

To: Joan Ganz Cooney Center
From: Rebecca Randall, VP of Outreach, Common Sense Media
Re: National Science Foundation Seminar on Media Multitasking

Common Sense Media is looking forward to participating in the upcoming seminar, and believes that the proposed agenda is very much on target with our core interest of exploring the impact—both positive and negative—of media multitasking on how young people learn. In addition, we hope to delve into the following issues (and/or propose that future research address these topics):

- Is the age at which children (e.g. at 7 years old vs 13) begin to media multitask a factor in determining the cognitive impact(s)? Is it advantageous or disadvantageous for children to first develop a foundation for concentration and information processing independent of media? Do children become more (or less) adept at cognitive functioning if they multitask overtime? Investigating these questions will be critical as the group thinks through the development of developmentally appropriate educational tools and curricula to promote the effectiveness of media multitasking.
- Is all media multitasking equal? In other words, do different combinations of technology (e.g. watching TV while doing homework vs socializing with friends on Facebook while doing homework) have different impacts on children's learning and their ability to focus/concentrate?
- In the long-term, how can results of these discussions and research be communicated effectively to parents and educators? Messaging regarding how adults can mentor and guide children in effective media multitasking—in both formal and informal learning environments— should be a priority, particularly if the findings represent a significant paradigm shift (assuming that the large majority of adults today see multitasking as a negative force in children's lives).