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Rationale for a Media Literacy Intervention for Parents of 5-10 Year Old Children

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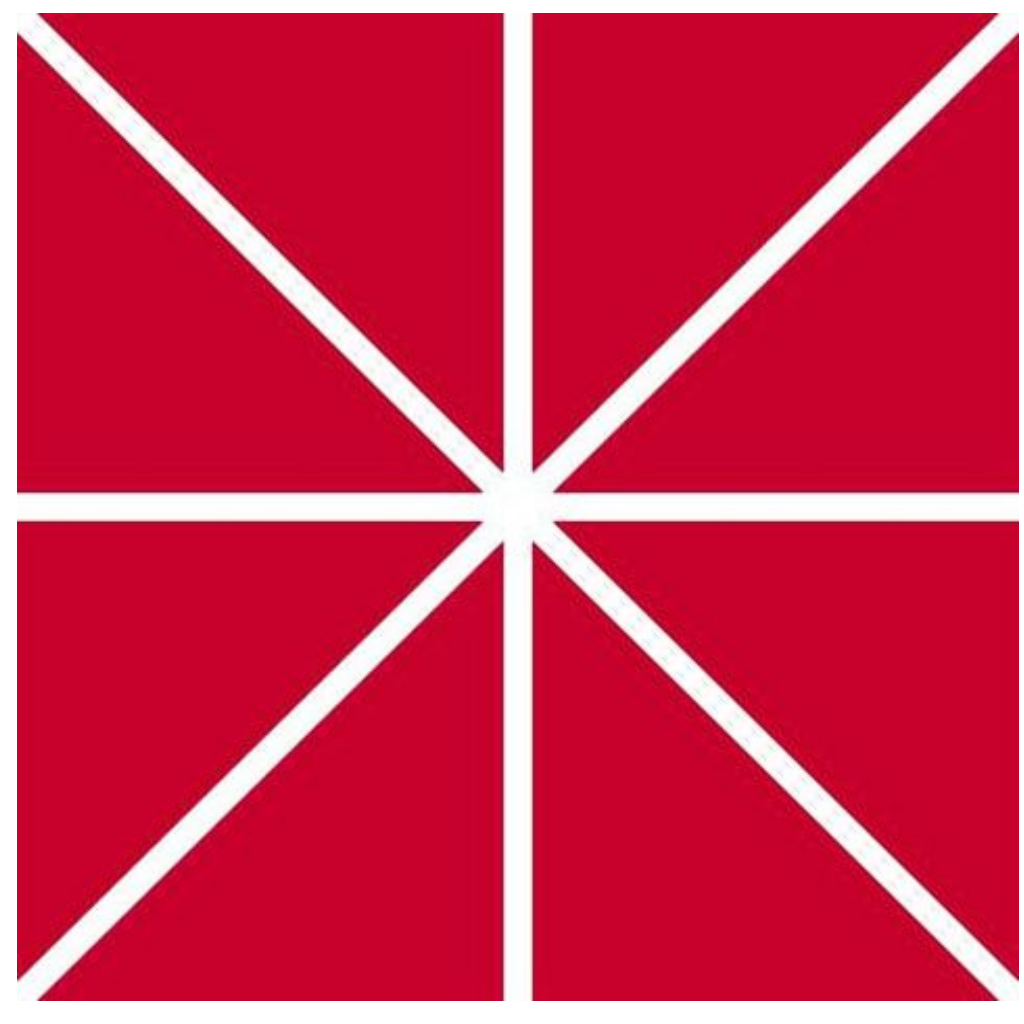
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Introduction

Children interact with electronic screens, media, and advertising at younger and younger ages, but there is nascent empirical research on how parents' attitudes and beliefs affect, and ultimately impact, their children's media behaviors. Guidelines for such behaviors have been forwarded by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). This exploratory study attempts to better understand how parental critical thinking skills, perception of media risk, knowledge of media effects, and media self-efficacy influence parents' mediation of children's media use and children's media exposure through the lens of media literacy, or the ability to access, analyze, and evaluate media.

