Reflections on social media participation in young people and parents during the COVID-19 global pandemic: towards an understanding of the barriers and facilitators to use that support wellbeing

Lauren Amy Yates

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UCL Doctorate in Clinical Psychology

Thesis declaration form

I confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. When information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Signature: 

Name: Lauren Amy Yates

Date: 16th June 2021
Overview

Part one is a scoping review of interventions or programmes available in school settings to support young people to use social media in ways that promote their mental health and wellbeing. The review examines focused and broad wellbeing interventions for content on social media use and includes a consultation with study authors. The review concludes there is currently a paucity of such interventions and offers suggestions for future work to develop provision of school-based support for young people around social media use in relation to wellbeing.

Part two is a qualitative interview study exploring the experiences and perspectives of young people and parents of social media use during the COVID-19 pandemic and seeks to better understand how young people can use social media in ways that support wellbeing. This work is intended to feed into future projects to develop an intervention/education package or support strategies for young people, which may include parents.

Part three is critical appraisal of the research process. It presents reflections on the personal and professional experiences that influenced the researcher’s interest in social media use amongst young people, approach to the work, and challenges of conducting research in the context of a pandemic. Key learnings for clinical practice and further development of research skills are discussed. Finally, a proposal for school-based support to use social media in a way that promotes wellbeing led by young people is presented.
Impact statement

This study offers insight into the experiences of young people and parents of the first wave of restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the important role social media had in maintaining social connections. In documenting these experiences, the work contributes to knowledge of this exceptional time of global challenge, particularly coping strategies and responses to social distancing. These insights may be useful should there be further restrictions related to the current pandemic, or future global challenges.

The scoping review identified that few current evidence-based wellbeing and mental health interventions delivered in school settings cover social media use, highlighting an unmet need. In response, existing wellbeing interventions could be modified, or new interventions or strategies developed. The idea of coverage of social media in school-based interventions was well received by experts in the field consulted with in this work, suggesting this is an important future direction for wellbeing interventions.

This study offers suggestions to inform the content of future wellbeing interventions and support strategies for young people around social media use. The study identified that strategies that involve teaching on media literacy skills (e.g. critical appraisal of sources) and promotion of awareness around risks and harms (e.g. cyberbullying, privacy) have utility and value in helping young people to navigate online life. Yet, viewed as more important, relevant, and specifically impactful to wellbeing by young people were the everyday, sometimes difficult to define, and frequently encountered interpersonal and social experiences elicited by social media use of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), comparisons, and exclusion. Consequently, the study implies these areas must be addressed as part of wellbeing promotion in support and education around social media use and digital technology.

The findings of this study also have implications for the way support is offered, suggesting a move away from adult-led approaches, which tend to place
emphasis on risk and were perceived to lack relevance by young people. Rather, the findings suggest that young people prefer to and do seek support from peers when they experience challenges related to social media. This study therefore advocates for the development of peer models of support led by young people that are not defined by a set curriculum, rather young people could be invited to set the agenda by bringing issues around social media and online activities they feel have relevance to them at that particular time. This approach may offer an elegant solution to difficulties around relevance and keeping pace with the rapid changes in technology, popular platforms, and trends in social media use.

This study advocates for close collaboration with and opportunities for young people to take a lead at every stage in future work undertaken in this field, as they hold knowledge and experience of social media culture that is inaccessible to adults.

Clinically, this study highlights the importance of considering the impact of social media use in assessment and intervention with young people, specifically being aware of and exploring the possible contribution of experiences such as FOMO, comparisons, and exclusion to wellbeing.
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Part 1: Literature Review

What evidence-based interventions or programmes are available in school settings to support young people to use social media in ways that promote their mental health and wellbeing? A scoping review.
Abstract

Aims: To explore what school-based interventions for young people are available that address issues around social media use in the context of wellbeing and mental health. Specific, targeted interventions and broader wellbeing and mental health interventions were assessed to determine whether they include content related to social media use.

Methods: A scoping review was performed following Arksey & O’Malley’s (2005) framework, including a consultation involving study authors. Searches of CINAHL Plus, MEDLINE, PsychInfo, Education Resources Information Centre (ERIC), Cochrane database, and British Education Index (BEI) were conducted to locate relevant studies published from 2003 to October 2020.

Results: Sixty articles, published between 2005 and 2020, were included. The response rate of the consultation was 67%. One intervention specifically focusing on social media use was found. Eleven broad wellbeing interventions were identified to include content related to social media use either in the planned curriculum (n=6), informally, but not in planned curriculum (n=4), or in the control or usual treatment condition curriculum (n=1). Six themes were drawn from responses provided by authors in the consultation.

Conclusions: The findings of this review suggest that few universal, school-based wellbeing interventions cover social media use. Further work is needed to develop or modify existing wellbeing interventions to include social media use, given it is an influential and meaningful part of young people’s lives.
Introduction

Adolescence is a formative developmental phase during which, all being well, the necessary competencies and knowledge to transition into an independent adult role are acquired (Dahl, Allen, Wilbrecht, & Suleiman, 2018). Traditionally adolescence has been defined as the period between 10 and 19 years of age (World Health Organisation [WHO], 2017). However, it has been contested that an expansion of the upper age limit to 24 years more appropriately reflects current patterns of adolescent growth, shifts in social landscape (e.g. increasingly urbanised, globally connected, technology driven), and popular understandings of this time in life (Sawyer, Azzopardi, Wickremarathne, & Patton, 2018). Whilst this stage can offer young people many opportunities for development, exploration, and learning about the world, others, and themselves, it may also carry with it multiple pressures (O’Reilly et al., 2018), and an increased risk of death and disability through accidents, violence, sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy, uptake of health-related risk behaviours, mental health difficulties, and suicide (Dahl, Allen, Wilbrecht, & Suleiman, 2018). Although these risks and behaviours are well documented, some have been observed to be in decline and a number of new risk factors and behaviours have emerged for adolescents, owing to significant changes in their daily lives in recent decades (De Looze et al., 2019). The introduction of social media has been particularly influential.

Social media has permeated the lives of many young people, becoming an integral part of multiple aspects, including education, culture, and socialising (O’Reilly et al., 2018). According to a recent Ofcom report (2021), 87% of adolescents aged between 12-15 years use social media, and worldwide across socio-economic contexts, young people are the most prolific users of any age group (Third et al., 2017). The proportion of social media users increases significantly amongst young people of high school age, such that 43% of 11 year-olds report having a social media profile and almost all 15 years do (Ofcom, 2019). The
extensive and habitual ways young people now engage with social media have challenged previous binary distinctions between ‘offline’ and ‘online’ life (boyd, 2014). Rather, Goodyear and Armour (2019) suggest that social media functions as an active digital space in which relationships, identities, and intimacies are formed, and learning from peers, by observation and interaction takes place (Ito et al., 2010). In these ways, social media is increasingly significant to the social and emotional development of young people (O’Keefe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011).

Public discourse around social media has tended towards risk (boyd, 2014), and in academia Orben (2020a) describes a ‘concern-centric’ focus. Troubling aspects of online activity characterising such discourses are the possibility for direct exposure to content that may be harmful or that these platforms may be used to exploit young people (Glazzard, 2018). Livingstone and colleagues (2014) acknowledge that young people are exposed to harmful content online, but estimate the level of risk for most young people to be low, pointing out that exposure does not necessarily result in negative consequences (Livingstone et al., 2018).

Mental health amongst adolescents

The reported prevalence of mental health difficulties amongst young people worldwide is estimated to be between 10% and 20% (WHO, 2020). The onset of half of all mental health difficulties occurs by the time young people reach the age of 14, and by the age of 18, up to 20% will have experienced an emotional disorder (Costello et al., 2003), yet it is estimated 75% of young people do not receive support (The Children’s Society, 2020). Amongst young people aged 10-19 years, mental health conditions make up 16% of the global burden of disease and injury (WHO, 2017) and are associated with a range of poor negative health and social outcomes (Collins & Dozois, 2008). The WHO (2017) cautions that if not attended to, difficulties arising in adolescence can persist into adulthood, resulting in impaired mental and physical health which may compromise potential to lead an active and
fulfilling life. Along with the profound personal impact mental health difficulties can have individuals, on a societal level, the associated economic cost is also substantial, at an estimated £105bn each year in England (Hutchinson, Reader, & Akhal, 2020), therefore early intervention to prevent mental ill health in adolescence may yield benefits for population health (Kelly, Zilanawala, Booker, & Sacker, 2018).

Social media as a contemporary influence on adolescent mental health

Concerns have been raised about the impact of social media use on mental health amongst young people, which may be in part driven by observations that over the last two decades the use of social media has grown exponentially apparently dovetailing with reports mental health problems are on the rise amongst young people (Schønning, Hjetland, Aarø, & Skogen, 2020). The risk that social media may cause or exacerbate mental health problems is a particular worry amongst parents (George & Odgers, 2015). However, the current evidence base presents a mixed picture in this regard (O’Reilly, 2020). Social media use has been associated with poor mental health (Verduyn, Ybarra, Resibois, Jonides, & Kross, 2017), stress, anxiety, and depression (Throuvala, Griffiths, Rennoldson, & Kuss, 2019). Numerous explanatory pathways for these negative associations are posited, including: experiences of cyberbullying (Fahy, Stansfeld, Smuk, Smith, & Cummins, 2016), ‘problematic’ use with an addiction-like profile (Walsh et al., 2020), use having a detrimental impact on levels of social support (Walsh et al., 2020), use interfering with sleep (Cain & Gradisar, 2010; Woods & Scott, 2016), experiences of negative feedback or negative social comparisons (Frison & Eggermont, 2016; Valkenburg, Koutamanis, & Vossen, 2017), low self-esteem, and body image concerns (Fardouly & Vartanian, 2016).

Young people themselves reportedly estimate a high net negative impact of social media on their mental health (Royal Society for Public Health, 2017). Yet, they also highlight multiple benefits such as stress relief (Allen, Ryan, Gray,
McInerney, & Waters, 2014), connection with peers (Underwood & Ehrenreich, 2017), access to advice and coping strategies (Raskauskas & Huynh, 2015), and receipt of support, understanding and acceptance from others (Elmquist & McLaughlin, 2018).

Given social media use has been posited as a contemporary risk to young people’s mental health and wellbeing (Walsh et al., 2020), there have been calls for it to be a target for prevention alongside traditional risks and risk behaviours. However, positioning it in such a way may subscribe to oversimplified narratives about social media which incite ‘moral panic’, over-pathologize the everyday behaviours of young people, discount the benefits, and tend to overlook cultural, personal, or social factors that influence use (boyd, 2014), and likely the impact of use. Livingstone, Mascheroni, and Staksrud (2018) note that public anxieties around social media place pressure on policy makers and stakeholders to act to introduce policy that may not reflect a complete or clear evidence base. Indeed, a recent report by the UK Chief Medical Officers (CMOs) (2019) found insufficient evidence to support guidelines around screen time but issued several recommendations towards safeguarding young people in order to acknowledge “societal concerns” (UK CMOs, 2019, pp.2) including precautionary action from schools, the government, and technology companies.

