how often different issues are mentioned or discussed between parents and children. Below is a list of things you may remember your parents mentioning to you or discussing with you, or warning you to be careful of over the past four or five years. Please estimate how often, if ever, either of your parents mentioned each issue below.

Never	Very Rarely	Some- times	Often	Very Often	
___	___	___	___	___	Avoiding dangerous neighborhoods.
___	___	___	___	___	Keeping car doors locked while driving in certain areas.
___	___	___	___	___	Keeping house/apartment doors locked when at home.
___	___	___	___	___	Self-defense strategies.
___	___	___	___	___	Curfew.
___	___	___	___	___	Not walking alone at night.
___	___	___	___	___	Not talking to strangers.
___	___	___	___	___	Not being alone with someone you don't know well.
___	___	___	___	___	Someone putting something in your drink.
___	___	___	___	___	Drinking alcohol.
___	___	___	___	___	Using illegal drugs.
___	___	___	___	___	Using tobacco products.
___	___	___	___	___	Safe sex practices.
___	___	___	___	___	Someone bringing a gun to a party.
___	___	___	___	___	Driving safely.
___	___	___	___	___	Drinking and driving.

PLEASE CONTINUE ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE.

MEDIA USE SURVEY

The following questions are concerned with media usage. They are intended to assess how much you use various forms of media, as well as the time periods in which you use them. Please give careful thought to each answer, and be as accurate as possible.

Please indicate in the average week, including weekends, how many hours of television you watch, and whether you watched yesterday, in the following categories. These estimates should include cable programming as well as network programming, but not videotapes.

- SOAP OPERAS: (All My Children, Days of Our Lives, etc.) Per week: _____ / Yesterday: _____
- NATIONAL NEWS: Per week: _____ / Yesterday: _____
- LOCAL NEWS: Per week: _____ / Yesterday: _____
- NEWS MAGAZINE: (60 Minutes, 48 Hours, 20/20, etc.) Per week: _____ / Yesterday: _____
- SPORTS ON TV: Per week: _____ / Yesterday: _____
- MOVIES ON TELEVISION (Excluding Videotapes)..... Per week: _____ / Yesterday: _____
- COMEDIES: (Frasier, Friends, Drew Carey, etc.) Per week: _____ / Yesterday: _____
- REALITY BASED PROGRAMS: (Fear Factor, Survivor, etc.) Per week: _____ / Yesterday: _____
- DRAMA: (Melrose Place, Providence, etc.) Per week: _____ / Yesterday: _____
- EMERGENCY DRAMA (ER, Chicago Hope)..... Per week: _____ / Yesterday: _____
- CRIME DRAMA (Homicide, NYPD Blue, Law & Order)..... Per week: _____ / Yesterday: _____
- MUSIC TELEVISION: (MTV, VH1, CMT, etc.)..... Per week: _____ / Yesterday: _____
- DAYTIME TALK SHOWS: (Oprah, Ricki Lake, etc.) Per week: _____ / Yesterday: _____
- LATE NIGHT TALK SHOWS: (Leno, Letterman, etc.) Per week: _____ / Yesterday: _____
- GAME SHOWS: (Wheel of Fortune, Jeopardy, etc.) Per week: _____ / Yesterday: _____

How much of your spare time do you spend watching television? (Check One)

- MOST OF MY SPARE TIME
- A LOT OF MY SPARE TIME
- SOME OF MY SPARE TIME
- VERY LITTLE OF MY SPARE TIME
- I NEVER WATCH TELEVISION

On the average, how many hours per week do you spend reading newspapers? ____ HRS PER WEEK

How many times have you gone to the movie theater in the past month? ____ TIMES

How many times in the past month have you watched a movie on videotape? ____ TIMES

How many hours per week do you spend reading magazines? _____ HRS PER WEEK

PLEASE CONTINUE ANSWERS THE QUESTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please provide the following information to the best of your knowledge.

Male _____ Female _____ (check one)

Current GPA _____

In what year were you born? _____

What is your race? White _____ Black _____ Hispanic _____ Asian _____
Other _____ (Please indicate)

Native (first) Language _____

State in which you grew up? State _____ Country _____

To help us reach your parent(s) please provide their name and phone number. Again, we will not tell them anything about your participation in this study.

Parent 1

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Parent 2

Name: _____

Phone: _____ (If different)

Finally, have you ever been a victim of a violent crime? YES NO (Circle one answer)

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY!!!

Appendix 6. Data Set 3: Survey for Parents

Name of Parent _____

Hello, _____. I'm _____ from the Murrow School of Communication at Washington State University. Earlier this semester your child completed a questionnaire and said it would be okay for us to call you. Do you have a few minutes to answer some questions? (On average it takes about 12 minutes).

Great. Before we start I must tell you that your answers, as well as your child's answers, are strictly confidential. Legally, we cannot share your answers with your child or anyone else. Nor can we share your child's answers with you or anyone else.

This study has been approved by WSU's Institutional Research Review Board. If you have any questions, you can call Professor Rick Busselle at WSU or the Research Office. I can give you those phone numbers now or later. (*Busselle: 509-335-2390 ... IRB: 509-335-9661*)

First, I have some questions about violent crime and your concerns about crime. Please answer each of these questions using a number from **zero** to **ten**... **ZERO** means "Not At All Concerned" and **TEN** means "Extremely Concerned." So using a number from zero to ten, how concerned are you about being the victim of some kind of violence?