Hypotheses and Research Questions

RQ1: To what extent do parents comply with the AAP recommendations?

RQ2: Which mediation strategy do parents engage in more?

H1: Parents' mediation of children's media use will be positively correlated with their critical thinking skills.

H2: Parents' mediation of children's media use will be positively correlated with their perception of media risk.

H3: Parents' mediation of children's media use will be positively correlated with their level of media literacy.

H4: Parents' mediation of children's media use will be positively correlated with their media self-efficacy.

H5: Children's media exposure will be negatively related to parents' critical thinking skills.

H6: Children's media exposure will be negatively related to parents' perceptions of media risk.

H7: Children's media exposure will be negatively related to their parents' level of media literacy.

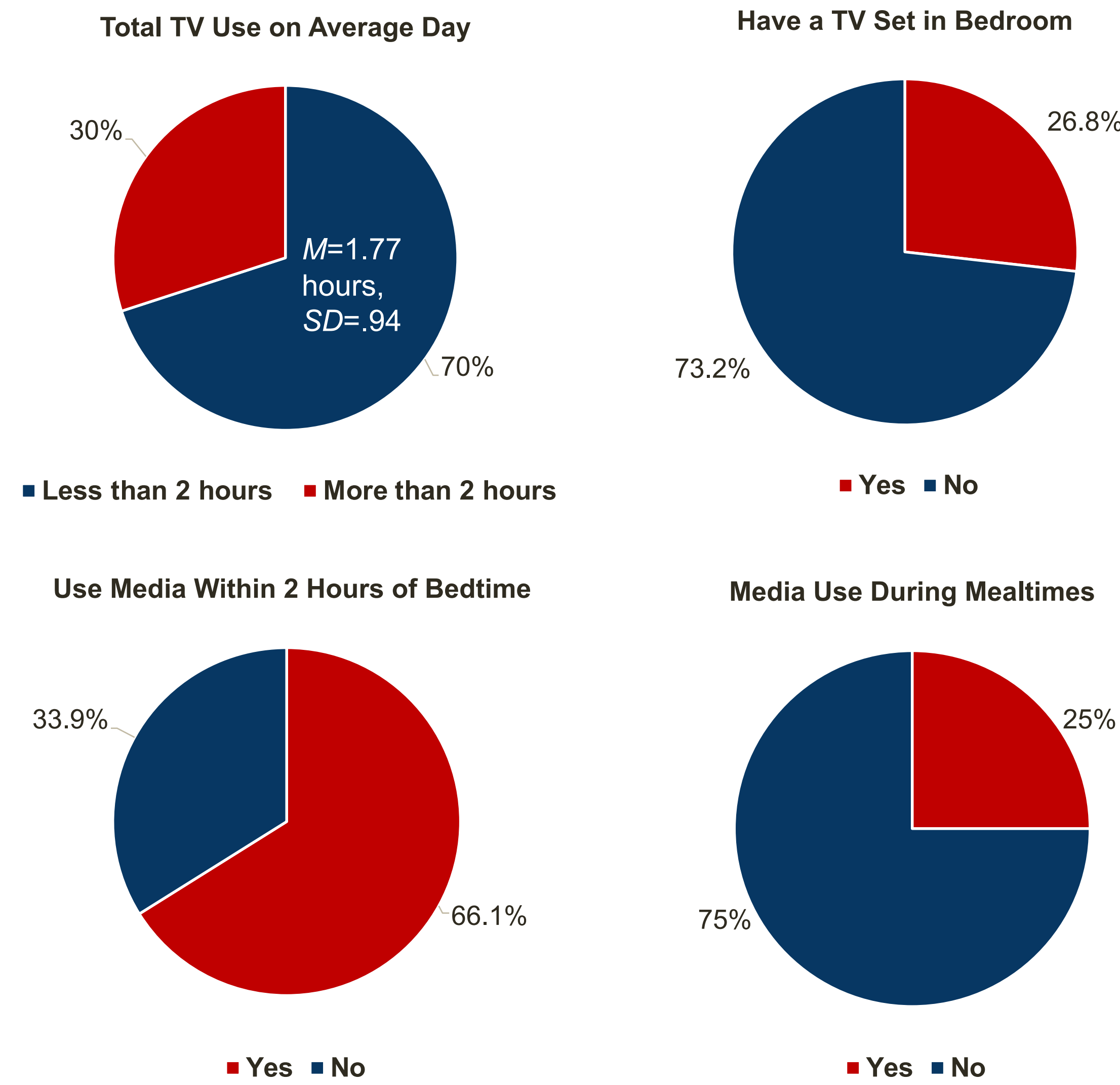
H8: Children's media exposure will be negatively related to their parents' media self-efficacy.

