



News Media Exposure and Mental Health

What is the relationship between exposure to continuous news media and levels of anxiety and other forms of psychological distress among adults?



The Results

Increased exposure to negative news media is associated with greater levels of anxiety, depression, hopelessness, and general negative affect. These can lead to things like suicidal ideation, persistent and overwhelming day-to-day stress, and feelings of instability, uncertainty, and dread for the future.

Significant topics of negative news media:

- COVID-19
- Natural disasters
- War and other conflict

Media elements that worsen mental health:

- Negative and more intense language choices
- Fake and/or inaccurate news
- Problem-focused instead of solution-oriented

The Solution

On the part of the media, sticking to a fact-based model that focuses on examining solutions and avoiding inflating the negative can help mitigate the negative effect on mental health. Additionally, individuals can strive to maintain an optimistic outlook and participate in healthy behaviors such as physical activity and mindfulness meditation.