Social Media Facilitated Sexual Assault

October 16, 2019

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Disclosures

I have no financial relationships with any commercial interests.

Objectives

The learner will:

- Review the literature on social media facilitated sexual assault
- Analyze cases for social media risks resulting in sexual assault
- Review social media screening recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics

Definition of Social Media

"A group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundation of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content."

Kaplan AM, Haenlein M, Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons.* 2010; 53(1): 59-68.

Merriam Webster Definition

Forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos).
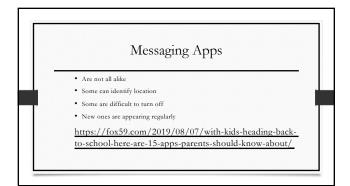
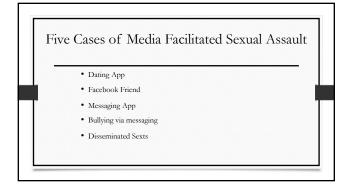https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/social%20media

Social Media

Example Messaging Apps		Standard/popular social networks
• Kik	• Nimbuzz	• Facebook
• BeeJive	• IM+	• Twitter
• Telegram	• Yahoo Messenger	• YouTube
• WhatsApp Messenger	• Apple Messenger	• Instagram
• Viber	• Telegram	• Snapchat
• Tox	• WeChat	
• Imo	• Zulip	
• Signal	• Monkey	
• Empathy		

14 Hazardous Social Media Apps
Kids Should Not Use

https://www.limevpn.com/hazardous-social-media-apps-dangers-of-social-media/

Messaging Apps

- Are not all alike
- Some can identify location
- Some are difficult to turn off
- New ones are appearing regularly

https://fox59.com/2019/08/07/with-kids-heading-back-to-school-here-are-15-apps-parents-should-know-about/

Five Cases of Media Facilitated Sexual Assault

- Dating App
- Facebook Friend
- Messaging App
- Bullying via messaging
- Disseminated Sexts

Dating Application
Case 1: When the App has GPS

- Chief complaint: A teenage male presents to clinic with anogenital warts.
- He disclosed having a sexual relationship two months prior with a person he met through through a dating application.

Dating App: Grindr

- Utilizes mobile GPS technology to help users pinpoint the location of other members
- Users log in to instantly find other members, chat, share pictures, arrange to meet
- Must be 18 years of age to download (patient was less than 18)
- Create a profile/tap on pic for info
- Profile lists refresh based on user location
- **Push/pull notification** (not signed out unless you specifically sign out)

Physical Examination

Finding: Anogenital warts

- Cauliflower-like appearance
- Skin-colored, pink, or hyperpigmented
- May be keratotic on skin; generally non-keratinized on mucosal surfaces

His Mother's Questions

- Was this a consensual relationship?
- How could she protect him? (Could she have/what should she do now?)
- Did he contract these warts from his rendezvous?
- What are her next steps to keep him safe? What about future adult relationships?

Warts

- HPV vaccine is not 100% effective.
- Cannot prove or use warts as evidence.
- Too late to collect evidence?
- Risks for other STIs assessed.

Other Apps with Mobile GPS

- Pokemon Go is an augmented reality mobile game that encourages you to explore the world around you.
- Share my location apps
- Fake GPS location spoofers

What's in a Photo?

- Exif Data---Exchangeable Image File Format
- Jeffrey's Image Metadata Viewer tool provides details about a photograph including time taken and location http://exif.regex.info/exif.cgi
- Have you noticed that Facebook asks if you want to tag location and suggests the place where the photo was taken?

Case 2: Facebook "Friend"

- A teenager accepted a Facebook friend request from a 20-something year-old male after seeing they had friends in common (on Facebook).
- He suggested she come to his house
- She asked her father for permission and her dad drove her to the house.

What Happened Next

- Dad dropped her off and said he would be back shortly
- When she got there, the male took her to his bedroom and raped her
- Dad began to worry and called her on her cell several times.
- Eventually she was able to leave the house.
- She told a friend who then told her father.

Case 3: Monkey

- A 14 year-old girl found and older male through the social media app Monkey.
- They began communicating with each other.
- He had sexual intercourse with her.

Monkey App

- The Monkey app allows "fun chats" with new people from all over the world.
- Users are randomly matched with other users for a brief, introductory video call. When matched with a new person, you can add more time or add the person on Snapchat to continue the connection.
- 12+ (too young!) and no age verification.
- Content is monitored (per App developers).
- No privacy protections; yet an anonymous environment.
- Pornography may be easily sent to children.

https://protectyoungeyes.com/apps/monkey-parental-controls/

Physical Findings

- Injury to external genitalia
- Bleeding
- Urine NAAT positive for N. Gonorrhea

Other Messaging Apps
Introduction to Kik
Case 4: "Kik Me"

- Chief complaint: A 15 year-old teen raped by an older male acquaintance.
- Other students at school know about the rape and she is being bullied at school.
- *Initial disclosure was to a "friend" on Kik.*

How It Works

- Download Kik and make up a username.
- Tap talk icon and type in a friend's username.
- Sync address book to Kik.
- Create groups.
- Tweet publicly, "Kik Me" with username - receive lots of messages and potentially porn.