In the absence of clear specification of what form ‘precautionary action’ may take, and multiple ideas expressed by different stakeholders, a key consideration for the government and organisations and sectors involved in provision of support for young people is to ensure strategies are in their best interests and respect their agency and right to access social media and digital technology (Livingstone, Mascheroni & Staksrud, 2018). boyd (2014, pp.93) takes the position that there is “no reason to think that digital celibacy will help them [young people] be healthier, happier, and more capable adults”, and the popularity of social media is unlikely to wane, therefore strategies that support young people to use social media in ways
that promote wellbeing and mental health whilst mitigating potential risks may be beneficial (O’Reilly et al., 2018).

Providing support in schools for young people around social media use

Schools are consistently implicated as key stakeholders in policy and recommendations around young people’s social media use, and may be well placed to provide support. Kelly, Zilanawala, Booker, and Sacker (2018) suggest schools could engage young people in learning how to effectively and safely navigate life online and encourage them to reflect on the impact social media use has on their lives. However, it is vital to consider whether young people themselves would position school as a useful source of support.

In a study by O’Reilly and colleagues (2018), young people attributed lack of knowledge about the risks of online activity to the failure of schools to provide this information, which may indicate some expectation for support to be in the form of education and for schools to deliver this. The authors concluded that young people would benefit from being better educated about the connection between social media use and mental health. Goodyear, Wood, and Armour (2019) explored the views of young people on receiving educational support around social media in schools. Amongst some, school was considered an appropriate setting, and teachers acceptable providers. However, others felt that since teachers do not occupy the same digital spaces as them, they would not be able to provide adequate guidance. Young people who had been provided support at school reported this was in the form of school assemblies, which they felt lacked relevance. To remedy this, young people advocated for adults to increase their awareness of the ways they engage with social media, the current risks they face, and how they navigate them. The mixed accounts from young people documented in the literature raise questions about the current provision of support around social media use in
school settings, suggesting some schools do not offer this kind of support, and those that do may be failing to adequately meet the needs of young people.

The need for a scoping review

To the best of the author’s knowledge, no existing reviews have sought to explore what evidence-based interventions or programmes are available in school settings to support young people to use social media in ways that promote their mental health and wellbeing. However, a review could contribute to the field by clarifying what schools currently offer and identifying whether there are any gaps in knowledge that might inform future work.

Scoping review methodology was selected. Scoping reviews are used to synthesise research evidence and map the nature, features and volume of existing literature to answer questions about what is known in the particular field (Peters et al., 2015). Given the recency of the ubiquity of social media use amongst young people, and the typical lag time between intervention development and implementation (Morris, Wooding, & Grant, 2011), it was hypothesised there may be a paucity of existing school-based interventions with a specific focus on social media use, and therefore randomised controlled trials, and as such it would be difficult to undertake a systematic review. However, it was thought plausible that social media use might be addressed within general wellbeing and mental health interventions, either formally as part of the curriculum, or informally arising in discussions or activities. To identify these kinds of interventions, a broader topic focus and appraisal of the content of a range of interventions were required, which is possible within the remit of scoping review studies (Pham et al., 2014).

Scoping methodology can identify gaps in the research literature and generate recommendations for future research (Arksey & O’Malley, 2005). Furthermore, this methodology is relevant for use in fields where evidence is emerging (Levac, Colquhoun, & O’Brien, 2010), which is the case in the literature on
mental health and social media use amongst young people. Regarding findings and output, scoping reviews provide a descriptive overview of reviewed material, which was considered appropriate for this work as the nature of content on social media use was of interest. Finally, scoping reviews offer the opportunity to draw together research from different fields and disciplines (Larsson, Staland-Nyman, Svedberg, Nygren, & Carlsson, 2018), which is well suited for this work as wellbeing, mental health and social media use are areas of interest across multiple sectors.

**Aims**

This scoping review aimed to explore what school-based interventions for young people that address issues around social media use in the context of wellbeing and mental health are currently available. Specific, targeted interventions and broader wellbeing and mental health interventions were assessed to determine whether they include content on social media use. The intended outcome of this work was to generate knowledge about the current provision of school-based support for young people around social media use in relation to wellbeing. It was hoped this would illuminate any unmet needs and provide direction for further work to develop new interventions or modify existing interventions to address these needs.

**Methods**

**Design**

This review was underpinned by the framework proposed by Arksey and O’Malley (2005), elaborated by Levac, Colquhoun, and O’Brien (2010), which encourages rigorous and transparent methodology to ensure replicability by others and increase the reliability of findings. The five stages for conducting scoping reviews are: (1) identifying the research question, (2) identifying relevant studies, (3) study selection, (4) charting the data, and (5) collating, summarising and reporting.
the results. A sixth optional stage of consultation with practitioners and consumers is also outlined. The authors contend that consultation can highlight additional relevant studies to include and may yield valuable insights into both specific studies and the field of interest more generally beyond what is presented in published reports. It was decided that study authors’ expertise could be drawn on to answer the research questions posed in this review. Consultation activities ran concurrently with the data charting process.

**Stage one: Identifying the research questions**

The broad focus of this review was to explore what is available in terms of school-based interventions to help young people to use social media in ways that support their wellbeing and mental health. To maximise coverage, the following questions were devised as a foundation for the search:

1. Are any specific school-based, universal interventions available to help young people to use social media in ways that support their wellbeing and mental health?
2. Do any *general* school-based, universal wellbeing and mental health interventions include components related to social media use and wellbeing?

**Stage two: Identifying relevant studies**

*Search strategy*

As a first step towards the development of the search strategy, five key concepts were generated from the research questions: social media, young people, school-based, intervention, and wellbeing. Alternative terms, synonyms, and spellings were considered to increase the likelihood the search strategy would provide a broad coverage of available literature whilst being sensitive enough to identify relevant papers (Arksey & O’Malley, 2005). Following this, the key concepts
were used in brief exploratory searches of Google Scholar and MEDLINE to confirm the feasibility of the review question and check for similar reviews to avoid replication of existing work. The search strategies of systematic reviews of school-based wellbeing interventions (O’Connor, Dyson, Cowdell, & Watson, 2017; Mackenzie & Williams, 2018; Cilar, Štiglic, Kmetec, Barr, & Pajnkihar, 2019) identified in these preliminary activities were appraised to gauge the expected number of papers that might be identified and inform selection of inclusion and exclusion criteria. Search terms featured in these papers were checked, with any assessed as potentially relevant being added to the search strategy.

In line with the recommendations and feedback from consultations with a senior member of the teaching faculty with extensive experience of conducting literature reviews and the faculty librarian, several searches of a selection of target electronic databases were performed, trialling different combinations of search terms and links with Boolean operators to refine the search strategy. The findings of these pilot searches were discussed with the project supervisor, Marc Tibber (MT) before the strategy was finalised (Appendix 1).

Two searches were planned: a first search to capture broad wellbeing and mental health interventions, followed by a repeat of the search including additional terms related to social media to identify any interventions with a specific focus. Searches of CINAHL Plus, MEDLINE, PsychInfo, Education Resources Information Centre (ERIC), Cochrane database, and British Education Index (BEI) were conducted between October and November 2020. Databases were selected to provide adequate coverage of research studies from clinical health, nursing, social sciences, and educational perspectives. The reference lists of the three key review papers identified in the search strategy development phase (see above) were searched and papers not already identified in the database searches were sourced from Google Scholar and screened for eligibility.
Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion and exclusion criteria were devised seeking to strike a balance between breadth, comprehensiveness, and practical constraints (O’Flaherty & Phillips, 2015) whilst ensuring the ability to answer the research questions was not compromised. To reduce uncertainty around eligibility of studies and manage risk of bias and errors, which can arise when one researcher is leading the process (Levac, Colquhoun, & O’Brien, 2010) and result in poor reproducibility (McDonagh, Peterson, Raina, Chang, & Shekelle, 2013), detailed inclusion and exclusion criteria were developed (see Table 1.1).

A lower boundary limit of 2003 for publication year was considered a reasonable lower threshold that would carry a low risk of excluding relevant interventions whilst appropriately limiting the number of irrelevant search results (interventions developed prior to the introduction of social media sites in 1997). Broad criteria for types of study design included in the review were applied to reflect the diverse range of methodologies used in school-based research. It was expected that there may only be a small pool of studies and interventions relevant to the research questions, therefore international studies were included to increase the chances of identifying important and innovative work that could be learned from or modified to suit the UK context.

The population of interest for this review was young people aged between 11 and 18 years as it was reasoned that the type of interventions sought might be more likely to be delivered to young people within this age group, corresponding with age limits on holding a social media account (13 years on many platforms) and observed uptake of use from the age of 11 onwards (Ofcom, 2019). The inclusion criteria for type of article were narrowed to original research granted ethical approval, published in peer reviewed journals to assure a reasonable level of quality.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Criterion</strong></th>
<th><strong>Inclusion</strong></th>
<th><strong>Exclusion</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time period</strong></td>
<td>2003 to present (November 2020)</td>
<td>Studies published outside of these date limits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Studies in languages other than English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of article</strong></td>
<td>Peer reviewed, original research, journal articles</td>
<td>Articles that were not peer reviewed, commentary papers, papers describing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>theoretical frameworks, conference abstracts or posters, theses, literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>reviews, papers reporting analysis of secondary data or not reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>intervention studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethics</strong></td>
<td>Ethical approval obtained</td>
<td>Ethical approval not obtained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population</strong></td>
<td>Young people aged 11-18 years.</td>
<td>People aged under 11 or over 18 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intervention</strong></td>
<td>Wellbeing and/or mental health promotion interventions.</td>
<td>Interventions not focused on wellbeing and/or mental health promotion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Young people directly receive / participate in the intervention.</td>
<td>Intervention is delivered to parents or teachers or more broadly in the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>school/college system, and not directly to young people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Setting</strong></td>
<td>Interventions take place at school or college within hours (additional</td>
<td>Interventions are not school or college-based, at least in part (e.g. in other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>settings permitted if in addition to</td>
<td>community settings or home-based, after school clubs, online outside of school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>hours).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
classroom-based engagement, for instance interventions with an online component).

International studies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study focus</th>
<th>Universal interventions or programmes delivered to all students.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|             | Programmes or interventions for young people with specific identified needs, socio-demographic characteristics, or to address specific problems (e.g. diagnosed mental health disorders, suicide, vulnerable or at risk young people, behavioural challenges, socio-economic disadvantage) or those which select participants based on clinical or other screening criteria (e.g. reaching clinical threshold for depression or anxiety, scores indicating below average life satisfaction).
|             | Single session interventions, interventions that do not include psychoeducation or discussion of wellbeing topics or interventions involving physical activity or sport without any additional classroom-based activities. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study design</th>
<th>Qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods studies evaluating or piloting interventions.</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multi component (e.g. discussions, techniques, skills, psychoeducation) and multi session interventions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Definition of social media

A broad definition of social media as websites and web-applications that provide a platform for the development of online communities and sharing user created content (Kim, Jeong, & Lee, 2010) was adopted for this review.