Yourself → (Not At All) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (Extremely)
(N/A)

How about your spouse or companion? From zero to ten, how concerned are about **them** being the victim of violence?

Spouse or companion → 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (N/A)

How about your

Oldest Son (if you have one)? →	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	(N/A)
...your Oldest Daughter →	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	(N/A)
...your 2 nd Oldest Daughter →	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	(N/A)
...your 2 nd Oldest Son →	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	(N/A)

Now I'm going to ask you some questions about how often you have had conversations with your son or daughter about a range of topics WHILE HE OR SHE WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL...This includes VERY BRIEF CONVERSATIONS...(We're talking about the child who attends WSU).

I'm going to read a list of concerns people often have. Please indicate how often you DISCUSSED WITH OR MENTIONED TO your son or daughter ANYTHING about each OF THE FOLLOWING ISSUES.

The choices are never, very rarely, sometimes, often, and very often.

Would you say you never, very rarely, sometime, often or very often mentioned that he or she should avoid certain areas or neighborhoods.

Never	Very Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often	
___	___	___	___	___	
___	___	___	___	___	How about <u>Keeping car doors locked when in certain areas.</u> Did you mention that <u>never, very rarely, sometime, often or very often?</u>
___	___	___	___	___	Keeping house doors locked when at home.
___	___	___	___	___	Self-defense strategies <i>of any kind.</i>
___	___	___	___	___	Obedying a curfew.
___	___	___	___	___	Not walking alone at night.
___	___	___	___	___	Not talking to strangers.
___	___	___	___	___	Not being alone with someone they don't know well.
___	___	___	___	___	Someone putting something in their drink.
___	___	___	___	___	Friends drinking alcohol.
___	___	___	___	___	Using illegal drugs.
___	___	___	___	___	Using tobacco products.
___	___	___	___	___	Safe sex practices.
Three more of these...					
___	___	___	___	___	Someone bringing a gun to a party.
___	___	___	___	___	Driving safely.
___	___	___	___	___	Drinking driving (alcohol).

We're about 2-thirds of the way done. Now I am going to ask about your media habits. Please be as accurate as you can.

In the average week, including weekends, how many hours of television do you watch in the following categories (*including cable programming (pay-per-view movies), but not including videotapes.*)

- SOAP OPERAS: (All My Children, Days of Our Lives, etc.) _____ hours per wk.
- LOCAL TV NEWS: (Local) _____ hours per wk.
- NATIONAL TV NEWS: (Network or Cable) _____ hours per wk.
- NEWS MAGAZINES: (60 Minutes, 48 Hours, 20/20, etc.) _____ hours per wk.
- SPORTS ON TV _____ hours per wk.
- MOVIES ON TELEVISION, including Pay Per View; (Excluding VCR) _____ hours per wk.
- MUSIC TELEVISION: (MTV, VH1, CMT, etc.) _____ hours per wk.
- COMEDIES: (Frasier, Friends, Drew Carey, etc.) _____ hours per wk.
- REALITY BASED PROGRAMS: (Survivor, Fear Factor) _____ hours per wk.
- CRIME DRAMA (Homicide, NYPD Blue, Law and Order) _____ hours per wk.
- DRAMA: (Melrose Place West Wing, or Titans) _____ hours per wk.
- EMERGENCY DRAMA (ER, Chicago Hope, etc.) _____ hours per wk.
- CRIME DRAMA _____ hours per wk.
- DAYTIME TALK SHOWS: (Oprah, Jenny Jones, etc.) _____ hours per wk.
- LATE NITE TALK SHOWS (Letterman, Leno, etc.) _____ hours per wk.
- GAME SHOWS (Wheel of Fortune, Jeopardy, etc.) _____ hours per wk.

Thinking back carefully, how many hours of television did you watch yesterday? _____ hours
 Do you remember what you watched? _____

How many times have you gone to the movie theater in the past month? _____ times

How many times in the past month have you watched a movie on video tape? _____ times.

How many hours per week do you spend reading a newspaper? _____ hrs.

...How about a magazine? How many hours? _____ hrs.

Do you read the news over the Internet. No Yes → about how many hours a week? _____ hrs.

 How much of your spare time do you spend watching television? (Check One)

- _____ MOST OF MY SPARE TIME
- _____ A LOT OF MY SPARE TIME
- _____ SOME OF MY SPARE TIME
- _____ VERY LITTLE OF MY SPARE TIME
- _____ I NEVER WATCH TELEVISION

Just a few demographic questions...

In what year were you born? _____ (write in year)

How many other children do you have? _____ How many are girls? _____

Would you say your annual family income is (check one)

- ____ 1. less than 40-thousand dollars a year,
- ____ 2. between 40-thousand and 70-thousand, or
- ____ 3. more than 70 thousand dollars a year?

This is the last question... Have you ever been the victim of a violent crime? YES NO

Thank you very much for helping us. Do you have any questions?

Thanks again. We appreciate your time.