Media Age in a Digital News Literacy

Listening, and speaking. traditional basics of reading, writing, and viewing visually representing have expanded the guidelines for production of media in a positive and communicate through their own activity, relationships, sexuality, and health, purchases, interrelationships, and effective users of changing technologies so they can make young people, in particular, to not only become more careful and values, but also to become creative producers of media to media literacy content to use information effectively, and that successful participation in the digital age entails two kinds of skills: digital literacy and media literacy. Digital literacy means learning how to work the information and communication technologies in a networked environment, as well as understanding the social, cultural and ethical issues that go along with the use of these technologies. Media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create, reflect upon, and act with the information products that media disseminate. Media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create, reflect upon, and act with the information products that media disseminate. These literacy skills focus on helping young people, in particular, to not only become more careful and critical consumers of media messages and effective use of changing technologies so they can make more informed choices about their health, purchases, interrelationships, and values, but also to become creative producers of media to more effectively communicate their thinking, ideas, and priorities. Media literacy programs in school, health, and community groups help young people to examine media messages about tobacco, alcohol and other drugs, nutrition, physical activity, relationships, sexuality, and violence. Many schools, agencies, and community organizations use integrating media literacy content and strategies into their curricula and prevention programs to help counteract the pervasive and often negative influence of the mass media and to provide opportunities for young people to express themselves and communicate through their own production of media in a positive manner. Both the IRA and NCTE have expanded the guidelines for developing a literate person to include viewing and visually representing as two additional key literacy skills to the traditional bases of reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

News Literacy in a Digital Media Age

News literacy is the ability to “separate legitimate news accounts from misinformation, propaganda, spin, and uninformed assertions,” essential skills in finding reliable information as citizens in the information age. The Knight Commission recognized that people need tools, skills and understanding to use information effectively, and that successful participation in the digital age entails two kinds of skills: digital literacy and media literacy. Digital literacy means learning how to work the information and communication technologies in a networked environment, as well as understanding the social, cultural and ethical issues that go along with the use of these technologies. Media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create, reflect upon, and act with the information products that media disseminate.

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Topics Include:

- News Literacy and its Importance in an Election Year
- What is Media/Digital Literacy? A Primer for Teachers, Parents, and the Public
- The Mass Media and Young Children—A Pediatrician’s View
- Powerful Media Images of Females and Males: Implications for Our Youth
- Media Literacy Research—What it Shows, What it Doesn’t, and What is Needed!
- Media-Related Issues in Health and Community Services
- The Role of Social Media in the Lives of Young People
- Media Production—The Attractive Challenge for Technologically-Savvy Youth
- What We Can Learn from Local and Regional Media Literacy Programs
- Helping Students Understand Their Pop Culture Choices through the Mass Media
- The Mass Media and Privacy
- Teachers Discover the Power of Media Education in Their Curriculum
- Media Representations of Alcoholism and Tobacco Use
- Using Media Literacy to Meet State Teaching Standards
- Media Literacy and Minorities, the Underrepresented, and Special Interest Groups
- Violence and Sex in Television, Video Games, and Films: Images that Sell—What?
- Let’s Get Specific: Media Literacy Classroom Activities that Work!
- Media Literacy and Developing Critical Thinking Skills—A Natural for Today’s School Curriculum
- Integrating Digital/Media Literacy in Teacher Education Programs
- International Perspectives on Digital/Media Literacy

Comments from Past Participants

“A terrific, thought-provoking overview of media literacy for beginners as well as extension ideas for those experienced in the field.”

“Really great conference and I was glad to see such a diverse group of people from various professions.”

“Excellent workshops, wonderful spirit from beginning to end.”

Spring 2012 Tenth Annual Northeast Media Literacy Conference

Empowering Children and Youth to Grow from Being Critical Consumers of Media to Being Effective Communicators through the Media
Why is Media Literacy Important Today?