Stage three: Study selection

Article selection adhered to the Preferred Reporting of Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) Statement (Moher, Liberate, Tetzlaff, Altman, & The PRISMA Group, 2009), illustrated in Figure 1.1. A total of 6300 articles were identified from the main search (n=5801), focused search including social media search terms (n=454), and papers identified from the reference lists of key reviews (n=45). The majority of articles identified in the main search were from MEDLINE and PsychInfo and additional articles from reference lists were located using Google Scholar. After removal of duplicates, 4399 articles underwent initial title screening which resulted in the identification and exclusion of a large number of irrelevant articles (n=3871). Following this, the abstracts of 528 articles were screened.

At the final stage of screening, one hundred and sixty-eight full texts were retrieved and assessed by for eligibility alongside the study inclusion and exclusion criteria. Where multiple articles were published on the same study, the evaluation of the study was included and additional papers were used as supplementary sources of information, for example, for further information about the intervention. Sixty-one studies were deemed relevant to the review topic and meeting inclusion criteria.

Stage four: Data charting and collation

The aim of the data charting process was to extract information from the articles to create an overview of key study characteristics and interventions. The
Main search: MEDLINE: 1420
ERIC: 589
British Education Index: 147
PsycINFO: 2146
CINAHL Plus: 916
Cochrane Database: 583
TOTAL = 5891

Additional search including ‘social media’ terms:
MEDLINE: 106
ERIC: 9
British Education Index: 147
PsycINFO: 2
CINAHL Plus: 161
Cochrane Database: 29
TOTAL = 454

Main search:
4296 records after duplicates (n=1550) removed (search plus 45 reference list papers)

Additional search including ‘social media’ terms:
103 records after duplicates from main search (n=342) removed
TOTAL RECORDS SCREENED = 4399

3871 total excluded at title screen
(Main search = 3748
Reference list = 34
Additional search = 89)

528 abstracts screened for eligibility

168 full texts retrieved and screened for eligibility against full inclusion/exclusion criteria

61 studies included in author consultation

60 studies underwent content appraisal to identify intervention components

12 relevant studies including social media identified

107 excluded
Exclusion criteria
Not school based/in school hours, single session interventions, young people under 11 or older than 18 years, prior to 2003, interventions for specific needs or characteristics, no intervention reported, secondary data analysis, intervention not delivered directly to young people

57 authors contacted for further information (4 authors with multiple papers identified):
38 responses received
6 additional papers screened, excluded
1 study excluded after consultation (data collected prior to 2003)

Identification of intervention components

Figure 1.1 PRISMA Flow Diagram
process was iterative (Levac, Colquhoun, & O'Brien, 2010) in that as familiarity with
the studies and charting procedure increased, gaps in information and points of
interest were noted, and the data chart was refined. Questions were devised to
guide examination of intervention content, maintain focus on the research questions,
and seek further information. The answer to the primary question of whether the
intervention included any content related to social media dictated which questions
were then kept in mind when appraising each study. This is shown as a decision
flowchart in Figure 1.2.

Figure 1.2 Decision flowchart for questions posed in consultations with authors

The question on whether both benefits and risks of social media use were
addressed was based on a hypothesis that identified interventions covering social
media use would be more likely to take a protection-oriented approach, focusing on
risks and harms in line with public discourse (boyd, 2014).
Consultation phase

Aims

The aims of the consultation phase were to:

(a) elicit further detail about the interventions beyond the information provided in the articles or online,

(b) tap into networks of authors who might signpost to work not identified in the search process or share resources,

(c) add sensitivity to the examination of broader wellbeing interventions by clarifying whether they included any informal coverage of issues around social media use that was not explicitly stated or planned for in the curriculum / intervention protocol or reported on in the article, and

(d) explore why interventions did not include content on social media use to understand and contextualise any identified gaps in the literature.

Methods

Consultation with study authors was carried out via email. The email correspondence comprised of a brief outline of the review topic and aims, the title of the article(s) of interest, and the questions devised in the data charting phase. After four weeks, a follow up email was sent to authors who had not responded. A further four weeks were allocated before studies were assigned ‘unable to contact’.

Stage five: Collating, summarising, and reporting the results

The content of each included intervention was appraised and categorised during the analysis phase. Interventions were grouped according to the research questions as: (a) universal school-based interventions focused specifically on social media use and wellbeing, or (b) broad universal wellbeing interventions. Then, if relevant content was found within a broad wellbeing intervention, the researcher
allocated it to one of the following categories: (1) social media use included in planned curriculum, (2) social media use included informally, but not in planned curriculum, (3) social media use included in control or usual treatment condition curriculum, and (4) no evidence of content on social media use.

Categories were developed by the researcher based on observations of the different ways content was reported in the articles and/or by the authors when consulted. The researcher considered the need for clarity around the distinction between authors providing reflections and speculating on possible coverage of social media use in the study, and authors reporting on coverage that had actually taken place to their knowledge, but that were not detailed in their published article. To be placed into category two, authors confirmed and described how social media use had been raised informally.

_Treatment of consultation data_

For interventions with confirmed content related to social media use, information provided by authors on intervention components and features, coverage of risks and benefits, and theoretical or therapeutic basis was incorporated into the descriptive summaries (Table 1.2). Where the interventions were confirmed not to cover social media use, themes were drawn from the author responses to explore the reasons for this. Additional comments from authors were also analysed to learn more about views of social media use in the field.

Brief thematic analysis was applied to author comments following components of Braun and Clarke’s (2006) process. Specific questions were posed to authors in the consultation phase, therefore the data was largely approached from a deductive standpoint. However, additional points of interest arising from the data were also coded based on Terry, Hayfield, Clarke, and Braun’s (2017) recommendation to code for as many potential themes or patterns as possible.
Results

General characteristics of included articles

Sixty articles were included in this review. One article (Horn, Pössel, & Hautzinger, 2010) was excluded during the consultation phase (see consultation phase results). Articles were published across a 15-year period from 2005 to 2020 and reported on studies conducted in nineteen different countries including the USA (n=12), UK (n=9), Australia (n=8), Italy (n=7), and Germany (n=4). Two studies took place in each of the following countries: Sweden, Hong Kong, Ireland, Israel, Spain, and Netherlands. Single studies were undertaken in Mauritius, South Africa, Denmark, Belgium, Portugal, Chile, Canada, and Finland. Young people participating in the studies were aged between 11 and 18 and all studies took place in a secondary school (or equivalent) setting. Descriptive summaries of studies are provided in Table 1.2.

Consultation

Thirty-eight of the fifty-seven authors (67%) responded to the consultation request. Several authors provided additional articles on the study of interest, or sign posted to other works which were screened for eligibility (Figure 1). For one article, the additional information provided by the author clarified that they did not meet inclusion criteria for the review as the study was carried out prior to 2003 (Horn, Pössel, & Hautzinger, 2010).
Table 1.2 Descriptive summaries of studies including content on social media use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study title and authors</th>
<th>Participated in consultation? (Yes/No)</th>
<th>Study aims and design</th>
<th>Intervention components and features</th>
<th>Coverage of social media content</th>
<th>Theoretical underpinnings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decreasing Risky Behaviour on Social Network Sites: The Impact of Parental Involvement in Secondary Education Interventions (2016) Vanderhoven, Schellens, &amp; Valcke (Belgium)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td><strong>Aims:</strong> To evaluate a school-based e-safety intervention involving parents. <strong>Design:</strong> Quasi-experimental study with pre- and post-test measures</td>
<td>Two part intervention. Taught class and task. Home-based task: students provided with a simulated social media profile containing privacy risks, cyberbullying, and sexual solicitation risks. Control condition, pupils answered questions about the profile independently. Experimental condition pupils and parents answer questions and discuss. Taught class: risks explored, task discussed, voting game to deepen understanding of different risks, real-life newspaper items exemplified the risks covered, and a summary of information about these risks given. Manualised, teacher led.</td>
<td><strong>Issues addressed:</strong> Risky behaviour online. <strong>Type of content:</strong> Psychoeducation, learning homework task (independent or collaborative with parent), vignette example, voting game, real life newspaper items around risks, summary of risk information given by teacher.</td>
<td><strong>Benefits addressed?</strong> No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Wellbeing interventions including content related to social media use

#### Category one: Interventions including social media use in planned curriculum

| A School-Based Program to Promote Well-Being in Preadolescents: Results From a Cluster Quasi-Experimental Controlled Study (2019) Allara, Beccaria, Molinar, Marinaro, Ermacora, Coppo, Faggiano, & The Diario della Salute Evaluation Support Team (Italy) | Yes | Aims: To evaluate the effectiveness of the programme in terms of the students’ subjective well-being, aggressive behaviour, and health behaviour. Design: Quasi-experimental 2-arm study design, schools in the intervention group implemented the full programme, comparison group received regular curriculum | Diario della Salute [My Health Diary], school-based intervention to enhance the subjective well-being and health. Five standardized interactive lessons covering common psychosocial and health issues in adolescence, and two narrative booklets for students and their parents. Manualised, delivered by teachers with training. Unit topics were (1) my emotions, (2) beyond stereotypes, (3) becoming men and women, (4) exploring the world of adults, and (5) let’s keep fit Frequency & duration: 2-4 hours per unit | Issues addressed: assessing credibility of sources of information and news, exposure to distressing or inappropriate content, addiction Type of content: tips and advice, vignettes Benefits addressed? No, due to time constraints of intervention sessions. Risks/harms addressed? Emphasis on potential risks arising from excessive engagement in online activities. | Unclear / not described |

| A new approach to gratitude interventions in high schools that | Yes | Aims: To evaluate a psychoeducational top down technique with a bottom-up | Psychoeducational curriculum, Thanks!: A Strengths-Based Curriculum for Teens and Tweens including gratitude practices. | Issues addressed: N/A Type of content: Social media style app (GiveThx) designed to be intrinsically motivating, inclusive of diverse students, and Positive Psychology principles |
supports student wellbeing (2020)

Bono, Mangan, Fauteux, & Sender (USA)

Social-media-app modality that supports the autonomous practice of interpersonal and general gratitude

**Design:** Pre-test post-test quasi-experimental waitlist design

Delivered by teachers with support from research team.

**Frequency & duration:** Delivered over six weeks

Identity-safe. Thanking and journaling functions operating like social media in the classroom. Students able to share and receive thanks without competitive or negative social comparisons authors felt were characteristic of social media apps.

**Benefits addressed?** Aimed to encourage purely positive use of a social media like web app.

**Risks/harms addressed?** No

---

Promoting Social and Emotional Learning and Subjective Well-Being: Impact of the “Aislados” Intervention Program in Adolescents (2020)

Cejudo, Losada, & Feltrero (Spain)

**Aim:** To experimentally assess the effects of an intervention program through a video game called “Aislados” for the improvement of subjective well-being, mental health and trait emotional intelligence of a sample of adolescents

“Aislados” was a game-based educational program to enhance psychological well-being and encourage young people to avoid young risk behaviours (addictions, violence, emotional disorders).

Young people navigated through game with instruction provided by teachers to support understanding of emotional situations and decisions taken by students as they played the game.

Teachers were trained to deliver programme.

‘Dimensions’ of the game included (1) relationships, (2) assertiveness, (3) self-esteem, (4) decision making, (5) emotional intelligence, (6) addictions, and (7) conflict management.

