

Trends & TudesSM

4 Volume
3 Issue

March
2005

Keeping you informed of current topics in youth and education research.

Contents

Children's Reactions to Tragedy.....	1-3
Editorial: Our Take On It.....	2-5
Recent Research for Public Release	4
Trends & Tudes Poll Vault	4
What Do Kids and Teens Think?	5
Get Smart!.....	5
CollegePulse.....	5
AutoYOUTH SM	6
DistrictWISE	6
Contact Us	6

EDITORS

Kelly Bagnaschi

Senior Research Assistant
Youth and Education Research

Dana Markow, Ph.D.

Senior Director
Youth and Education Research



YOUTH AND EDUCATION
The Harris Poll® PEOPLE

Children's Reactions to Tragedy

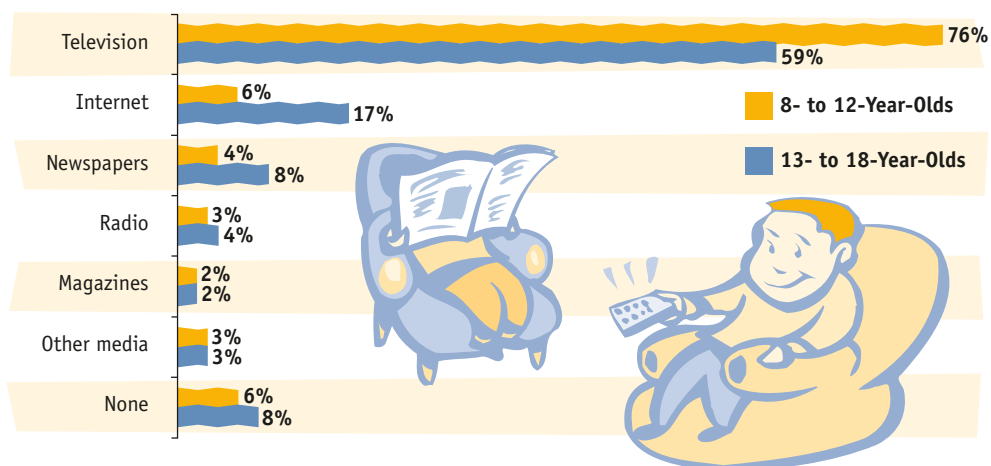
The recent earthquake and resulting tsunami in Southeast Asia is another example of a large-scale tragedy whose devastating effects have confronted kids and teens in the United States. Several aspects of the disaster may have heightened its impact on American youth. The timing of the tsunami on the day after Christmas meant that most children were on vacation and had greater access to media during the height of the coverage. In addition, news stories particularly focused on the suffering of families, with children accounting for a disproportionate number of the dead or lost. To better understand U.S. tweens' and teens' reactions to the earthquake and tsunami, we conducted a poll of 8- to 18-year-olds a few weeks after the tsunami occurred.

Many children (68%) told us they had been closely following the news about the tsunami. Only 7% said they were not following the news about the event at all. Both tweens and teens – girls and boys – reported a similar level of attention to the coverage of this event. Television was their primary media source for this information. However, nearly two in ten teens (17%) reported that they relied on the Internet the most (compared to only 6% of tweens).

Did children feel oversaturated by the media coverage? Overall, the answer was no. Tweens and teens did not think that the coverage was excessive. Just over half of youth (54%) thought that the media was paying the right amount of attention to the tsunami story with only 11% reporting that the media should be paying less attention.

Main Media Source for Tsunami Information

"What have you relied on most for information about the recent earthquake and tsunami that struck parts of Asia?"



Source: Harris Interactive YouthQuerySM, January 19-24, 2005; n=1,251.

Continued on Page 2

Continued from Page 1

Editorial: Our Take On It

Dana Markow, Ph.D.

Senior Director

Youth and Education Research

What prompts a person – child, teen or adult – to help another person in need? One important factor is empathy, the ability to share someone else’s emotional perspective. Even young infants are capable of displaying a rudimentary empathy. The ability to empathize undergoes developmental changes during childhood, but what also changes throughout a person’s lifetime are the types of actions a person takes as a result of a feeling of empathy. Additional factors motivating people to help others are their sense of morality and their belief systems (religious, political, etc.). These systems can differ by culture, and that culture can be defined by a nation, by a religion or even by a generational divide.

