

## Texting 4 Health 2008 Palo Alto, CA

---

### Using Text Messaging to Affect Teen Health

Michele Ybarra MPH PhD  
Internet Solutions for Kids, Inc.

\* Thank you for your interest in this presentation. Please note that analyses included herein are preliminary. More recent, finalized analyses may be available by contacting ISK for further information.



## Roadmap

---

1. General indicators of text messaging use among US teens
2. Our 'philosophy' of technology and health (when to use technology, when to use traditional delivery methods)
3. A case study: TXTing 4 Bettering Parenting project

## Roadmap

---

General indicators of text messaging use among US teens

## Background: Growing up with Media

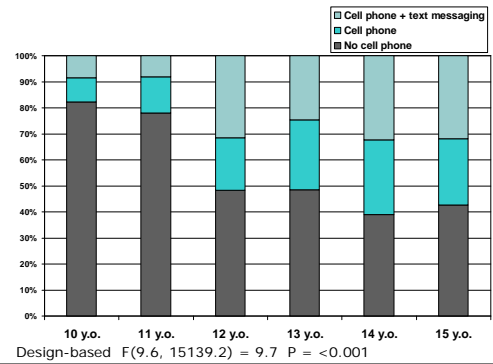
---

- National longitudinal survey of 1,588 youth
- Youth were 10-15 years of age at baseline
- Baseline data collected August-September, 2006
- Funded by the CDC (U49/CE000206)

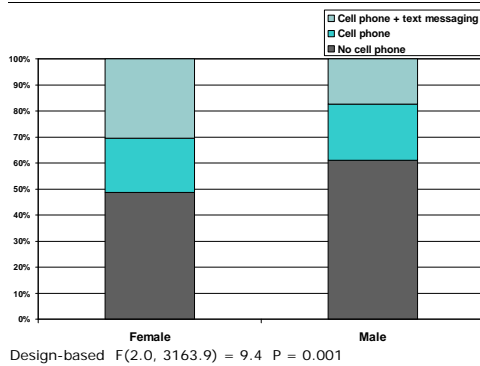
### Prevalence of text messaging

- 45% of 10-15 year olds own a cell phone
  - 24% have a cell phone and using text messages
- 13% report texting everyday
- 16% texting 1 hour or more a day

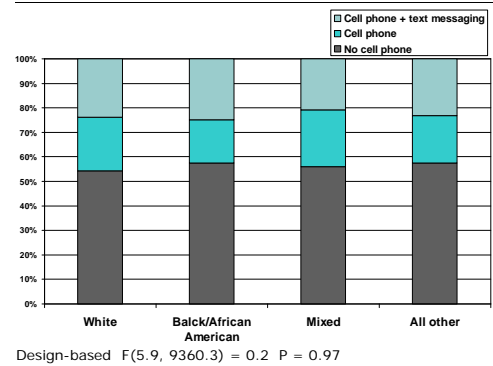
### Cross-tabulation of **age** and cell phone ownership (n=1,588)

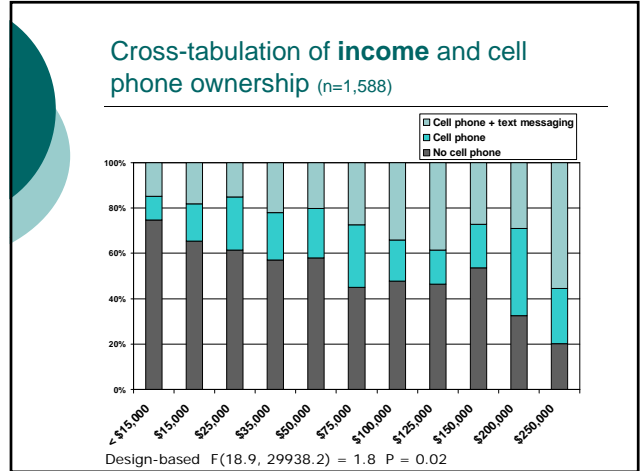
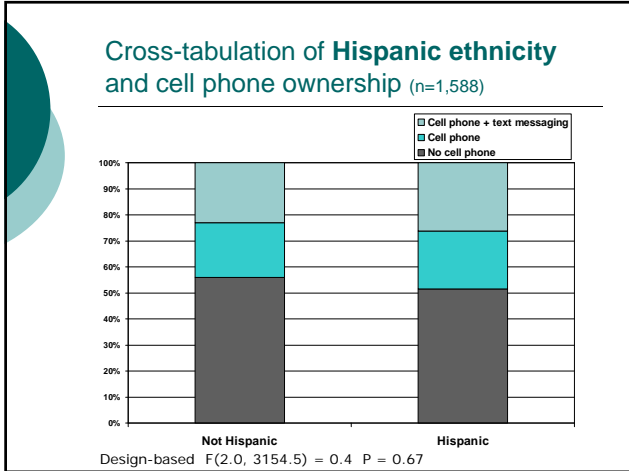


