

Food, body weight, and health among adolescents in the digital age

An explorative study from a health promotion perspective

The overall aim of this thesis was to explore adolescents' relationship with food, body weight, and health communication in online digital media, as well as how adolescents experience participating in a health promotion intervention regarding food and physical activity habits.

Health promotion as a research area served three purposes: to inform the research questions, to direct the data collection, and to identify implications from the research findings.

Overall, the findings suggest that food is a significant means of adolescents' online self-presentation practices. Food imagery was most often communicated in a positive way, associated with commercial elements, and often depicted high-calorie foods. Adolescents with obesity experienced this user-generated food content as challenging for their weight management. These findings also question the separation between media and information content, as stated in the original definition of eHealth literacy. Additionally, the findings emphasize a need to explore the adolescents' own experiences of acceptability of using social media in health promotion practices, with regards to the type of social media and in what context it was or could be used.



Christopher Holmberg, is a registered nurse and also has a MSc in Public Administration, a BSc in Health Services Administration, and a BSc in Nursing. The research reported here has been conducted within Gothenburg's center for epidemiologic studies on mental health and physical health interacting over the life course (EpiLife). The data have been collected with collaboration from Gothenburg Pediatric Growth Research Center (GP-GRC) at Queen Silvia's Children's Hospital, and from the How to Act? research project.

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