



Advances in Digital Health for Youth

2018 Youth Health Forum
eYouth: Maintaining safety, balance and health in the digital world


Presented by
Dr Brad Ridout
Deputy Chair
Cyberpsychology Research Group
Faculty of Health Sciences

brad.ridout@sydney.edu.au
@Cyberpsych_Syd or @DrBradRidout
sydney.edu.au/health-sciences/cyberpsychology

Latest stats on tech use by youth


- 85% of parents used screens to occupy their kids under 6 to get things done (1 in 4 everyday!)
- 50% of toddlers/pre-schoolers used digital devices on their own without supervision
- 43% of children regularly use digital devices at bedtime (1 in 4 of those reported sleep problems)
- 97% of households with children have video game devices (8 in 10 have multiple)
- 50% of parents play video games with their kids



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Latest stats on tech use by youth


- Over 90% of teens have their own smartphone
- 63% of under 25s report spending 3+ hours a day on their smartphone
- 52% check their phone at least every 30 minutes
- 53% consider their phone distracting
- Two-thirds of young people admit to using their smartphone too much
- 48% of young people agree 'living without their phone would be intolerable'



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Latest stats on tech use by youth


- Social media is the most important function for under 25s
- Facebook use in decline, embracing Snapchat and Instagram
- 20% of youth report cyberbullying as either a victim or perpetrator
- 61% of parents reported concerns with their child's digital device use



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Latest research

- Digital Health and Cyberpsychology research is flourishing at present, given the societal shift from reducing tech use to embracing its potential
- The following are 3 areas of research tapping into the power of technology to help support youth mental health and physical health



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Social media and identity construction

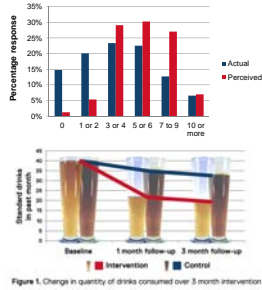
- Social networking sites have altered the traditional ways young people construct their identity
- People present their 'hoped-for possible self' (Yurchisin et al. 2005)
- High prevalence of alcohol-related content by adolescents
- 'Alcohol-identity' score predicted alcohol problem behaviours (Ridout, Campbell & Ellis, 2012)



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Social Media to correct misperceived drinking norms

- Alcohol-related content on social media found to normalise and perpetuate binge drinking culture
- Young people overestimate how much their peers drink
- Using Facebook messages to correct misperceptions among heavy drinkers lead to significant reductions in alcohol consumption (Ridout, 2015)



Group counselling on social media

- Youth with mental health issues seek info/support online, report higher than average social media use (Highton-Williamson et al., 2015)
- Kids Helpline (KHL) Circles responding to need for safe and anonymous online environment for connecting with peers and professionals for support
- Connects young people with others of similar age with similar problems
- Monitored and lead by KHL Counsellor



Group counselling on social media

- KHL counsellor guides conversation and provides solution-focused therapy
- Psychoeducation modules on various topics
- Improved coping skills and reduced feelings of stigma (Campbell et al., in press)



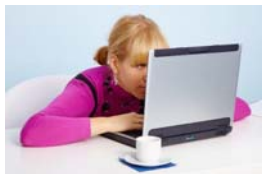
Virtual Reality for mindfulness

- Mindfulness effective for reduction in symptoms of stress, anxiety and depression (Hoffman et al., 2015; Valmaggia et al., 2016)
- Emerging evidence for feasibility of using VR in mindfulness exercises (Navarro-Haro et al., 2017; Naylor et al., in press)
- Portable headsets will enable smartphones to be used for 'quick fix' of VR mindfulness



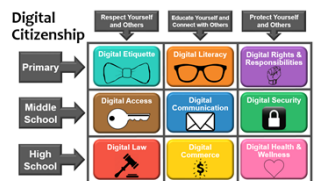
Future challenges in digital health

1. Ergonomic use of technology
 - Positioning and posture
 - Impact on eyesight
 - Address from a young age
2. Parents keeping up to date
 - Developments in digital devices and their functions
 - Risks and benefits
 - Health relationship with tech approached as a family
 - Curiosity rather than judgment



Future challenges in digital health

3. The need for Digital Citizenship education programs that include:
 - Safety and security
 - Etiquette & communication
 - Law and ethics
 - Digital literacy
 - Digital health and wellness
 - e.g. eSmart Digital Licence by Alannah & Madeline Foundation

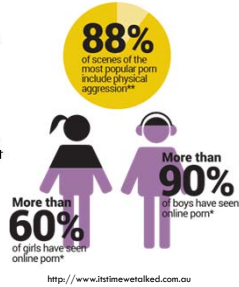


<http://www.digitalcitizenship.net/nine-elements.html>

Future challenges in digital health

4. Sexual education around online pornography

- Average of first exposure decreasing, before typical sex education begins
- May distort understanding and expectations of what is acceptable, rewarding and normative
- Impact on mental health, body image, addiction, health identity development
- Need to understand healthy and unhealthy use
- No effective ways to completely prevent access, so need to educate



Conclusion

- We can become overly focused the 'technology' being used, and forget about sociological and psychological factors
- We have a responsibility to young people to upskill our knowledge of technology
- Just because a treatment works offline, doesn't mean it will be effective online
- Standards needed to ensure digital tools are evidence-based and do no harm



**Cyberpsychology
Research
Group**

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@DrBradRidout
@Cyberpsych_Syd

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