**Issues addressed:** Use/abuse of technologies, addictions

**Type of content:** Interactive video game

**Benefits addressed?** Unclear, but paper suggests a focus on risk.

**Risks/harms addressed?** See above

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) principles, Positive Psychology principles
Enhancing the mental health promotion component of a health and personal development programme in Irish schools (2013) Fitzpatrick, Conlon, Cleary, Power, King, & Guerin (Ireland)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No (information obtained from paper)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Aims:** To examine the impact of a health and personal development programme (the Social, Personal and Health Education Programme) which had been ‘enhanced’ by the addition of a mental health promotion component.

**Design:** Cluster randomised trial of the standard programme (SP) or the enhanced programme (EP). Schools randomly allocated SP or EP.

EP consisted of SP plus ‘Working Things Out’ DVD included to enhance the delivery of the mental health promotion aspects of the SPHE programme. Stories from the DVD form the basis of lesson plans. Manualised, but flexibility in order of delivery of content. Delivered by teachers. Modules included (1) belonging and integrating, (2) self-management, (3) a sense of purpose, (4) communication skills, (5) physical health, (6) friendship, (7) relationship and sexuality, (8) emotional health, (9) influences and decisions, (10) substance use, and (11) personal safety.

**Frequency & duration:** 12, 40 minute classes delivered over 8 months.

**Issues addressed:** Digital media literacy, personal safety concerns when using digital technologies, communication tools and the internet.

**Type of content:** Discussions, activities (e.g. create a charter of online rights and responsibilities for the class), role play.

**Benefits addressed?** Students taught to consider how digital media texts can support citizenship and inform decision making.

**Risks/harms addressed?** Students taught appropriate responses to potentially harmful situations.

Unclear / not described
The Effect of "In Favor of Myself": Preventive Program to Enhance Positive Self and Body Image among Adolescents (2013) Golan, Hagay, & Tamir (Israel)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Aims: To evaluate intervention acceptability, efficacy and effectiveness</th>
<th>'In Favour of Myself' was an interactive, community-based, media literacy and dissonance wellness program with multiple target areas. Kit provided to facilitators with introductory material and detailed programme guide. Delivered by teachers, school counsellors and master program's students in nutrition with supervision. Sessions included (1) adolescence, self esteem &amp; positive interpersonal communication, (2) filtering messages from the mass media advertisements, (3) filtering messages from cultural origin stereotypes, (4) the beauty myth, (5) the power of words, interpersonal communication and self esteem, (6) the power of words, interpersonal communication and self esteem, (7) me, internally and externally, and (8) adopting a stance where to take it further</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design: Controlled trial, non randomised experimental group design. Control did not receive any intervention.</td>
<td>Frequency &amp; duration: Eight, 90-minute sessions, weekly integrated into a regular school coping skills curriculum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Issues addressed: Media literacy

Type of content: interactive activities (e.g. advertising videos and identification), critical thinking activities, videos (e.g. demonstrating the terms territory, personal space), experiential activities (e.g. gaming), discussions (e.g. feelings arising, responses to homework tasks), psychoeducation.

Benefits addressed? Yes

Risks/harms addressed? Yes

Unclear / not described
I Am Me: Adolescent Perspectives of a School-Based Universal Intervention Program Designed to Promote Emotional Competence (2019) Lakes, Nguyen, Jones, & Schuck (USA)

**Yes**

**Aims:** To obtain preliminary data on intervention outcomes in high school students.

**Design:** Mixed-methods. Two studies. Study one involved post intervention focus groups, study two was a quasi-experimental design. Comparison group received no intervention.

‘I Am Me’ taught emotion management, life skills, problem solving, effective communication, gratitude, finance management, confidence and empathy, and healthy relationships. Young people were provided with a journal. Three-phase interactive curriculum as follows:

**Phase 1:** learning to identify emotions, understanding the impact of emotions on behaviour, improving self-awareness, recognizing self-handicapping, increasing intrinsic motivation, improving mindfulness, and learning the benefits of giving and forgiving

**Phase 2:** understanding how cognitions, behaviours, and the environment influence and are influenced by one another; building community engagement; and making a difference in the world.

**Phase 3:** build self-efficacy, emphasize the value of individuality, and assist young people in identifying their unique contribution to the world.

**Frequency & duration:** Delivered over school year.

**Issues addressed:** Cyber bullying, social networking, promotion, comparison to self (low self worth, body image), addiction, violence in media, legacy of user & source verification.

**Type of content:** Interactive group art activity, group discussion, journal activities & role play.

**Benefits addressed?** Students explore social media usage and how it influences their life. Students learn to identify the benefits/consequences of using social media. Students become skilled at creating healthy boundaries around social media.

**Risks/harms addressed?** See above.

*Category two: Interventions including social media use informally, but not in planned curriculum*
The UK Resilience Programme: A School-Based Universal Nonrandomized Pragmatic Controlled Trial (2013)

Challen, Machin, & Gillham (UK)

**Aims:** To assess the effectiveness of an 18-hr cognitive behavioral group intervention in reducing depressive symptoms (and associated outcomes) in a universal sample of students in mainstream schools in England.

**Design:** Quasi experimental design. Assigned arbitrarily into intervention (UKRP) or control (usual school provision) conditions based on class timetables. Control received usual school provision.

UKRP (adapted from Penn Resiliency Programme; Brunwasser et al., 2009) aimed to build resilience and promote realistic thinking and adaptive coping. The curriculum taught cognitive-behavioural and social problem-solving skills, techniques for positive social behaviour, assertiveness, negotiation, decision making, and relaxation.

A range of teaching methods and materials were used, including class discussion, worksheets, and games. Delivered by school staff.

Topics included (1) link between thoughts and feelings (2) thinking styles, (3) challenging beliefs: alternatives and evidence, (4) evaluating thoughts and putting it into perspective, (5) review, (6) assertiveness and negotiation, (7) coping strategies, (8) procrastination and social skills training, (9) decision making, (10) review, (11) social problem solving, and (12) review.

**Frequency & duration:** 18 hours of lessons replaced by UKRP for students in the intervention group. Duration of sessions varied between schools from 50 mins to 100 mins. Sessions delivered weekly, fortnightly or multiple times per fortnight.

**Issues addressed:** N/A

**Type of content:** Discussions – students invited to draw on their own experiences of interpersonal situations and challenges. Authors described that social media and online activities were raised in this context.

**Benefits addressed?** Unclear

**Risks/harms addressed?** Unclear

---

**Evaluation of a School-Based Program Aimed at Preventing**

**Aims:** To evaluate a universal school-based cognitive behavioural

“Coping with Stress” programme (Clarke et al., 1995) modified by the Center for Public Health in Stockholm for a Swedish setting. Manualised and fixed curriculum.

**Issues addressed:** N/A

Cognitive behavioural Therapy (CBT) principles
### Depressive Symptoms in Adolescents (2015)

**Garmy, Jakobsson, Carlsson, Berg, & Clausson (Sweden)**

**Design:** Pilot evaluation. Quasi-experimental design with pretest, posttest, and a 1-year follow-up. No control condition.

Sessions included:
1. Introduction
2. Coping with stress and cognitive restructuring, the link between thoughts, feelings, and actions, identification of positive and negative thoughts.
3. Identification of activating events and situations, stressful situations, and negative thoughts.
4. Positive thinking, how to increase the number of positive thoughts and activities.
5. Changing negative thoughts to positive thoughts, identification of irrational thoughts.
6. Discovering irrational ways of thinking, identifying negative ways of thinking.
7. Origin of negative thoughts, ways to cope with stressful events/situations.
8. Techniques for stopping negative thoughts, communication practice.
9. Communication practice and social skills, identification of negative thoughts, and how to replace them with positive thoughts.
10. Prevention of depressive symptoms, how to maintain skills, coping with difficulties, planning for crisis, maintain well-being, and how to cope with early warning signals.

**Frequency & duration:** Weekly 1.5 hour session, delivered over 10 weeks

**Type of content:** Discussions – offered opportunities to discuss topics students felt were important and social media was raised.

**Benefits addressed?** Unclear

**Risks/harms addressed?** Unclear

---

### Social and emotional education with Australian Year 7 and 8 middle

**Social and emotional curriculum derived from the Victorian Education Department’s Social and Emotional Learning Resources (Cahill et al., 2014). Delivered by teachers.**

**Issues addressed:** N/A

**Type of content:** Vignette scenario discussions - some scenarios featured in activity on hypothetical peer relationships

**SEL principles**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Title</th>
<th>Authors, Country</th>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Frequency &amp; duration</th>
<th>Issues addressed</th>
<th>Type of content</th>
<th>Benefits addressed</th>
<th>Risks/harms addressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Hummingbird Project: A Positive Psychology Intervention for Secondary School Students</strong> (2020)</td>
<td>Platt, Kannangara, Tytherleigh, &amp; Carson (UK)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Two phase study. Phase I small scale pilot followed by intervention modifications. Phase II delivery of intervention in secondary school context</td>
<td>Phase I: eight weekly one hour sessions, Phase II: six weekly one hour sessions</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Discussions – young people raised the impact of social media and online activities on mental health and happiness.</td>
<td>Unclear</td>
<td>Unclear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Hummingbird Project: A Positive Psychology Intervention for Secondary School Students</strong> (2020)</td>
<td>Platt, Kannangara, Tytherleigh, &amp; Carson (UK)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Two phase study. Phase I small scale pilot followed by intervention modifications. Phase II delivery of intervention in secondary school context</td>
<td>Phase I: eight weekly one hour sessions, Phase II: six weekly one hour sessions</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Discussions – young people raised the impact of social media and online activities on mental health and happiness.</td>
<td>Unclear</td>
<td>Unclear</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Category three: Interventions including social media use in control or usual treatment condition curriculum**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Title</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Frequency &amp; duration</th>
<th>Issues addressed</th>
<th>Type of content</th>
<th>Benefits addressed</th>
<th>Risks/harms addressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A randomized controlled trial of strong minds: A school-based mental health program combining acceptance and commitment therapy and positive psychology (2016)</td>
<td>Cluster randomized controlled trial. Control continued to attend usual pastoral care classes.</td>
<td>To examine the efficacy of a school-based mental health program combining positive psychology with acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT).</td>
<td>Eight hours comprising 16, 30 minute sessions over three months</td>
<td>Content on social media appeared in pastoral care classes which were the control condition. Year 10 students cover cyber issues such as managing online harassment and the long-term consequences of online activity.</td>
<td>Class discussions.</td>
<td>Unclear.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Review question one: Are any specific school-based, universal interventions available to help young people to use social media in ways that support their wellbeing and mental health?

**Intervention components and features**

Of the 60 studies included, one directly focused on social media use and wellbeing. This focused specifically on ‘risky’ behaviour in the online environment (Vanderhoven, Schellens, & Valcke, 2016). The intervention comprised of a homework task and a teacher-led, classroom-based session incorporating discussion of the vignette, games, and appraisal of real-life case examples from newspapers. In both the experimental and control groups, the homework task was assigned. However, in the experimental group, students were instructed to discuss the vignette with their parents, whereas students in the control condition completed this independently. The intervention was manualised.