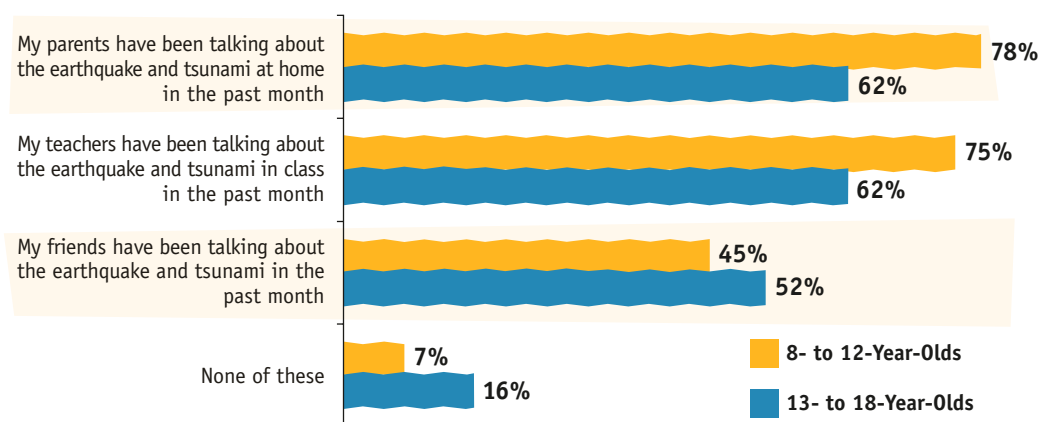
Today’s youth are primarily part of Generation Y (also known as Echo Boomers or Millennials). One characteristic of this generation is its group and community orientation; this is a marked contrast to the individualistic and disaffected description of the preceding generation, Generation X. The poll results discussed in this issue of *Trends & Tudes* show that most tweens and teens have been closely following the news about the recent tsunami tragedy and that a majority have also taken

Continued on Page 3

Of course, media are not children’s only source of information about the tsunami. Nine in ten youth (88%) reported that their parents, teachers or friends had been talking about the event during the past month. The tsunami was more likely to be a source of discussion among parents (69%) and teachers (68%) than among friends (49%). Age differences did come into play. Teens were more likely than tweens to report that their friends had been talking about the tsunami (52% vs. 45%). In contrast, more tweens than teens reported that parents (78% vs. 62%) and teachers (75% vs. 62%) had discussed this event.

Who’s Talking About the Tsunami?

“Which of these statements is true for you?”

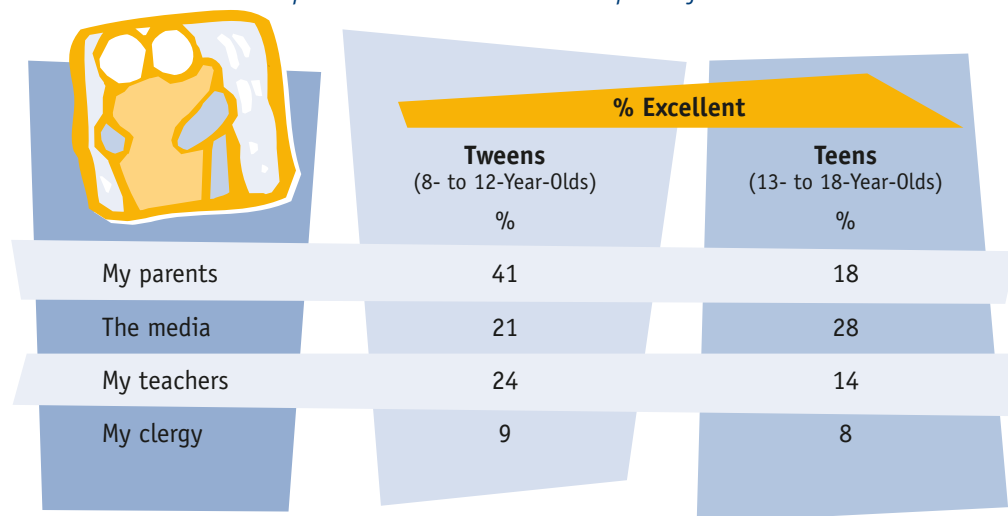


Source: Harris Interactive YouthQuerySM, January 19-24, 2005; n=1,251.

