

Native Youth Media Survey

In 2009, Project Red Talon collected surveys from over 400 Native youth (age 13-21 years) living in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, to better understand how they use media technologies (like the Internet, social networking sites, cell phones and text messaging). Project Red Talon is using this information to develop technology-based health resources for Native youth in the Pacific Northwest. The survey was anonymous, and participation was voluntary. For more information about the survey or Project Red Talon, please contact Stephanie Craig Rushing at: scraig@npaihb.org or 503-416-3290.



Media Technology Use Regional Results

Teens and young adults use a wide variety of media technologies, like the Internet, cell phones, iPods, and social networking sites. AI/AN youth in the Pacific Northwest use these technologies at rates similar to other teens in the U.S. Nearly 75% of Native youths surveyed by Project Red Talon use the Internet, 37% use digital cameras, and 75% use iPods on a daily or weekly basis.



Cell phone use is particularly common in the NW. Almost 70% of AI/AN youth reported that they use a cell phone every day or almost every day, and half send more than 40 text messages per day! This is similar to national figures - On average, teens with cell phones send over 2,880 text messages per month!

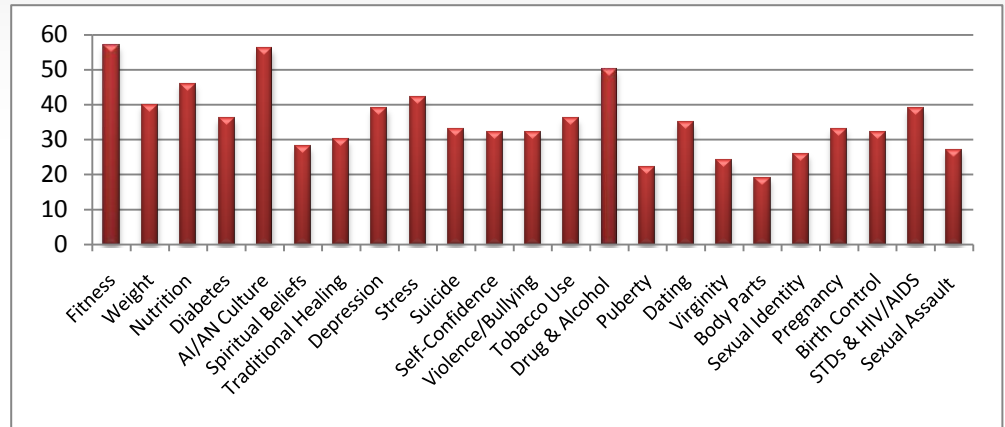


In addition to communicating through text messages, more and more young people are using instant messaging (IM) and social networking sites (SNS) like Myspace and Facebook to talk with their friends. Over 87% of AI/AN youth reported that they manage a personal profile online, 77% watch videos (like on YouTube), and 63% use the Internet to get news or information about American Indian culture or their tribe. One-quarter use the Internet for 1-2 hours at a time.



Health Information Needs & Preferences

What health topics are Native teens most interested in learning about online?



Teens and young adults expressed interested in a wide range of health and wellness topics.

What health topics do Native teens search for online?

- ✗ Respondents most frequently searched the Internet for information on diet, nutrition, exercise, or fitness (48%).
- ✗ About 44% of respondents had searched the Internet for a sexual health topic - like STDs, HIV, birth control, pregnancy, or reproductive anatomy.

Most Native youth use the Internet to get information on health and wellness topics.

Where do Native teens feel most comfortable learning about sexual health?

- ✗ The vast majority of youth (65%) felt most comfortable learning about sexual health from a health professional - like a doctor, nurse or health educator.
- ✗ Over one-third (35%) expressed interest in learning from the Internet or a website.
- ✗ And about one-quarter (28%) expressed interest in learning about sexual health topics from print materials.

Age-appropriate sexual health information should be made available to teens and young adults in a wide variety of formats.

Did you see Joe's MySpace post about binge drinking?
I had no idea....



Risky Technology Use

Friends with Strangers

- ✗ Approximately one-third (32%) of respondents reported that they've communicated with strangers (people that they haven't met in person) using email, IM, or chat rooms.
- ✗ And 14% of respondents have been contacted by a stranger online who made them feel scared or uncomfortable.

Does it really matter? Not all strangers are bad, but it's important to keep yourself safe. Don't give out personal information online that might allow strangers to locate you (full name, phone number, address, or postings about parties, events, or activities).