What's Wrong with Kik?

- Reuse of usernames.
  - If you use your Facebook username for Kik, then others can easily find you.
  - Can't change your username. (Can only delete the app and start over.)
- Difficult to block someone on Kik.
- Can't log out of Kik – the messages keep coming.
- Kik users can reveal their username and invite strangers to "Kik Me." This may result in pedophiles sending them pornographic messages.
  https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/things-youll-wish-you-knew-before-your-kids-started-using-kik/

Research (Older)

Growing up with Media Survey: 1588 youth ages 11-15 (2006), half were female

- 15% of all youth reported being targeted by unwanted sexual solicitation.
- 4% in social media networking sites.
- 32.5% reported being harassed.
- Most adults disclosed their age.

Ybarra M, Mitchell K. How risky are social networking sites? A comparison of places online where youth sexual solicitation and harassment occurs. *Pediatrics*. 2008; 121(2): e350-357.

Research

Youth Internet Safety Survey 1999-2000

- 19% of youth who use the Internet regularly were the targets of unwanted sexual solicitation

Mitchell K, Finkelhor D, Wolak J. Risk factors for and impact of online sexual solicitation of youth. *JAMA*. 2001; 285(23): 3011-4.

Research

A retrospective chart review of patients aged 0 to 17 years who had medical evaluations at the Duke Child Abuse and Neglect Medical Evaluation Clinic (CANMEC) from January 2009 to April 2014

- 23/647 charts were identified with media-facilitated sexual assault.
- The majority of patients reporting media-facilitated sexual assault were females, between the ages of 11 and 14 years (65%).
- The majority of alleged perpetrators were described as unrelated males between ages 15 and 19 years (30%) or unknown adult age (39%).
- 65% reported use of a cell phone, 22% tablets, 26% desktop computers, and 4% laptop computers.

MacPherson S, Brown E, Herold B, Narayan A. Media-facilitated sexual assault in children and teens. *Clinical Pediatrics*. 2018; 57(11): 1349–1353.

Research

Type of Sexual Assault/Abuse	Percent
In person contact	78%
Exposure without contact	22%
Penile vaginal	55%
Penile anal	11%
Penile oral	11%
Touching	28%
Photos	40%
Sexual Videos	60%

MacPherson S, Brown E, Herold B, Narayan A. Media-Facilitated Sexual Assault in Children and Teens. *Clinical Pediatrics*. 2018; 57(11): 1349–1353.

How (Examples)

- Alleged perpetrator showed adult nudity over Skype social media app.
- Patient posted sexual photos of herself via Kik social media app and received sexually explicit texts, photographs, and videos.
- Patient met alleged perpetrator on Facebook and arranged to meet in person.
- Alleged perpetrator provided patient with a secret cell phone so he could arrange times to sneak in house.
- Patient used 9 unspecified social media apps to text and send/receive sexual photos with older men.

  MacPherson S, Brown E, Herold B, Narayan A. Media-facilitated sexual assault in children and teens. *Clinical Pediatrics*. 2018; 57(11): 1349–1353.

Other Potential Issues

- Children and adolescents are able to actively hide their online activity via popular privacy vault apps that hide sensitive photos, texts, or apps behind the disguise of a calculator (or other) display.

https://fox59.com/2015/09/04/some-kids-using-secret-apps-to-hide-photos-from-parents/

Research

- Sexting is a rising trend and is associated with increased sexual behavior.
- Teen behaviors seem to be outpacing development of laws to protect.
- Teen-to-teen sexting is a health and education issue that should be addressed at home, in primary care settings, and schools.

Strasburger VC, Zimmerman H, Temple JR, et al. Teenagers, Sexting, and the Law. *Pediatrics*. 2019; 143(5): e20183183.

Case 5: Disseminated Sexting

- A young teen disclosed forced oral sexual contact and the perpetrator video recorded the incident.
- The incident was posted on social media and sent to the victim's friends.

Non-consensual Sexting

- Disseminated sexts: This occurs when a sext has been disseminated against the wishes of one of the partners or without the initial sender's knowledge.
- Sextortion: An emerging phenomenon, sextortion involves the threatened dissemination (for money, sex, or more images) of explicit or embarrassing sexual images without consent.
- Teen sexts that have been requested or accessed by an adult (pornography).

Strasburger VC, Zimmerman H, Temple JR, et al. Teenagers, sexting, and the law. *Pediatrics*. 2019; 143(5): e20183183.

Guidance for Teens

- Incorporate sexting into your ongoing discussions with teens regarding safe sex and healthy relationships.
- Talk with parents about the different types of sexting: consensual, nonconsensual, and coerced.