Methods

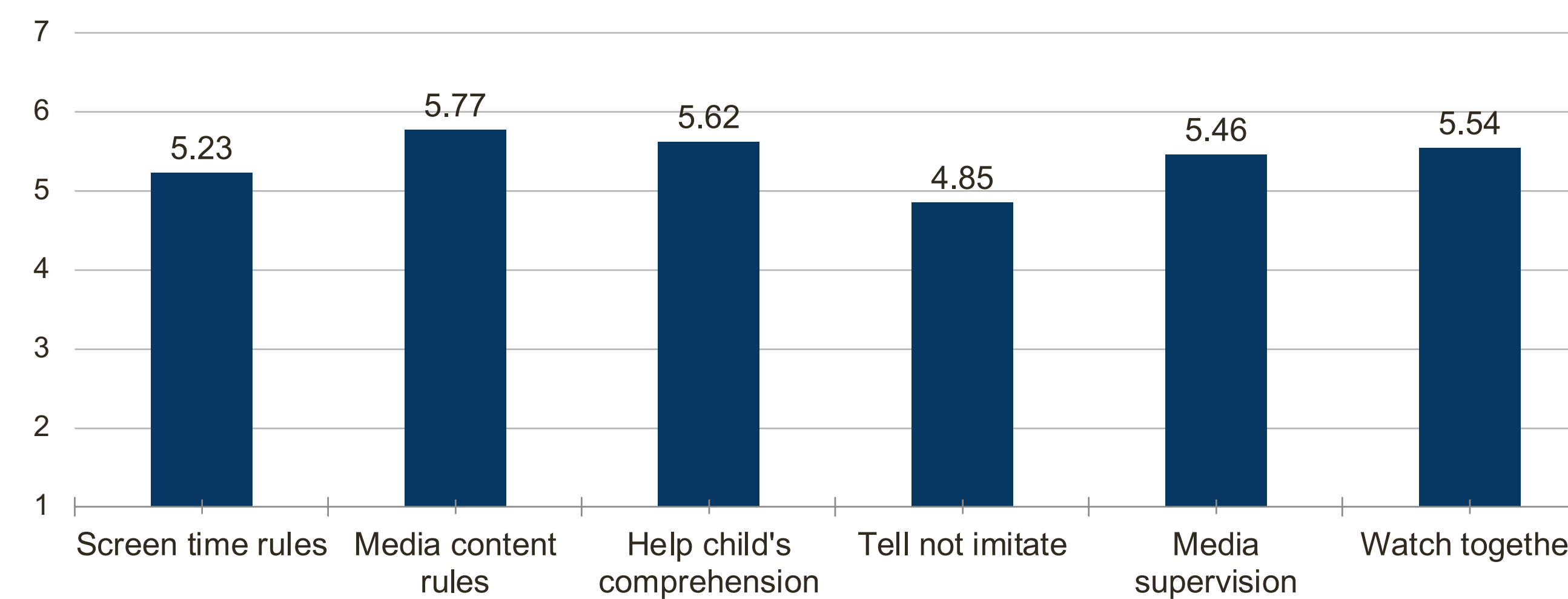
- Parent participants ($N=57$, 70.17% female, 35.14 years, 75.44% White racial majority) were recruited through snowball sampling and Amazon Mechanical Turk.
- In an online survey, they responded to questions about their critical thinking skills, perception of media risk, knowledge of media effects, media self-efficacy, mediation of children's media use, and children's media exposure.