Access to Personal Information and Online Profiles

- ✗ Many respondents (34%) indicated that they do not restrict access to their online profile so that only their friends can view it.

Why restrict access? It's important to remember - Nothing is truly private on the Internet, but restricting access to your online profile helps keep your most sensitive information away from unwanted eyes.

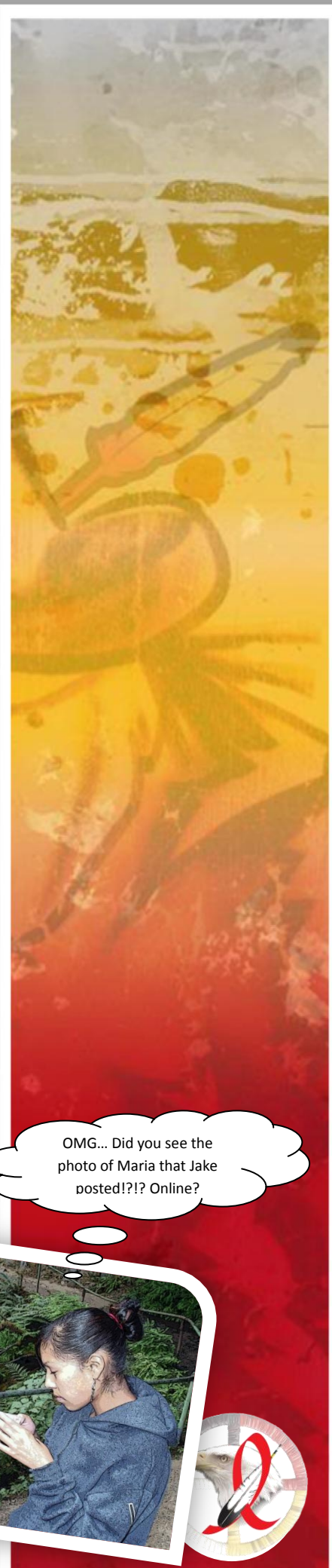
Sexting

What is it? Sending or receiving sexually explicit messages or photos electronically, usually between cell phones.

- ✗ Over half (53%) of respondents reported that they've *received* a sexually suggestive message, image, or post from someone else.
- ✗ And 20% reported that they've *sent* a sexually suggestive message, image, or post.
- ✗ These sext messages and images were most often sent to a boy or girlfriend (24%), hook-up (10%), or good friend (10%).

Why all the fuss? In some cases, sexting is illegal. If you forward a sexual picture of someone underage, you could face child pornography charges, go to jail, or have to register as a sex offender.

Teens in OR, WA, and ID have been prosecuted for sexting.



Tips for Teens & Parents

The Truth about Technology

- ✗ **Nothing is truly private on the Internet. Other people can gain access to your online profiles or any content you upload to the Internet. Text, pictures, videos, posts, tweets and other electronic information can be unknowingly copied or recorded, and shared with others.**
- ✗ **Deleting a picture or video from your profile, computer, or digital camera doesn't necessarily mean that it's gone forever. Once created, these images can live in cyberspace forever.**

- **Don't assume that anything you send or post is going to remain private.** Since anything can be downloaded and forwarded, ask yourself if you want the whole world (including parents, teachers, friends, enemies, future colleges, and potential employers) to see what you post. Your messages and images will get passed around, even if you don't think they will. And there is no way to "change your mind" in cyberspace—anything you send or post will never truly go away. Even if you delete something, there is no telling who has already copied it and posted it somewhere else.
Never take images of yourself or post messages that you wouldn't want everyone to see.
- **Nothing is truly anonymous.** Even if someone only knows you by your screen name, online profile, phone number, or email address, they can probably find you if they try hard enough.
- **Don't give in to peer pressure, even in cyberspace.** Many teens say that "pressure from friends" is the reason they send sexually suggestive messages or photos. It's easier to be more provocative or outgoing online, but whatever you write, post, or send will shape the real life impression that other people have of you. *Don't say or do anything online that you wouldn't say or do in person.*
- **Report nude pictures or anything that makes you feel uncomfortable to an adult you trust.** Do not delete the message until you show it to an adult.
- **Parents –** Monitor your kid's cell phone and Internet use, and try to know who they're communicating with and what they're posting. If they have an account on a social networking site like MySpace or Facebook, ask to see or join their profile, and talk to them about what they see and do online.

(Myths and Tips From: The Institute for Responsible Online and Cell Phone Communication - www.iroc2.org/page/parents-educators and SexTech - www.thenationalcampaign.org/sextech/)