Strasburger VC, Zimmerman H, Temple JR, et al. Teenagers, sexting, and the law. *Pediatrics*. 2019; 143(5): e20183183.
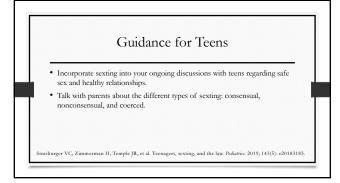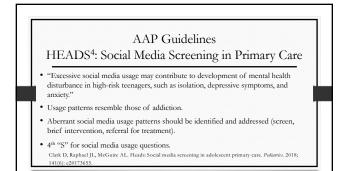
Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST) and Social Media

- Craigslist ("Adult Services," "Censored"), Backpage, others?
  - Adult Services shut down in Sept. 2010. Backpage seized in April 2018.
- "Technology has the potential to increase exploitative transactions, but it also has the potential to create new opportunities to intervene."
- FOSTA-SESTA https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stop_Enabling_Sex_Traffickers_Act

Thakor M, Boyd D. Networked trafficking: reflections on technology and the anti-trafficking movement. *Dialectical Anthropology*. 2013; 37(2): 277-90.

Anticipatory Guidance for the Adolescent

Table. The HEADS FIRST Approach to Psychosocial-Medical Issues of Adolescence	
Home:	Separation, support, "space to grow"
Education:	Expectations, study habits, achievement
Abuse:	Emotional, verbal, physical, sexual
Drugs:	Tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, others
Safety:	Hazardous activities, seatbelts, helmets
Friends:	Confidant, peer pressure, interaction
Image:	Self-esteem, looks, appearance
Recreation:	Exercise, relaxation, TV, video games
Sexuality:	Changes, feelings, experiences
Threats:	Running away, harming self or others

*Some use "A" for Activities

* "S" for Safety, Sexual Activity, Suicide, and Social Media

Cavanaugh R. Anticipatory guidance for the adolescent: Has it come of age? *Pediatrics in Review*. 1994; 15(12): 485-488.

AAP Guidelines
HEADS[4]: Social Media Screening in Primary Care

- "Excessive social media usage may contribute to development of mental health disturbance in high-risk teenagers, such as isolation, depressive symptoms, and anxiety."
- Usage patterns resemble those of addiction.
- Aberrant social media usage patterns should be identified and addressed (screen, brief intervention, referral for treatment).
- 4th "S" for social media usage questions.

  Clark D, Raphael JL, McGuire AL. Heads: Social media screening in adolescent primary care. *Pediatrics*. 2018; 141(6): e20173655.

All pediatric patients >11 years should be asked the following:

1. Which social media sites and/or apps do you regularly use?
2. How long do you spend on social media sites and/or applications in a typical day?
   - Concerning response: > 120 minutes a day
   - Practical tip: most smartphones track the total time spent in each application. Ask the patient if they would be willing to follow these instructions to get a more accurate response.
     - iOS instructions: Settings > Battery > clock icon > scroll down to "Battery Usage." May also download the applications listed below from the App Store.
     - Android instructions: Will need to download an app that tracks usage. Free options in the Google Play store include QualityTime, BreakFree and Checky.
3. Do you think you use social media too much?
   - If yes, ask if they have tried any strategy to remedy it.
4. Does viewing social media increase or decrease your self-confidence?
5. Have you personally experienced cyberbullying, sexting, or an online user asking to have sexual relations with you?
   - Depending on the patient, the clinician may need to describe what these are.

Positive "Screens" for Social Media Overuse/Misuse

- Craft a family media plan
- Follow up
- Referral for behavioral health interventions
- Internet safety interventions

Gaming

- Gaming systems are computers (with cameras and facial recognition-malware may be used and can enter your home network).
- Most games meant for kids -- like Roblox and Animal Jam -- have built-in features and settings designed to prevent inappropriate comments and chat.

Internet Safety

- App blockers
- Use of "history" on computer
- State Trooper members of FBI Child Exploitation Task Force (Computer crimes unit)
- Office of Homeland Security, Office of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)

- National Center for Missing & Exploited Children http://www.missingkids.org/home (Netsmartz)
- Sextortion https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/sextortion
- Child Victim Identification Program and Child Pornography Victim Assistance
  https://www.fbi.gov/resources/victim-services/cpva
- Cybertipline www.cybertipline.com
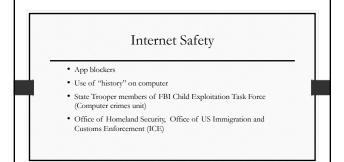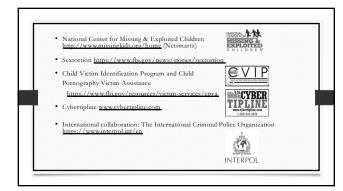- International collaboration: The International Criminal Police Organization https://www.interpol.int/en

Summary

- Even children and their parents who are open and aware regarding their social media use may find themselves in dangerous situations due to their online interactions.
- Children and teens (and even sometimes their parents) can be seduced by predators.
- Technology can aid a pedophile in finding the physical location of a child.
- We can do more to protect children/teens from online predators.