

## **Can Media Have a Positive Effect on Teen Sexual Health? – Video Transcript**

(Highlights from Sarah Keller's Presentation at the "Taming the Media Monster" Conference, June 26, 2009.)

Sarah Keller: ...in our world and then, in adolescent sexual health we talk about entertainment media often but uh, most people think about news and many people are exposed to news on a regular basis. So working with the news through publicity, through public relations to get news coverage of your topic can have a positive effect. The only good study I found about this looked at tobacco ...to see if there was a correlation between adolescent attitudes about tobacco and uh, news coverage. And uh, this study found in fact that there was a significant uh, increase in perceived harm from tobacco and uh, a reduction in reported smoking behavior in the last month and uh, self-efficacy to quit in direct correlation with every ten-news-story increase in tobacco coverage. So uh, there is some hope there and uh, media advocacy has the advantage of sometimes being a...a cost-effective approach.

...Social networking sites, seems like a great option for sexual health media interventions, but unfortunately we have uh, no evaluation data that I know of that's been published to date on the effects of uh, using social networking sites for sexual health. We do have some idea that uh, campaigns can reach a large number of adolescents. The evolved condom cam, condom campaign by Trojan uh, somewhat accidentally attracted uh, over four hundred thousand viewers in a short period of time on Youtube and Facebook...The Trojan condom uh, producers were trying to uh, social norm condom use and I think they did a great job uh, but there's no data that I know of on that...

Jane Brown: Two TV networks refused to air that ad. Uh, so you just think about how often we see viag, ads for Viagra and Cialis and they wouldn't show the condom ad.

Sarah Keller: ...there are many uh, great interactive web sites for sexual health and uh, this may be one of the answers for educators in terms of, "What do we do with parents and teachers?"

Uh, we need to give more parents and teachers and youth access to lists of trusted recommended sexual health web sites that are available at their fingertips since the credibility of uh, online information is listed repeatedly as one of the primary concerns among youth and parents uh, alike. Using cell phones is a great way to reach youth, especially poor youth who uh, we're finding are only using the Internet for academics. Uh, they don't typically have the same, while they may have access, their actual use is much more limited uh, compared to middle and upper income youth. So uh, texting is also something that's a little more subtle and a mit, a little more available on the spot in the moment of an awkward or embarrassing situation. And uh, as the health department in San Francisco teamed up with ISIS...The Internet Sexuality and Information Services in San Francisco—the title is incorrect here—uh, developed an intervention called, "SexInfoSF.org" uh, that provides text sexual health uh, messages on the spot to adolescents who text in "sex info" uh, and they can get answers on the spot to their phones, which is a...a great idea. We have uh, found that there was very high use. I think they had twenty-five-hundred users in the first month and that uh, questions like, "What do you do if your condom broke or if you think you're pregnant?" were among the most popular questions. And uh, the nice thing about this approach is that it offers the veneer of uh, anonymity. It offers a protection from humility and it's uh, something that can be done rather subtly in a bathroom or a corner of a bedroom without necessarily having to let onto your partner what you're doing.

Uh, sexting is...the concern that Michael Rich raised I think is uh, should be our biggest concern that teenagers who are using uh, who are sexting, who are using new technology to portray themselves as sexualized people are now uh, experiencing some backlash in college admissions, in the workplace and even increased rates of predation. Uh, so they are at higher risk for uh, sexual solicitations from strangers and this is a real danger. And then overall, in terms of lessons learned when I look at old media and new media uh, evaluations, uh, they seem to be saying that interventions should be theoretically designed uh, self-efficacy being one of the key constructs that should be uh, promoted; uh, that audiences should be involved in campaign design; that uh, high-risk audiences should be focused on. New behaviors are easier to promote than cessation of old, just like new products are easier to advertise than sub uh, quitting substance abuse. Uh, achieving high levels of exposure is really important. Using new technologies and media advocacy need to be explored more. Uh, using sound evaluation methods uh, needs to be done more often and planning for sustainability, absolutely key. Thank you. I look forward to the discussion. (Applause)