Results

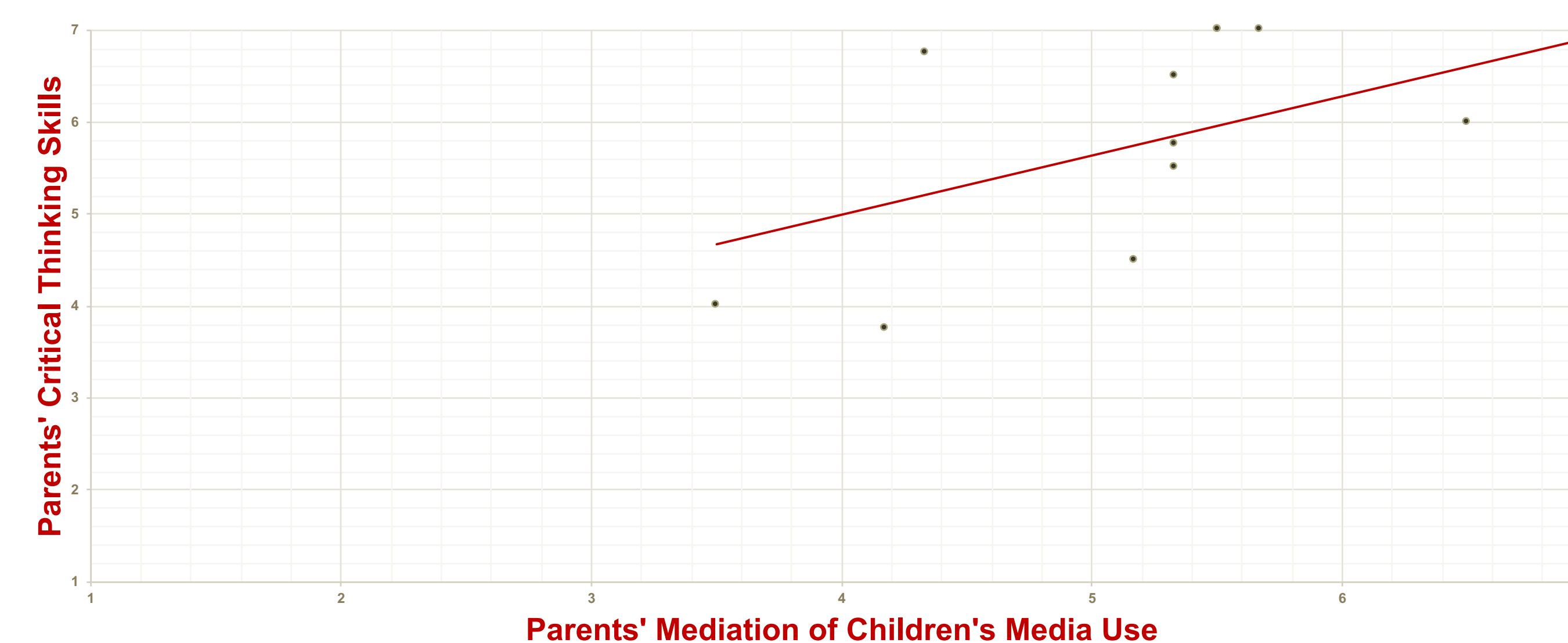
RQ1: **Blue** = in compliance, **Red** = not in compliance