Young people are bombarded continuously with mass media messages including over 1,500 advertisements every day, from television, radio, movies, video/computer games, Internet, music DVDs, billboards, newspapers, magazines, clothing, packaging and marketing materials. Increasingly, recent developments in technology have added blogs, YouTube, MySpace, Facebook, and cell phone text messages to the list. Many of the messages include much violent and sexual content that is usually attractive to young people as they are largely the intended target audience. Such daily exposure to the many forms of the mass media has a tremendous impact upon thinking, values, perception, and actions. Concern among parents, teachers, pediatricians, counselors, religious leaders, and health care and juvenile justice workers has clearly pointed to a need for open discussion, the sharing of experiences and concerns, and the planning of strategies to cope with the huge, and often negative, impact of the mass media upon our young people. Although much media content is negative, there are many important positives that need to be explored, not the least of which is the potential for today’s technologically focused young people to effectively and creatively communicate through the many media forms that are so attractive to them.

Our 10th conference focuses on the impact of today’s news media on our lives and the importance of news literacy to help young people better understand and think critically about the sources and quality of often conflicting news media messages.

National and International Conference Leaders

Headlining this timely conference are two dynamic keynote speakers:

Howard Schneider — a nationally recognized speaker, educator, founding dean of the School of Journalism at Stony Brook University, and creator of a landmark news literacy program seeking to have students across all disciplines become discerning news consumers.

Dr. Kathleen Clarke-Pearson — a distinguished pediatrician and expert on the impact of the mass media upon young children, a media literacy leader for the American Academy of Pediatrics, and AAP award winner for developing a statewide initiative to limit television viewing by children.

Special International Feature

Twenty-four international media and education professionals from 22 nations representing all regions of the world will participate in the conference. They are part of a professional exchange program sponsored by the U.S. Department of State’s International Visitors Leadership Program that is focusing primarily on worldwide media literacy efforts and entitled, “Media Literacy: Promoting Civil Society through New Media Technology”. The diverse group represents university professors, print, broadcast, and online journalists, bloggers and community activists, NGO leaders, and youth media professionals.

A sampling of fifteen workshop presentations includes: technology tools to enhance learning in the content areas, civics and social education: teaching and learning about digital storytelling utilizing online tools, Web 2.0 tools to enhance media and news literacy for the 21st century, the media’s increasing recognition and treatment of LGBT issues, and framing our perspective – the impact of photography on our world, also, toxic media – sex, violence, and trauma, analyzing media sports texts, Internet privacy concerns, assessing media literacy intervention, using critical media literacy in any K-12 lesson, and international perspective and programs in digital and media literacy education.

For an up-to-date list of presenters and workshops, please access our conference website periodically at http://medialliteracy.education.uconn.edu

PROGRAM SCHEDULE—Friday, March 16

8:00–8:45 Registration, Continental Breakfast
8:45–9:00 Welcome, Introductory Remarks
9:00–10:00 Conference Keynote: Howard Schneider — “A Report from the Front: What We’ve Learned Teaching 7,000 Students to Be Smarter News Consumers”
10:00–10:15 Coffee Break
Exhibits open 10:00–5:00
Film Screenings 10:30–5:00
10:15–11:15 Session I Workshops
11:15–12:25 Session II Workshops
12:25–1:10 Buffet Lunch and Exhibits
1:10–2:10 Keynote: Dr. Kathleen Clarke-Pearson — “The Impact of the News Media Upon Young Children’s and Youth’s Perceptions of Their World Today”
2:15–3:15 Session III Workshops
3:15–3:25 Break, Refreshments
3:25–4:25 Session IV International Panel
4:30–5:10 Summary Panel Discussion: “Promoting News Literacy as an Education Priority in the Expanding Digital Media Age”
5:10–6:00 Social Hour

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A Conference Promoting Media Literacy in Young People Today

Friday, March 16, 2012

A one-day conference for teachers, health care professionals, counselors and prevention specialists, media leaders, parents, and others interested in exploring the great impact of today’s mass media upon young children and youth.

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