

Background

As the relationship of health and media becomes more clearly understood, support for media literacy education have been growing from prestigious organizations such as the the Centers for Disease Control, the Aspen Institute, the Newseum, and the MacArthur Foundation. There are promising signs that media literacy is a viable intervention strategy for positively impacting knowledge, attitudes and behaviors, and The Consortium for Media Literacy is a pioneer in this field.

In the only major longitudinal study of middle school students on media literacy and health produced in the United States* – supported through the Consortium for Media Literacy, among others – media literacy was shown to be an effective health intervention strategy that can be feasibly integrated into schools as an approach to improving critical analysis of media and media consumption. As research is addressed with other health subjects, the strength of confidence in media literacy is bound to continue.

The media literacy field is a global movement, a field of research and study, and a pedagogy. As the 2014 Aspen Institute report entitled “Learners at the Center of a Networked World” stated, “Technology has been the driving force behind dramatic advances occurring in every sector of society. Industry after industry has seen traditional business models challenged as customers connect directly with suppliers or one another and the line blurs between consumers and creators. The digital revolution has turned passive viewers into active users.” It is this technology revolution that underpins the needed focus on media literacy, since media literacy provides the foundational skills necessary to acquire, contextualize and apply content knowledge, insuring that media users are able to effectively represent themselves in a global media culture.

* Fingar, Kathryn R. and Jolls, T. [“Evaluation of a school-based violence prevention media literacy curriculum,”](http://www.medialit.org/sites/default/files/Injury%20Prevention%20Journal%202013.pdf) Injury Prevention, 2013, downloaded from <http://www.medialit.org/sites/default/files/Injury%20Prevention%20Journal%202013.pdf>.

Health and Media Literacy: An Intervention Strategy that Works ☐☐

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