RQ2: There was no significant difference between the types of mediation strategies:

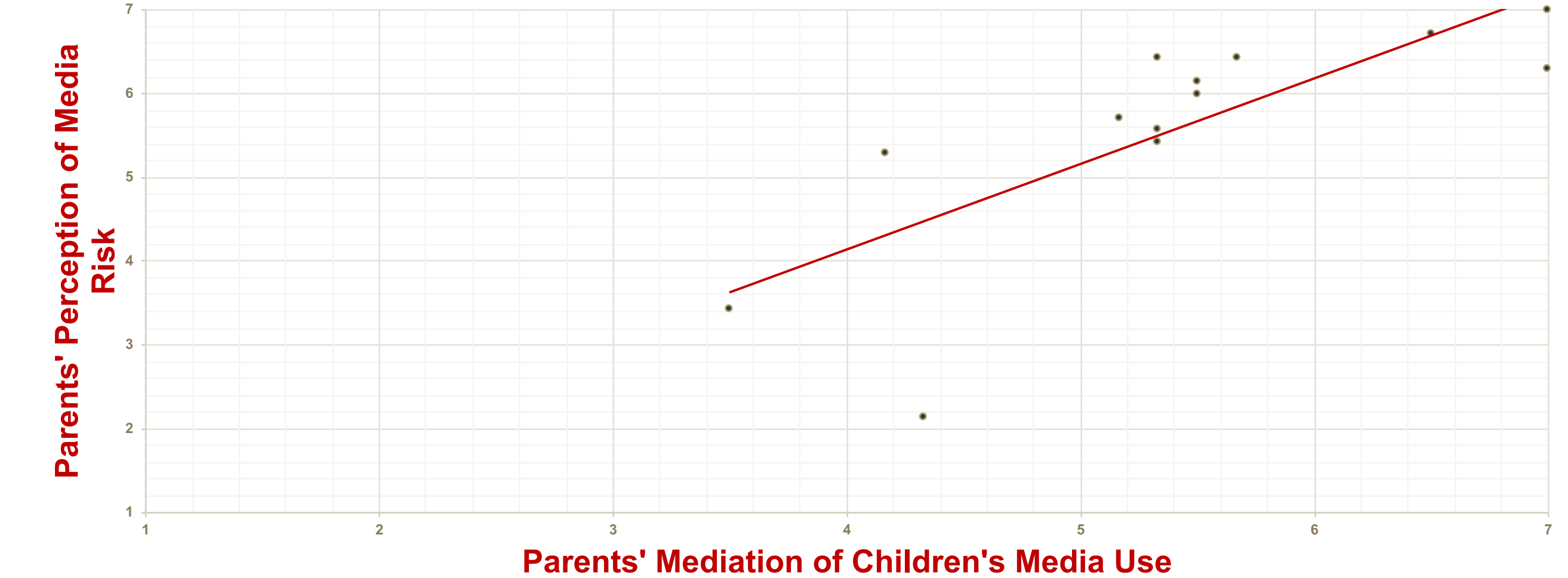


H1: Supported. Parents' reported mediation of their children's media use was significantly positively correlated with their critical thinking skills ($r=.57$, $p<.05$).



Results cont.

H2: Supported. Parents' mediation of their children's media use was significantly positively correlated with their perception of media risk ($r=.771$, $p<.05$).



H3: Not supported. There was no significant correlation between parents' mediation of children's media use with their level of media literacy ($r=.272$, $p=.368$).