Tweens and teens also differed in their evaluation of the support they had received in coming to terms with the tragedy. Tweens gave their highest ratings to their parents for helping them understand and deal with the earthquake and tsunami, with teachers in distant second place (41% vs. 24%). Surprisingly, teens gave their highest ratings to the media, while parents came in second (28% vs. 18%).

Ratings of Support

“How would you rate the job the following people have done in helping you understand and deal with the recent earthquake and tsunami that struck parts of Asia?”



Source: Harris Interactive YouthQuerySM, January 19-24, 2005; n=1,251.

Continued on Page 3

Continued from Page 2

some action available to them to help the relief effort (making donations, assisting with collections or praying). Given their own actions, what are tweens' and teens' views on the actions taken by those individuals and groups around them? We asked 8- to 18-year-olds their opinions about the way America and its institutions are reacting to the December earthquake and tsunami. Similar questions were also asked of adults, who represent several generations among them. A comparison of these results offers interesting insights into multigenerational similarities and differences.

We asked kids and adults¹ what they thought of the U.S. response to the tragedy. Half of 8- to 18-year-olds (48%) say that Americans are doing all that they should to help the victims of the tsunami, compared to 29% who say that Americans should be doing more. Overall, even more adults feel that America's response was sufficient. Two-thirds of adults (66%) feel that Americans are doing all they should, compared to 19% who say Americans should be doing more. However, the adults' view is not monolithic; generational differences exist. The youngest adults (aged 18 to 27) are also the oldest portion of Gen Y. And, in fact, their views are more in line with those of the tweens and teens with 45% saying Americans are doing enough and 35% saying they should do more. In contrast, 66% of Gen Xers (aged 28 to 39),

Continued on Page 4

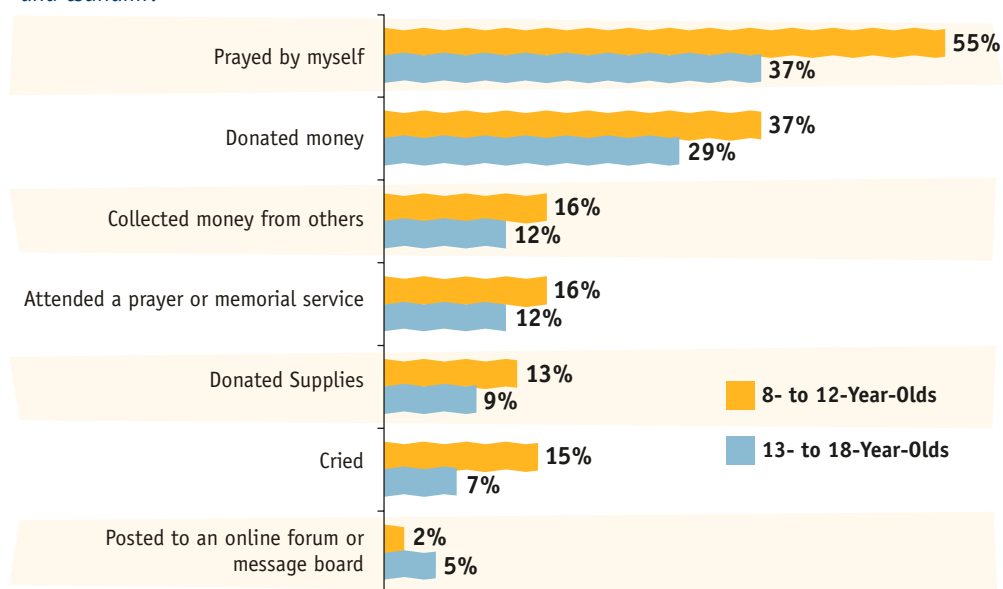
Continued from Page 2

How were children affected by the combined attention to the disaster from media, family and friends? A sizable group of U.S. youth was concerned about a tsunami occurring in the future. Two in ten (20%) were extremely or very worried that another event like this will take place. More tweens than teens reported this level of concern (24% vs. 16%). Tweens and teens showed a range of reactions to the event – chief among them was a private prayer. For both tweens (55%) and teens (37%), this response was more common than crying, attending a memorial service or making a donation.



Reactions and Coping

"Which of the following have you done or thought about doing as a result of the earthquake and tsunami?"