**Coverage of benefits and risks or potential harms of social media use**

The intervention was entirely risk-oriented, aiming to support students to identify and understand risks such as threats to privacy, cyberbullying, and sexual solicitation and different types of online behaviour associated with or incurring these risks (e.g. posting contact information). In building the rationale for the intervention in the article, the authors briefly acknowledge possible benefits offered by social media, However, they expressed a view that these cannot be extricated from safety concerns.

**Theoretical or therapeutic basis of the intervention**

Ajzen’s Theory of Planned Behaviour (1991) formed the theoretical basis for the intervention. The authors emphasised the need for prevention and awareness interventions to be optimised to elicit behavioural change in order to be effective. The parental involvement component of the experimental condition was intended to
introduce social pressure on student’s online behaviour (subjective norm) which might influence their intention to engage in risky behaviours, and lead to behavioural change.

Review question two: Do any general school-based, universal wellbeing and mental health interventions include components related to social media use and wellbeing?

Eleven broad wellbeing interventions were identified as including content related to social media use through a combination of examination of the articles and consultation with authors. These are presented below in their assigned categories: (1) interventions including social media use formally in planned curriculum (n=6), (2) interventions including social media use informally, but not in planned curriculum (n=4), and (3) interventions including social media use in control or usual treatment condition curriculum (n=1). The remaining 48 interventions were placed into category four as there was no evidence to suggest they included content on social media use.

Category one: Interventions including social media use in planned curriculum (n=6)

_intervention components and features_

Interventions included were ‘Aislados’ (Cejudo et al., 2020), ‘Diario della Salute [My Health Diary]’ (Allara _et al._, 2019), ‘I Am Me’ (Lakes _et al._, 2019), ‘In Favour of Myself’ (Golan _et al._, 2013), ‘Social, Personal, and Health Education’ (SPHE) (Fitzpatrick _et al._, 2013), and ‘Thanks! A Strengths-Based Curriculum for Teens and Tweens’ (plus ‘GiveThx’) (Bono _et al._, 2020).

In terms of delivery, the interventions were facilitated by teachers or other multi-disciplinary professionals (e.g. psychologists). The role of the intervention facilitators was to guide students through the curriculum materials, support
completion of activities, encourage discussions, and provide psychoeducation. However, the ‘Aislados’ programme (Cejudo et al., 2020) was distinctive as the intervention was presented in a video game format which was accessed during class time with supervision from teachers. Facilitators were provided with manuals, detailed guides, curriculums, or materials in all studies.

Regarding intervention duration, the briefest programmes were ‘Diario della Salute’ which comprised of five, two to four hour sessions and ‘Thanks!’ (plus GiveThx), both of which offered six weekly sessions. ‘In Favour of Myself’ was an eight, 90-minute session intervention. SPHE involved twelve, 40 minute sessions. The longest programmes were ‘I Am Me’ which consisted of 36 sessions delivered across three phases, and ‘Aislados’ which was 28, hour long weekly sessions.

Regarding content, four of the interventions promoted development of media literacy skills such as the ability to critically assess media, verify online sources, and consider media legacy (Fitzpatrick et al., 2013; Golan et al., 2013; Allara et al., 2019; Lakes et al., 2019). Psychoeducation, interactive activities, and discussions were used to engage students (Fitzpatrick et al., 2013; Golan et al., 2013; Lakes et al., 2019). These components were complimented with use of multi-media (e.g. videos) in ‘In Favour of Myself’ (Golan et al., 2013), and vignette examples and provision of tips and advice in ‘Diario della Salute’ (Allara et al., 2019). Lakes et al. (2019) described use of group art, journaling, and role plays in ‘I Am Me’. ‘Aislados’ approached engagement with students from a gaming perspective, creating a fantasy game with multiple levels students navigated to learn information about wellbeing.

‘Thanks!’ (Bono et al., 2020) made use of a social network style application. The intervention sought to incorporate social media technology in line with the social interaction habits and preferences of students. A bespoke web-application (‘GiveThx’) was created for students and teachers to share and receive messages of gratitude on a private social network. This component of the intervention was
intended to encourage students to learn gratitude practices within a social media environment free of competitive or negative social comparisons.

**Coverage of benefits and risks or potential harms of social media use**

Four interventions offered content and skills to manage or reduce risk of potential harms including cyberbullying (Lakes et al., 2019), personal safety concerns (Fitzpatrick et al., 2013), exposure to distressing or inappropriate content (Allara et al., 2019), ‘use and abuse of technologies’ (Cejudo et al., 2020), violence (Lakes et al., 2018), and addiction (Lakes et al., 2018; Allara et al., 2019; Cejudo et al., 2020). Potential harms to self-image, self-esteem, and body image were covered in the ‘I Am Me’ (Lakes et al., 2018) and ‘In Favour of Myself’ (Golan et al., 2013).

The content of ‘Aislados’ and ‘Diarios della Salute’ appeared to be more risk focused overall. When consulted, Allara et al. (2019) reported ‘Diarios della Salute’ was centred on excessive online activities and did not cover the benefits of social media use due to time constraints. It was somewhat unclear whether SPHE (Fitzpatrick et al., 2013) took a balanced approach to risk and benefits. However, the article makes reference to communication tools, supporting citizenship, and informed decision-making, which suggests the intervention was not solely risk focused. Further clarification was not obtained as the authors did not participate in the consultation. The authors of ‘In Favour of Myself’ (Golan et al., 2013) confirmed the intervention covered both benefits and risks of social media use, attempting to help students learn to differentiate between negative and positive impacts of social media use and promote more positive use. ‘I Am Me’ (Lakes et al., 2018) also encouraged students to explore the influence social media use has on their lives from the perspective of the benefits and the consequences, and to assist them to create healthy boundaries.
Theoretical or therapeutic basis of the interventions

Two of the six interventions were based on specified theoretical or therapeutic approaches. ‘Aislados’ (Cejudo et al., 2020) incorporated elements of Social and Emotional Learning and Positive Psychology. ‘Thanks!’ (Bono et al., 2020) was also founded in Positive Psychology principles.

Category two: Interventions including social media use informally, but not in planned curriculum (n=4)

Intervention components and features

Interventions were ‘UK Resilience Programme’ (UKRP), (Challen et al., 2013), ‘Depression in Swedish Adolescents’ (DISA) (Garmy et al., 2015), ‘Victorian Education Department’s Social and Emotional Learning Resources’ (Midford et al., 2017), and ‘The Hummingbird Project’ (Platt et al., 2020). All were led by school staff. Schools were provided with support from MSc and BSc Psychology students in the Hummingbird Project.

With respect to duration, schools participating in UKRP were required to set aside 18 hours for delivery. Schools implemented sessions weekly or fortnightly, and most split the required hours into one-hour sessions (range 50-100 minutes). ‘DISA’ and the ‘Social and Emotional Learning Resources’ intervention comprised of 10, 30 minute sessions delivered over two months. ‘DISA’ was delivered weekly for 90 minutes. ‘The Hummingbird Project’ consisted of six weekly, one-hour sessions.

All authors in this category responded to the consultation and shared additional information, which gave insight into the ways the interventions addressed social media use informally. Garmy and colleagues (2015) described ‘DISA’ offered students the opportunity to discuss topics they felt were important and noted that social media was something that came up in the course and was highly relevant. Similarly, Platt and colleagues (2020) reported that several groups of students participating in the intervention linked social media use and online activities to
mental health and happiness in their discussions. Challen and colleagues (2013) shared that students were invited to draw on their own experiences of interpersonal situations and challenges in discussions in UKRP, and that social media and online activities were raised in this context. The ‘Social and Emotional Learning Resources’ programme (Midford et al., 2017) included an activity in which students critically appraised scenarios about peer relationships, some of which encouraged them to think about the online part of people’s relationships and the influence of social media.

Coverage of benefits and risks or potential harms of social media use

Given issues around social media and online activities in these interventions took place informally and largely in the context of discussions driven by participating students, it was not possible to determine the extent to which risks and benefits were considered.

Theoretical or therapeutic basis of the interventions

Two interventions were founded in the principles of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) (Challen et al., 2013; Garmy et al., 2015) and sought to provide psychoeducation and skills such as identifying activating events, challenging thoughts, thinking errors. In both, social and communication skills were also covered. The ‘Social and Emotional Learning Resources’ programme (Midford et al., 2017) and ‘The Hummingbird Project’ (Platt et al., 2020) drew on social and emotional learning principles and positive psychology respectively.

Category three: Interventions including social media use in control or usual treatment condition curriculum (n=1)

Intervention components and features
‘Strong Minds’ was comprised of sixteen, 30-minute sessions delivered over three months by a Clinical Psychologist (Burckhardt, Manicavasagar, Batterham, & Hadzi-Pavlovic, 2016). As far as could be assessed from the article and in the absence of information from author consultation, the intervention programme did not appear to include any components related to social media use. However, the control group attended usual ‘pastoral care’ classes covering social and personal issues such as ‘management of social media’.

Coverage of benefits and risks or potential harms of social media use

From the brief information presented in the article, it appears students in the control group in Year 10 received classes about ‘cyber issues’ (e.g. managing online harassment, long term consequences of online activities), suggesting a focus on risks of social media use.

Theoretical or therapeutic basis of the interventions

‘Strong Minds’ drew on a combination of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and Positive Psychology (PP). It was unclear whether the pastoral care classes had a theoretical or therapeutic basis.

Category four: No evidence of content on social media use in the interventions (n=48)

Forty-nine studies were allocated into category four, of which 29 authors participated in the consultations (Appendix 2, Supplementary Table 1). Three themes were derived from the comments provided by authors to develop an understanding of why social media use was not addressed in the interventions: (1) the rise of social media use, (2) recognition of the impact of social media on wellbeing, and (3) practical constraints.
The rise of social media use

A frequently cited reason social media had not been included in interventions was the timing of the work in relation to author’s perceptions of when social media emerged and use boomed in popularity amongst young people. This theme arose in ten author responses. Two authors explained that social media was not available to their awareness when they conducted their work (data collection for two studies occurred around 2005). One said they evaluated an established intervention that pre-dated social media. One author responded that to the knowledge of their research team, social media was not common when they undertook their study, though acknowledged the possibility it may have been amongst others. Some authors made reference to the popularity of social media use in their particular setting (e.g. country) or amongst the specific age group they were studying, but most spoke about popularity and use in general terms. As well as increased popularity of social media over time, authors noted that between the early 2010s and now, there had been significant changes in both how young people use social media and how much time they spend on these platforms.

Recognition of the impact of social media use on wellbeing

A sense of unfolding understanding of the impact of social media use on wellbeing was expressed by seven authors, who made distinctions between what was known in the field then and what is known now. Four felt the impact of use on wellbeing was unclear at the time of the development and implementation of their work, describing a lack of evidence base in the literature to support the inclusion of social media use in their interventions. Whilst some authors expressed a current view that it is important for wellbeing interventions to address social media use, some reflected they had not realised this or considered it at the time of their work. One author shared that because they had not realised how influential social media
was for young people, in their decision-making about what could feasibly be included in the intervention programme, social media use had not been prioritised.