### Cross-tabulation of **sex** and cell phone ownership (n=1,588)



### Cross-tabulation of **race** and cell phone ownership (n=1,588)





- ### Benefits of text messaging-based interventions
- Girls (AOR: = 2.3,  $p < .001$ )
  - Older youth (AOR = 1.4,  $p < .001$ )
  - Youth in households with higher income (AOR = 1.2,  $p < .001$ )
  - Little differences noted by race or ethnicity
- AOR = Adjusted odds ratio

### Roadmap

Our 'philosophy' of technology and health (when to use technology, when to use traditional delivery methods)

### Advantages of technology-based interventions

---

- Scalable
- Cost effective (fewer personnel and infrastructure costs)
- Tailoring of the program

### Advantages of mobile phones specifically

---

- 'Always on' capability reach people wherever they are
- Active vs. reactive

### The philosophy of technology-based interventions

---

- In order to reach young people, we need to go where they are (instead of expecting them to come to us)
- Young people are on mobile phones
- We need to be on mobile phones

*Go where they are; use the technology they've adopted to promote the health behavior we want them to adopt*

### The philosophy of technology-based interventions

---

- Technology is not a replacement of traditional services, it is an enhancement
- Attract youth who would otherwise not utilize traditional smoking cessation services
- Not all populations are using newer technologies. Understand who your target population is and where they \*are\*

## Roadmap

---

A case study: TXTing 4 Bettering Parenting project

## Teenage pregnancy

---

- The US has the highest teen pregnancy rate in the developed world (Coren et al., 2003).
  - 41.7 / 1,000 adolescents each year (National Center for Health Statistics, 2004)
- Adolescent mothers and their children are at risk for a variety of medical, psychological, and social challenges (Committee on Adolescence & Committee on Early Childhood, 2001; Coren et al., 2003).

## Case study: TXTing 4 Better Parenting

---

Teen parenting programs struggle to (Gomby et al., 1999):

- enroll
- adequately involve
- retain
- implement services as intended by their original program models.

New delivery models are needed.

## Parent Express

---

- Developed in 1992 by Dickinson and Cudaback.
  - Evaluation studies have consistently reported increases in parenting knowledge and changes in parenting behaviors (Cudaback et al. 1985; Cudaback and Jenson, 1992; Martin, et al., 1992; Martin & Weigel, 2001; Riley, 1997; Riley et al., 1991).
  - Teen mothers increase parent-infant interaction (Riley et al., 1991).

## Parent Express

---

- 8-page newsletter mailed to new parents monthly for up to 3 years
- Age-paced to capitalize on the teachable moment

## TXting 4 Better Parenting

---

- We propose to use this text-based parenting program as the basis for a text messaging-based teen parenting intervention.
- 3 messages daily:
  - supportive (e.g., promoting self-efficacy),
  - parenting skills (e.g., infant feeding), and
  - 'from the baby' (i.e., helps the mother understand her baby's 'perspective').

## TXting 4 Better Parenting

---

- Parenting skills: Iern 2 recogniZ d hunger cry. She may nt B hngry evry tym shes fusy. She may nd burping, a daiper chng, or jst wan2B held.
- Supportive: B patient W yrslf. Ur nt solo n ur feelins n dis tym of adjustment wl pass
- A message 'from the baby': I lk 2 feel warm, +I don't lk heaps of noyZ

## Summary

---

- Young people are using text messaging (1:4 10-15 year olds)
- We need to harness the technologies they are using (where they are) to reach them
- Don't re-invent the wheel; adapt existing interventions for new technologies



Contact Information

---

**Michele Ybarra**

Internet Solutions for Kids  
Michele@ISolutions4Kids.org  
877 302 6858