Source: Harris Interactive YouthQuerySM, January 19-24, 2005; n=1,251.

It is important to note that 61% of 8- to 18-year-olds felt motivated to take action and become involved in the relief effort by making or collecting donations or through prayer. A substantial number of these actions were monetary donations. One-third (33%) became involved in the relief effort by donating money and an additional 38% thought about doing this. This is a generation that appears to be both thinking globally and acting globally.

Find out more:

Read more about the results of this poll and its comparison to a poll conducted after the attacks of September 11, 2001:
<http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/allnewsbydate.asp?NewsID=890>.

Continued from Page 3

71% of Baby Boomers (aged 40 to 58) and 70% of Matures (aged 59 or older) believe that Americans are doing all they should to help the relief efforts.

Similar patterns are seen when asking people's views on the roles of U.S. companies and the U.S. government in the relief efforts. One-third (32%) of 8- to 18-year-old Gen Yers believe that U.S. companies are doing all they should, compared to 38% of 18- to 27-year-old Gen Yers, 45% of Gen Xers, 50% of Baby Boomers and 45% of Matures. In addition, 45% of 8- to 18-year-old Gen Yers believe that the U.S. government is doing all it should, compared to 46% of 18- to 27-year-old Gen Yers, 60% of Gen Xers, 68% of Baby Boomers and 76% of Matures.

One final thought relates to how a generation is defined. Although a generation is typically thought of as a 20-year span of time, other factors (such as significant historical events) also come into play. Thus, while the Baby Boomers cover a 20-year span, Generation X accounts for a 10-year segment of time. The names for the most recent generation reflect its sequence in the generations (Gen Y), its relationship to an earlier generation (Echo Boomers) and to significant events (Millennials). No matter what they are called, there is some consensus that the generation refers to people born since the early 1980s. But when does one

Continued on Page 5

Recent Research for Public Release

Most of the American Public, Including a Majority of Parents, Believe that Childhood Obesity in the U.S. is a Major Problem

Majorities look to both schools and the government to help fight issues contributing to the epidemic.

More than three in four (77%) U.S. adults, including 70 percent of parents and guardians with children aged 12 and under, believe that childhood obesity in the United States is a major problem. The American public also believes that the rising rate of childhood obesity is both a public health problem and an issue of personal responsibility, and many (86%) agree that this epidemic will lead to higher healthcare costs for all Americans.

These are some of the results of a Harris Interactive poll of 2,387 U.S. adults conducted online between February 4 and 8, 2005 for The Wall Street Journal Online's Health Industry Edition.

Who's responsible?

A large majority (86%) of adults believe parents who do not pay enough attention to their children's eating habits, rather than the food industry's marketing and advertising, are responsible for children's weight problems. However, many do not believe the food industry is exempt as more than two-thirds (68%) of adults say the industry's advertising directed toward children is a major contributor to the rising rate of childhood obesity.

The American public is looking to both schools and government to help fight the childhood obesity battle. More than four in five (83%) adults believe public schools need to do a better job of limiting children's access to unhealthy foods like snack foods, sugary soft drinks and fast food. In addition, majorities not only want the government to react to companies who mislead consumers, but also want the government to take some proactive measures to regulate food industry practices.

- Nearly three in five (68%) adults believe the government should take companies to court if they mislead children and their parents about the nutritional value of the foods they sell.
- 55 percent believe the government should play a more active role in regulating the types of marketing and advertising that the food industry directs toward children.

To read the complete release, including tables, visit:

<http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/allnewsbydate.asp?NewsID=891>.

Trends & Tudes Poll Vault

To view previous issues of *Trends & Tudes*, please visit our website at www.harrisinteractive.com/news/newsletters_k12.asp.

Continued from Page 4

generation end and the next begin? Are today's younger tweens firmly part of Gen Y or do they represent a transition point to the next generation? Based on the results to the poll just discussed, tweens' views are more closely aligned with those of the rest of Gen Y – both teens and young adults. But the transition point is most likely coming soon, and it will be an exciting time to watch as a new generational ethos emerges.

¹The Harris Poll #8, January 25, 2005, conducted online by Harris Interactive, http://www.harrisinteractive.com/harris_poll/index.asp?PID=538.