**Practical constraints**

Nine authors of studies allocated to category four explained that social media use was outside the scope of the intervention they evaluated. Reasons reported were: the intervention was founded or focused on specific theories, models, or approaches (e.g. Positive Psychology), coverage of social media use in relation to wellbeing was not an aim of the study or intervention, and social media was not seen as relevant to intervention themes, activities, or strategies. Two authors talked about the challenges of fitting in social media use as a topic in their intervention, citing it wasn’t covered due to lack of time and already full programmes.

**Additional themes from consultation data**

Three additional themes were generated across all consultation responses ($n=38$), capturing ideas arising in the reflections of authors of interventions that did and did not include content on social media. These were: (1) young people driving discussions around social media use, (2) applicability of model-specific wellbeing interventions to social media use, and (3) future directions for wellbeing interventions.

**Young people driving discussions around social media use**

There was evidence that when interventions covered social media use in an informal way, this happened because young people had actively raised the topic. Two authors talked about how young people had introduced social media in discussions and activities during the interventions. One of the authors reflected they felt this demonstrated social media use was highly relevant to young people.
Applicability of model-specific wellbeing interventions to social media use

Some authors offered that although their intervention programmes did not address social media use directly, skills learned in the intervention would be relevant and could be used by young people to mitigate the impact of social media use on wellbeing or relationships. For example, if use was causing a young person stress or interpersonal problems. In another study, young people were invited to provide personal examples in workbook and classroom activities, and the author speculated on the possibility they would have selected examples related to social media use. Another author described an approach whereby social media would be addressed as a stressor if it was identified as such by young people in the intervention. One author said they had no formal records of young people discussing social media in relation to stress-related experiences, but suggested it may have been possible.

Future directions for wellbeing interventions

Seven authors made reference to the need for future wellbeing interventions for young people to include social media use. Four of whom described related projects currently underway involving the development of new programmes or modification of their existing interventions. Others said they had not embarked on work to revise their interventions but felt this would be appropriate and important if any further revisions were to take place. Involvement in this consultation was taken by one author as a suggestion to modify their intervention manual, whilst another said this enquiry about their intervention had given them pause to consider the relevance of social media use, which they appreciated. One workgroup was particularly emphatic about the inclusion of social media in school wellbeing programmes, advocating for it to be a permanent part of mental health promotion for young people.
Discussion

Social media use amongst young people has become a key area of interest in the field of mental health and wellbeing (Keles, McCrae, & Grealish, 2020). As such, there have been calls for schools to be involved in provision of interventions to mitigate risks and promote ways of using social media that support wellbeing and mental health (UK CMOs, 2019, pp.2). This review provides an overview of universal school-based interventions offering support around social media use, including programmes with a specific focus and broader wellbeing and mental health interventions covering social media use within the programme content. The review yields insights into the characteristics of the intervention programmes, including whether social media use was part of the planned curriculum, whether risks and opportunities of social media use were broached, and theoretical foundations. Consultations with study authors supplemented the literature search, providing clarification of intervention content and, where social media use was not a component of the intervention, offering insight into rationales for this.

Few school-based universal mental health and wellbeing interventions and programmes addressing social media use were found. Only one intervention with a specific focus on social media use was located, along with six general wellbeing interventions that addressed social media use in the planned curriculum, four that covered the topic because it was raised by young people and one the included content in the control group curriculum. This suggests that, as hypothesised, there may be gaps in the provision of support around social media use, which corroborates with some young people’s accounts of receiving no or little support at school (O’Reilly et al., 2018).

Interventions that address social media use

Content and delivery
The intervention specifically addressing social media use was brief and comprised a task completed either independently or in collaboration with parents, and a teacher-led classroom session (Vanderhoven, Schellens, & Valcke, 2016). By contrast, the broader wellbeing interventions identified (Golan et al., 2013; Fitzpatrick et al., 2013; Allara et al., 2019; Lakes et al., 2019; Bono et al., 2020; Cejudo et al., 2020) were classroom-based and facilitated by teachers, researchers, or clinicians, with no involvement from parents, and were longer-term programmes spanning weeks and involving multiple sessions.

Multiple approaches were adopted across the interventions to promote learning and awareness of issues around social media use and develop media literacy including teaching (e.g. psychoeducation), interactive activities, and creative approaches (e.g. art, role plays). Two interventions were distinct in that they were classroom-based, but incorporated technology or online activities. This was via a gaming platform (Cejudo et al., 2020) and a social media-like platform (Bono et al., 2020). Interest in use of digital technologies in the service of health and education is growing, reflecting the assimilation of the internet into most, if not all aspects of life (Punukollu & Marques, 2019). Education approaches have changed both teaching and learning processes with the integration of technology in school settings (Keser & Semerci, 2019). In health interventions, technology such as applications (‘apps’), websites and online resources, and the use of design tools such as gamification to promote engagement (Floryan, Chow, Schueller, & Ritterband, 2020) have been used. Amongst young people health apps are reportedly well accepted and could promote access to interventions (Punukollu & Marques, 2019).

Coverage of risks and opportunities

The sole intervention that was designed specifically to address social media use focused on risks and harms such as privacy, cyber-bullying, and sexual solicitation (Vanderhoven, Schellens, & Valcke, 2016). Similarly, the majority of the
broader wellbeing interventions identified to have content on social media use appeared to be oriented in this way, covering personal safety concerns, exposure to distressing content, abuse of technology, addiction, and self-image, body image, self-esteem, and comparisons. These online experiences have been flagged in the literature as risk factors for mental health concerns (Nesi, 2020).

In terms of prevalence, studies have reported between 24 and 57 percent of adolescents have experienced some kind of online risk event (Livingstone & Smith, 2014). McHugh, Wisniewski, Rosson, and Carroll (2018) point out that it would be unrealistic to suggest exposure to these risks can be prevented, neither would restricting online behaviours provide an adequate solution, rather risks should be addressed to build young people’s resilience in these encounters. This supports that addressing risks as a component of interventions to support young people with social media use is likely to be relevant. However, it is frequently reported in the literature that despite young people being aware of risks, and indeed expressing concerns about issues like privacy (Barnes, 2006) and potential negative impact on mental health, they continue to use a wide range of social media (O’Reilly et al., 2018), to self-disclose on these platforms (Cheung et al., 2015), and often articulate risks in general and abstract terms as happening to others (O’Reilly, 2020).

O’Reilly and colleagues (2018) note that adolescents can ignore directives and advice about internet use, thus discussion and dialogue may be a more fruitful format for support. Several of the interventions described engaging young people in activities, discussions, and vignette work (Fitzpatrick et al., 2013; Golan et al., 2013; Vanderhoven, Schellens, & Valcke, 2016; Lakes et al., 2019). However, it is unclear to what extent these were didactic or directive in nature. Explicitly linking risks and associated behaviours may also be an effective strategy as in Vanderhoven, Schellens, and Valcke’s (2016) intervention, which aimed to enhance awareness of risks by associating them to examples of behaviours that might incur these risks. Optimisation of behavioural change may be important to elicit, not only...
understanding, but action from young people towards using social media in ways that support their wellbeing. This was considered by Vanderhoven, Schellens, & Valcke (2016) who founded their intervention in Ajzen’s Theory of Planned Behaviour (1991) and built-in elements like parental involvement to strengthen behavioural intention.

A minority of interventions identified in this review appeared to approach social media use with a balanced acknowledgement of both risks and benefits (Golan et al., 2013) or reference to more positively oriented ideas such as healthy boundaries (Golan et al., 2013), citizenship, and informed decision-making (Fitzpatrick et al., 2013). However, the fact that most prioritised coverage of the negative impacts and risks suggests an alignment with a more ‘concern-centric’ approach to wellbeing (Orben, Weinstein, & Przybylski, 2020). From this viewpoint of health as absence of risk, disease and abnormal behaviour, social media is seen as a threat, therefore it makes sense that policy and intervention would be focused on reducing risk and attempts to encourage low risk behaviour, even so far as to conceptualise ‘healthy use’ of social media as use that is ‘risk free’ (Quennerstedt, 2019). Emphasis of risks and harms corresponds with broader public and media discourses around social media use (boyd, 2014). The utility of these discourses and the intervention and support strategies arising from them (e.g. protection-orientation approaches limiting and controlling) has been questioned by prominent figures in the field (boyd, 2014; Livingstone, Mascheroni, & Staksrud, 2018).

A notable consequence of these discourses and pathogenic views of social media and wellbeing, is that the benefits and opportunities of social media tend to be frequently overlooked and undervalued, particularly by adults who are in positions of power around research and intervention priorities. Increasingly, salutogenic ideas are being put forward as an alternative which imply that young people should be offered opportunities to critically examine and discuss social media and explore different ways to ‘live a good life’ acknowledging the presence
and impact of digital issues (Quennerstedt, 2019). This is highly compatible with Livingstone and Third’s (2017) assertion that access to social media is a fundamental right of young people and Livingstone’s (2017) calls for strategies to empower young people to actively engage with society through media.

Model based approaches / theoretical underpinnings

Models and approaches the interventions covering social media use drew on were: Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), Positive Psychology (PP), and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Amongst interventions that did not include social media in a planned way, SEL and PP were also prominent, and additionally Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). The range of models observed in this review reflects the current dominant approaches amongst school-based wellbeing interventions for young people that have been identified in a number of reviews (O’Connor, Dyson, Cowdell, & Watson, 2017; Mackenzie & Williams, 2018). It makes sense that where curriculums were structured around specific principles of models, rather than wellbeing ‘topics’, social media was not necessarily included, and that either the topic was covered in a more unplanned way being raised by young people who applied the ideas to their own examples as speculated on or described by some consulted authors, or social media was not broached at all or considered outside the scope, focus, or aims of the intervention as other consulted authors commented.

An implication of this is that school-based wellbeing interventions adhering to model specific approaches may have utility and applicability to social media use in a general sense. A potential advantage of the use of these approaches and models is that each has a level of established evidence base across contexts and challenges (e.g. CBT; David, Cristea, & Hofmann, 2018). However, if social media is not in some way a planned part of the curriculum in a model-based wellbeing intervention, or indeed any intervention, coverage may be contingent on young people taking the
lead, as was highlighted in the consultations for this review. That they did so suggests young people recognise an association between the ways social media is used and wellbeing, and further may imply that school-based wellbeing interventions offer a context that feels appropriate for them to engage with these issues, which is promising. A possible drawback of not explicitly including social media as part of the curriculum of wellbeing programmes and relying on young people to raise it in discussions might be variation in what is and isn’t discussed within and between schools, which may result in gaps in provision and missed opportunities for useful support. It would be beneficial to establish the views, preferences, and offered solutions of young people around this dilemma.

**Exploring why social media use was not included in intervention curriculums**

Although social media has now been available for around two decades, the outcomes, consequences, and impacts of use on young people were not immediately evident and continue to be debated in the field (Schønning, Hjetland, Aarø, & Skogen, 2020). Indeed, several consulted authors offered the lack of clear evidence base in the field as an explanation for not covering social media in their interventions. Social media use, and the type and amount of platforms and content available have increased and changed rapidly in recent years, which Orben (2020b) posits has resulted in an incomplete and incohesive body of knowledge around wellbeing and social media use amongst young people. Arguably, the pace of change and development in social media use amongst young people may also challenge the ability of research and education to respond to calls for evidence-based support by developing interventions, or integrating social media into existing programmes, and implementing these in school settings. Thus, the finding of this review that only a small pool of interventions appear to cover social media may reflect this challenge of keeping pace and maintaining relevance in a rapidly
evolving field when the development, evaluation, modification, publication, and implementation processes are often lengthy (Morris, Wooding, & Grant, 2011).