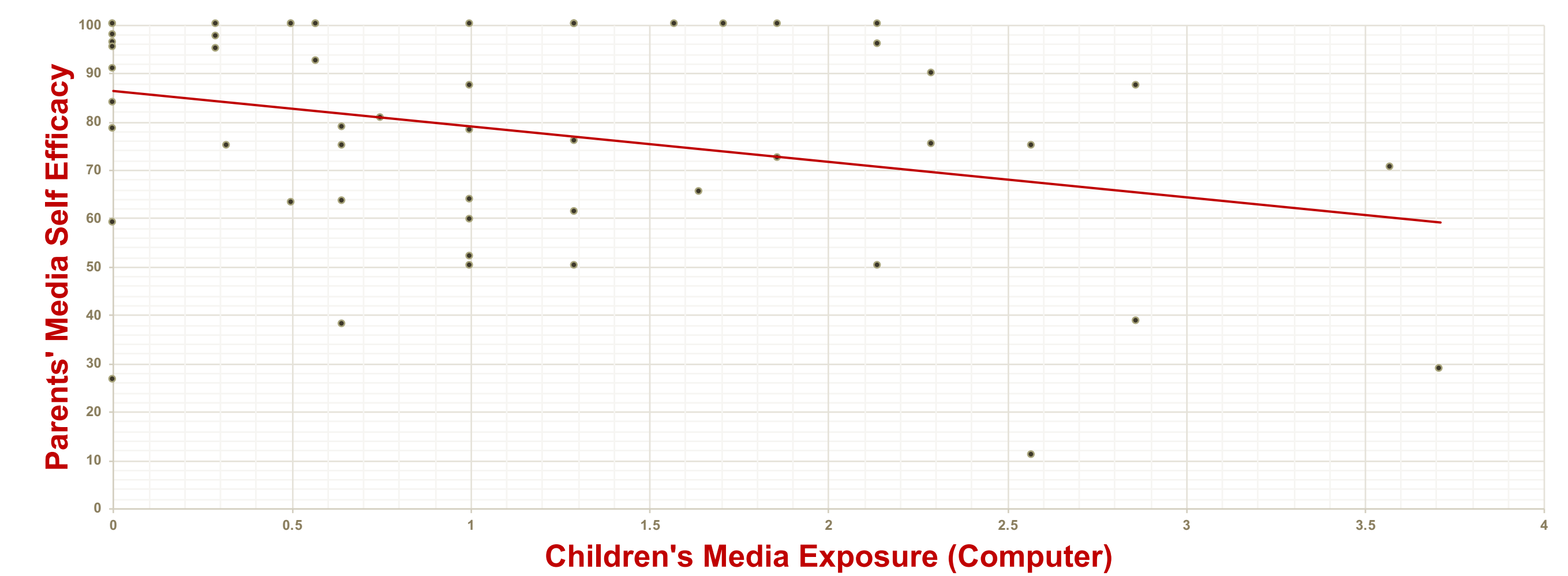
H4: Not supported. There was no significant correlation between parents' mediation of children's media use and their media self-efficacy ($r=.335$, $p=.263$).

H5: Not supported. There was no significant correlation between children's TV or computer exposure and parents' critical thinking skills (TV: $r=-.244$, $p=.081$; computer: $r=-.195$, $p=.167$).

H6: Not supported. There was no significant correlation between children's TV or computer exposure and parents' perceptions of media risk (TV: $r=-.120$, $p=.376$; computer: $r=-.099$, $p=.462$).

H7: Not supported. There was no significant correlation between children's TV or computer exposure and their parents' level of media literacy (TV: $r=.068$, $p=.617$; computer: $r=.098$, $p=.466$).

H8: Partially supported. Children's computer exposure was significantly positively correlated with their parents' media self-efficacy ($r=-.310$, $p<.05$), but there was no correlation between children's TV exposure and parents' media self-efficacy ($r=-.136$, $p=.327$).



Discussion

- Parents were in compliance with the AAP's recommendation regarding amount of screen time per day (two hours or less).
- Parents were not in compliance with the AAP's recommendations regarding not having a TV in their children's bedroom, not allowing media use within 2 hours of bedtime, and not using media during mealtimes.
- Parents appreciating risk makes a difference, but knowing things does not.
- As a result, it is important to not only educate parents, but convey the risks associated with noncompliance.