CollegePulse: A New Research Solution for Higher Ed Marketers

Harris Interactive and Hobsons, the leading provider of recruitment solutions to colleges and universities, have formed a strategic alliance giving higher education marketers more insight than ever into the college decision-making process. CollegePulse includes a full suite of research offerings by Harris Interactive, paired with the unmatched experience of Hobsons. To learn more, please contact Clay Bond, Hobsons National Sales Director, at **800 927 8439 Ext. 6048** or **cbond@hobsons-us.com**.

What Do Kids and Teens Think?

Each month, we ask young people what they think about a variety of issues, and share some of their open-ended answers with you. Have an idea for a question? Just let us know.

If you were principal of your school, how would you handle discipline for students who have broken the rules?

"In-school detention, make them help clean up the school or do other community service."

"Set up 'three strikes, you're out' system. Three warnings before any drastic measure is done."

"I would talk to them and have them come up with a solution."

"Only serious punishments ever affect students. Detention is not a punishment anymore."

"Different standards for different things. In school suspension, out of school suspension, lunch and after school detention, and ineligible to do school activities."

"I would make it a point to have the parents involved. If they are the type not to care then I would make sure the kid knew I cared and that discipline was a way to show that."

"Make them do something nice for the people they abused. Students need to be held responsible for their actions and not just given time out of school on detention. In school detention would also be good."

"It depends on the issue. Some of these kids should be expelled and never let back in. Strict punishment to help deter any further occurrences of these events."

"100 pushups and 100 sit-ups and 100 squats."

Source: Harris Interactive YouthQuerySM, February 17 - 22, 2005; n=1,207.

Get Smart!

Did you know that Harris Interactive conducts up to five free webinars a month? Spanning a variety of business issues facing a handful of industries, these 1-hour interactive sessions allow you to catch up on the latest research advancement, proprietary industry findings, and best practices. Register for one or more sessions at <http://harrisinteractive.webex.com>. Visit often as our schedule changes weekly.

Contact Us

To make suggestions regarding this newsletter or to discuss a business issue involving youth or the people and issues that influence today's youth, please contact us at **877 919 4765** or **info@harrisinteractive.com**.

You received this newsletter because you provided your contact information to a member of our youth research team. If you would prefer to be removed from our distribution list, please send an email to **HI_youth_research@harrisinteractive.net** with the word "Remove" in the subject line. If others in your organization are interested in receiving our information, please have them forward their email address to **HI_youth_research@harrisinteractive.net**.

For more information, please contact us at:

877 919 4765

or visit our website at
harrisinteractive.com

Media inquiries, contact:

Kelly Gullo 585 214 7172
kgullo@harrisinteractive.com

Nancy Wong 585 214 7316
nwong@harrisinteractive.com

AutoYOUTHSM Brings Together Youth and Automotive Expertise – With Powerful Results

In a joint effort between our Youth Research and Automotive & Transportation Research groups, Harris Interactive presents the first annual study providing in-depth market knowledge in this area. AutoYOUTH's study design and survey was co-designed with extensive OEM, advertising agency and supplier feedback, and answers key questions, including:

- How much influence do young adults and teens exert on their family's vehicle purchase decision?
- How are brand preferences formed with young adults and teens?
- What role do parents play in a young adult's vehicle purchase decision?
- What media do young people utilize – magazine, cable TV, network TV, newspaper, Internet and/or radio – when getting informed about a new vehicle?

AutoYOUTH surveys over 3,000 U.S. panelists each year from its own Youth and Automotive Insights panels, particularly U.S. Generation Y-Millennials from ages 13 through 30. To learn more, please contact us at 877 919 4765 or **info@harrisinteractive.com**.

DistrictWISE: A New Resource for K-12 Education Leaders

Harris Interactive's Youth and Education team offers a 360 degree view of the lives of America's youth. One of the biggest parts of any kid's life is the school environment, and we've worked with hundreds of school districts across the U.S., interviewing more than 75,000 students, 31,000 parents and 12,000 teachers in recent years to help leading school districts maximize their effectiveness.

This research is now the backbone of a new newsletter, launching this month. Much like *Trends & Tudes*, *DistrictWISE* offers a free monthly dose of insights, but targeted specifically to those in school leadership positions.

To read the inaugural issue, with a new perspective on school leadership, visit http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/newsletters/DistrictWise/Hi_DistrictWISE_2005_vol1_iss01.pdf.

To subscribe, visit <http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/districtwisesubscribe.asp>.