The responses of consulted authors offered insight into perceptions of social media use across time, reflecting the movement from initial awareness of the existence of platforms when impact on wellbeing was not yet in the spotlight in research, to observations of increased popularity and use amongst young people and developing understandings of potential impact on wellbeing, to current considerations of social media use as highly influential and important in young people’s lives and to their wellbeing, which appears to map on to broader societal and research developments and perspectives in the field (Livingstone, Mascheroni, & Staksrud, 2018). A high proportion of consulted authors related the absence of social media as an intervention topic to trends in social media use and broader research agendas at the time they undertook the work, suggesting these contextual factors influenced decision-making. This rationale was cited by authors across the majority of the time span covered by the review (2003-current), even as recently as 2018.

**Strengths and limitations**

Support was sought from the project supervisor Marc Tibber (MT) throughout the review process, and in decision-making around feasibility, efforts were made to ensure ability to address the research questions and achieve the study purpose was not compromised as recommended by Levac, Colquhoun, & O’Brien (2010). In documenting the process of this review, care was taken to demonstrate how methodology had been implemented in a transparent way, provide justification for decisions limiting the scope of the work, and adhere to established frameworks as far as possible to add rigour to the process (Arksey & O’Malley, 2005). However, a number of decisions on methodology were made from a pragmatic perspective based on capacity and some compromises were necessary around recommended
practice for scoping reviews. Scoping reviews lend themselves to broad and comprehensive investigations of evidence in a particular field (Davis, Drey, & Gould, 2009). However, resources above and beyond the remit of a single researcher would be required in order to investigate the field to optimal levels of rigour. Levac, Colquhoun, and O'Brien (2010) acknowledge this is a common challenge faced even by teams of researchers undertaking scoping reviews that often results in trade-offs between breadth, comprehensiveness, and feasibility.

In the screening, appraisal of eligibility, and data extraction phases of reviews, the involvement of multiple independent reviewers is recommended as best practice to reduce bias and data extraction errors, which may impact on the results and conclusions of the review (Mathes, Klaßen, & Pieper, 2017). As such it is important to acknowledge a limitation of this work is that it was carried out by a single researcher. Prior to publication, the searches, screening, assessment of eligibility, and extraction would need to be repeated in partnership with at least one other researcher.

A strength of the review was the inclusion of a consultation exercise, which is encouraged by Arksey and O'Malley (2005) and considered to add ‘value’ and enhance the utility of results (Oliver, 2001). The value of the consultations in this study was that they gave insight into social media use emerging as a research interest over time within the field of adolescent mental health and wellbeing which appears to have influenced decision-making on inclusion of the topic in interventions. A key benefit of the consultations was that they enabled the detection of content on social media use in interventions that could not be derived from reading the published articles alone. Given consultations are considered an optional addition to scoping studies, there is little in the way of detailed guidelines for this aspect of the review methodology, so it was difficult to compare this consultation against others featured in the literature or to formally measure the quality of the exercise.
Though this review identified interventions from a broad range of geographic locations implemented in diverse education systems, the majority were developed and implemented in Western cultural contexts or high-income countries. Consequently, the review likely reflects Western-centric understandings of the relationship between social media use, wellbeing and mental health, how to intervene to support young people, and what should be addressed in such interventions, which may lack relevance, utility, and applicability beyond Western cultural contexts.

**Recommendations for future work and conclusions**

This review suggests there may be a gap in provision of support delivered via universal, school-based interventions for young people to use social media in ways that promote wellbeing. As such, further work is needed to develop new or modify existing wellbeing interventions to include social media use, given it is an influential part of their lives, and is likely to continue to be (O’Reilly *et al.*, 2018). Integrating coverage of social media use into broader wellbeing interventions and utilising existing, well-established models may be useful, and importantly these kinds of interventions may be perceived by young people as an acceptable context for provision of this support. From organisational and logistical perspectives, schools will require support to successfully roll out evidence-based wellbeing interventions (Vostanis *et al.*, 2013). Policy makers should attend to the ways in which this may be achieved.

A challenge for wellbeing interventions is to find a way to empower young people to drive the agenda for exploration of what is relevant to them, avoid simply adhering to pre-defined goals or topics based on notions of what is relevant established by society, education, or adults (Giroux, 2004; Quennerstedt, 2019), yet provide enough direction to ensure social media is covered consistently. Centring young people in the development and implementation of wellbeing interventions is
crucial to ensure support resonates with them and may also offer a way to keep pace with the rapid and ever-evolving nature of social media and the issues that arise (Orben, 2020b). In line with rights-based perspectives on social media use amongst young people (Livingstone et al., 2014) and salutogenic approaches to wellbeing, which prioritise the best interests of young people and seek to optimise their experiences with social media (Quennerstedt, 2019), curriculums should reflect opportunities and benefits as well as risks, and crucially avoid perpetuating discourses of moral panic around social media by demonising use and promoting strategies around monitoring and restriction (boyd, 2014; O'Reilly et al., 2018).

Further, Goodyear, Armour, and Wood (2018) suggest that the role of educators may be to support young people to develop skills to reflect critically on the things they encounter through social media and facilitate discussions about their experiences and their relationships to popular culture that do not marginalise their understandings or behaviours (McCuaig & Quennerstedt, 2018).

Conclusions around the effectiveness of the identified interventions cannot be made on the basis of this review, as examination of outcomes and effectiveness was outside the scope of this work. However, should workgroups seek to build on this work to develop new interventions or modify existing wellbeing interventions to include social media use, enquiries around effectiveness will be necessary in line with recommendations outlined in guidance frameworks for the development and evaluation of complex interventions (O’Cathain et al., 2019).
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Part 2: Empirical paper

Reflections on social media participation in young people and parents during the COVID-19 global pandemic: towards an understanding of the barriers and facilitators to use that support wellbeing
Abstract

**Aims:** This study aimed to (1) explore perspectives of young people and parents on social media use during the COVID-19 pandemic, and (2) better understand how young people can use social media in ways that support wellbeing.

**Methods:** Nine parents and eight young people participated in semi-structured interviews remotely via video in July 2020. Thematic analysis was performed on the data.

**Results:** Four main themes were derived: (1) impact of the pandemic on social media use, (2) role of social media in young people’s lives, (3) challenges of social media, and (4) supporting young people to use social media in ways that promote wellbeing. Fourteen subthemes were identified.

**Conclusions:** Social media use increased within families during the pandemic, and was perceived as crucial for maintaining social connections. Benefits of social media were acknowledged. However, fear of missing out, exclusion, and comparisons were identified as challenges to wellbeing. School support was thought by young people to lack relevance. Barriers to parental support included lack of knowledge and experience, and young people favoured peer support. Findings implicate peer-based models to promote social media use that supports wellbeing, led by young people and in line with rights-based perspectives on digital technology use.
Introduction

Social media use amongst young people

Social media are a socio-cultural phenomenon that have become an ubiquitous feature in everyday life (Krishen, Berezan, Agarwal & Kachroo, 2016) for people all over the world with users passing the 3.8 billion mark (We Are Social, 2020). Encompassing blogs, social networking sites (e.g. Facebook), micro blogs (e.g. Twitter), content sharing sites (e.g. Instagram), Wikis, and video gaming sites, social media platforms offer users the opportunity to generate, co-construct, and share content (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). Internationally and across different socio-economic contexts, reported rates of social media use are highest amongst young people than any other age group (Goodyear, Armour, & Wood, 2018), and they are prolific drivers and consumers of online culture. The introduction of smartphones has facilitated easy access to these platforms (Twenge, Martin, & Campbell, 2018).

Opportunities and risks of social media

Whilst social media activity has been associated with benefits such as enhancing communication, social connection, technical skills (O’Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011), and opportunities for self-expression (Baker & White, 2010), use of these platforms has also introduced challenges and potential risks. Concerns raised include: cyberbullying and trolling (Griffiths, 2014; Kircaburun et al., 2019), dependency (Gardner & Davis, 2013), social alienation and impaired interpersonal skills (Turkle, 2017), accessing, creating, or sharing inappropriate content (e.g. pornographic or violent material), violations of privacy, depression, and sleep deprivation (O’Reilly et al., 2018). Worries around impact on physical and psychosocial wellbeing often centre around screen time (Asare, 2015).

Adolescence is often marked with periods of vulnerability during which times the scale, intensity, and pervasiveness of social media might have an amplifying effect (Goodyear & Armour, 2019). It is thought that young people may also be more
susceptible to risks associated with social media use as capacity for self-regulation may be limited and peer pressure tends to be more salient (O’Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011). Kirk (2019) emphasises that the effects of social media on health and wellbeing, whether beneficial or harmful, are mediated differently between groups and individuals by key systems and contexts such as family, peers, school, community, local cultures, and levels of deprivation.

Implications for support

Goodyear, Armour, and Wood (2018) suggest that in order to support young people it is necessary to know how they engage with social media, what they derive and learn from it, and how their behaviours might be influenced as a consequence. Further, support must be grounded in the understanding that social media is an extension of self and a primary tool for communication and social engagement for young people. Livingstone (2017) advocates for a media literacy approach whereby young people are supported to develop skills and knowledge through active participation and engagement with media and digital technology, which will enhance their ability to benefit from the opportunities of social media. Opportunities for schools to play a key role in supporting young people with media literacy and awareness of the opportunities and risks of social media have been highlighted (Goodyear, Wood, & Armour, 2019).

Parents and guardians often take a role in monitoring young people’s online activities, and values, practices, and media literacy are typically initially shaped within the family system (Livingstone & Helsper, 2008). As such they may be well placed to support young people to reflect on the consequences and impact of their social media use on themselves and others and develop skills to support use. Indeed, parental input is increasingly viewed as a potentially valuable tool in the implementation of public policy strategies to safeguard young people in their use of social media (Livingstone & Bober, 2006).
Challenges around the feasibility of parental support have been identified. Foremost, parents may lack appreciation of the opportunities that can arise from the ways young people use and navigate social media (Goodyear & Armour, 2019). From the perspectives of young people, parents may lack credibility as guides to digital technology as ‘digital immigrants’ (Prensky, 2001), notwithstanding that during adolescence young people tend to make efforts to distance themselves from primary attachment figures in pursuit of autonomy (Salgado, González, & Yáñez, 2021) which may mean parental efforts are rejected or advice around safety and risk is discarded (Livingstone & Bober, 2004). An additional challenge may be the digital literacy of parents themselves, their ability to consider the impact of their own social media use, and the relationship with social media and technology they model to young people in their family environment. This may be understood by applying Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977), which suggests if parents are not able to use social media in a way that supports their own wellbeing, through learning, their children may be expected to have similarly poor relationships with social media and technology.

**Context of COVID-19 pandemic**

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-2019) pandemic has posed a severe threat to public health globally, and unprecedented steps to prevent the spread of the virus have been implemented by governments since mid-March 2020. In the UK this has included national periods of quarantine during which the public were instructed to remain at home, non-essential businesses and public places including schools were closed, and restrictions were placed on social contact with others (Davillas & Jones, 2021). Though initial restrictions were proposed to last a few weeks, subsequently they have been implemented to varying degrees for over a year, with rules around social distancing changing frequently (Kamin, 2020).
Negotiating limitations and new ways of living, learning, and socialising has undoubtedly been challenging for all. However, young people may be particularly impacted by the unforeseen and ongoing nature of the disruption to their social lives and education (Hamilton, Nesi, & Choukas-Bradley, 2020). Perhaps unlike other age groups, adolescents as prolific users of social media may be better able to adapt and use skills learned through familiarity with these platforms to keep socially connected (Anderson & Jiang, 2018). Social media can be a prominent and influential source of information, connection, and social support during crisis (Drouin, McDaniel, Pater & Toscos, 2020). It can also offer a platform for individuals exposed to trauma to process their experiences (Cumiskey & Hjorth, 2019). However, platforms have the potential to be misused to spread misinformation (Bradshaw & Howard, 2019), incite fear (Fung et al., 2016), and promote incorrect and potentially harmful behavioural action (World Health Organisation [WHO], 2019). The pandemic may shape and alter behaviours of young people around social media in the short, mid and long term. Indeed, reports published in April 2020 documented a 61% increase in social media use since the onset of the pandemic (KANTAR, 2020), suggesting that social media could potentially be an even stronger presence than usual in young people’s lives.

There have been calls for research to assist with understanding the psychological and behavioural responses of communities to the COVID-19 pandemic (WHO, 2020). This study, with its focus on wellbeing and social media use amongst young people provided an excellent opportunity to capture a snapshot of social media use at this exceptional time to add to the developing understanding of the psychosocial impact of COVID-19 in this population. Furthermore, it was anticipated the study might yield insight into the role of social media in helping or hindering young people to cope with the stress of experiencing social, economic, and political phenomena that have the potential to fundamentally disrupt and reorganise structures of local and global communities.
Aims

This study aimed to explore perspectives of young people and parents on social media use during the COVID-19 pandemic through interviews with dyads of young people and parents / guardians (within a family). A second, broader aim of the study was to better understand how young people can use social media in ways that support their wellbeing, seeking the views of both young people and parents. This work is intended to feed into future projects with the ultimate aim of developing an intervention/education package or support strategies for young people which may include parents.

The Interpersonal-Connection-Behaviours (ICB) Framework (Clark, Algoe, & Green, 2018) was drawn on to understand the impact of social media use on wellbeing. The ICB framework posits that the impact of social media use on wellbeing relates to whether it promotes or impedes innate human desires for acceptance and belonging. Whilst behaviours that promote connection are linked with positive outcomes, complex and negative outcomes arise from use that does not foster connection.

The study was linked with a larger scale quantitative project undertaken by Maya Bowri (MB) and Ghiselle Green (GG). Researchers formed a working group supervised by Dr Marc Tibber (MT) and Dr Emma Silver (ES).

Methods

Design

A qualitative study was conducted, with semi-structured interviews selected as the primary medium for data collection. In addition, basic quantitative data including demographics and basic information about social media use were gathered to characterise and locate the sample.
Consultation with young people

A consultation session took place in March 2020 with the Pupil Welfare Committee of the school to obtain feedback on information sheets, the quantitative questionnaire, and an initial draft of the topic guide, which were then refined. Details are provided in Appendix 3.

Topic guide

Interviews were conducted with a topic guide (Appendix 4) which was organised into themes corresponding to components of Ajzen’s Theory of Planned Behaviour (1991): (1) patterns of social media use (behaviour), (2) reflections on social media use and its impact (beliefs, attitudes, intentions), (3) perception of control over social media use (perceived behavioural control), and (4) barriers and facilitators to using social media in a way that supports wellbeing (intention). The order of presentation of questions to young people was considered from a developmental perspective and with recommendations from the consultation in mind. Capacity to reflect, self-awareness, and ability to regulate cognitive functioning increases with age (Bakracevic Vukam, & Licardo, 2010), therefore it was expected that ability to engage in meta-cognitive thinking and reflection may vary across the sample. The researcher monitored the responses of young people to determine whether to progress to more complex questions, using scaffolding and prompts. The topic guide was applied flexibly and opportunities were sought for participants to engage in, co-construct, and influence the discussion and introduce important topics of enquiry relevant to them (Ruark & Fielding-Miller, 2016), but perhaps unfamiliar or not privileged by the researcher.
Measures

Quantitative data was gathered using a shortened version of a questionnaire designed as part of a larger scale quantitative project (Appendix 5). Pertinent to this study, data were gathered on demographics (e.g. age, gender, school year) and patterns of social media use (e.g. number of social media platforms, hours of use).

Participants

Eligibility criteria

Young people aged 11-18 years who used social media and had a parent or guardian willing to participate in interviews were eligible. It was not a requirement for dyads to reside in the same household.

Recruitment

A non-clinical sample of young people aged between 11-18 years attending a co-educational, fee paying independent school (Appendix 6) was recruited alongside a parent. Study information was disseminated via email to all parents by ES in June 2020 (Appendix 7). Interviews were allocated on a first come, first served basis with additional participants placed on a waiting list.

Procedure

Participants were emailed consent forms, a Microsoft Teams meeting invitation and instructions for access including a guide (Appendix 8). At the start of the video call, LY ensured the connection was working and discussed provisions for connection failure.

LY met with both the parent and young person together at the start of the interview to give a brief overview of the procedure, check participants had read and understood the information sheets (Appendix 9), and explain confidentiality. Provision for aftercare and debriefing was also outlined. Participants were invited to
ask questions. Informed consent and assent for participation was obtained verbally and in written form (Appendix 10).

Members of the dyad were each interviewed in their own right, but young people were offered the choice to have a parent present and whether to be interviewed first or second. In the planning stages, LY reflected on the benefits and potential pitfalls of a parent being present during the young person’s interview from the perspective of the potential power imbalance this configuration might create, the impact on ability to build rapport with the young person, and how far the young person would be able to openly share their experiences, particularly on a potentially sensitive topic as social media use (Gardner & Randall, 2012).

On this dilemma, Kutrováž (2017) suggests that young people can be empowered when they decide about the conditions of the research. For example, participation, location, or aspects of the research process. Furthermore, Kutrováž asserts that offering free choices can reduce the distance between researcher and participant, which enhances the likelihood data obtained will be valid and reliable. LY felt that the decision around presence of a parent might constitute a free choice about the research process. It was also considered that some young people may also be reassured by the presence of a parent (Hill, 2005) as it was assumed the young people would unlikely have participated in research before, and so this option might be beneficial as a means of helping the young person to feel comfortable in the researcher’s presence and with the interview process. It was not expected that all young people would prefer this option and the decision was led by the young person’s preference.

LY invited the parent and young person to come back together at the end of the interviews for a debriefing, checking both were satisfied with the process and had not been caused distress. No dyads requested additional post study support and LY did not perceive any risk of harm to participants. Dyads received a £15 voucher as compensation for their time. A follow up email was sent to all participants
containing a fact sheet about social media use and an information sheet with details of mental health support (Appendix 11).

**Ethics and Data Protection**

The study (Project ID 17431/001) was granted full ethical approval by the University College London (UCL) Research Ethics Committee (REC) in February 2020 (Appendix 12). Given the sample included young people, capacity was considered in the process of obtaining consent in line with the British Psychological Society (BPS) Code of Human Research Ethics (2014). Data protection procedures were approved by the UCL Data Protection department and were according to the provisions of Data Protection Act (2018) and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (2018). Safeguarding procedures were agreed between the research team and the school, including a process for screening and reporting issues and managing distress.

*Confidentiality*

Measures to safeguard participant confidentiality were necessary as the interviews were conducted virtually from LY’s home. To minimise the risk interviews would be overheard, LY conducted them in a room separate from other members of the household. LY checked participants were also satisfied with the level of privacy in their environment.

**Researcher position**

LY approached this work from the stance that researcher subjectivity is inherent in the research process and therefore made efforts to be critically conscious of the influence of their own self-location, position, and interests throughout (Pillow, 2003). LY is a White British, middle class, female from the North of England who has been afforded opportunities to pursue education to a high level,
and has a background in research. LY is a casual user of a limited number of social media platforms (see Part Three).

Across social and cultural constructs of childhood and adulthood, children are always ‘other’ to adults and vice versa, and this ‘otherness’ is located in the power differentials between the researcher and young participants (Bucknall, 2014, p.81). To address the impact of ‘otherness’ in the interview process, the researcher must cultivate their awareness and reflect on ways to best position themselves to establish rapport with participants. LY perceived some potential alignment and familiarity with both the young people and parents, particularly related to educational attainment and class. However, points of ‘otherness’ included age across both participant groups and LY not having children in relation to parents.

**Analyses**

LY fully transcribed one interview, and the remaining were uploaded to Trint, a professional artificial intelligence based service approved by UCL. All transcripts were reviewed by LY for accuracy and participant identifying information was deleted. Thematic analysis was applied to the data following the process outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). To establish familiarity and create a foundation for active engagement with the data (Terry, Hayfield, Clarke, & Braun, 2017), transcripts were read multiple times. When an overall sense of the data was achieved, codes were generated. Codes captured LY’s interpretation of the data related to the research questions and additional points of interest that arose during analysis (Terry *et al.*, 2017), therefore this process and the data itself was subjective and context-bound (Bucknall, 2014). An eclectic approach was taken whereby combinations of coding methods were applied (e.g. in vivo, holistic) (Saldaña, 2016). DClin Psy colleagues, Holly Summers (HS) and Grace West-Masters (GWM) independently coded two transcripts having been briefed on the study aims (Barker & Pistrang, 2005) (Appendix 13). Discussions were held post coding. Coding was dynamic and
iterative with revisions taking place throughout multiple cycles (see Appendix 14 for coding and mapping examples). Broader level themes were derived within which extracts of coded data were organised in tabular form. Themes then underwent review and were refined aiming to ensure they provided a coherent account of the data (Terry et al., 2017) and addressed the research questions.

With respect to quantitative data, only basic descriptive statistics are presented as the purpose was to characterise / locate the sample. This study therefore involved a basic level of integration of qualitative and quantitative data, classified as ‘Level 1’ in Ross and Onwuegbuzie’s quantitative analysis continuum (Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013).

Results

Demographic information

Eight dyads of parents and young people participated in interviews in July 2020. Dyad characteristics are provided in Table 2.1. The median age was 48.5 years (interquartile range = 2) for parents, and 12 years (interquartile range = 2) for young people. Half of the young people were in Year 7, 38% were in Year 10, and 25% were in Year 9 when interviewed. The majority of parents (78%) and young people (75%) were female. All participants were of a White British or European background. Partial demographic data were provided by three of the dyads. Interviews lasted on average 87 minutes (range = 57-104).

Only one interview took place over the telephone due to connectivity problems. In one case, both parents wished to be interviewed. Two young people opted to be interviewed in the presence of their participating parent. Notably they were amongst the youngest in the sample. Of these, one young person was not present for their parent’s interview as they had another planned activity to go to, and the other expressed a preference to stay for their parent’s interview, which was negotiated and agreed between them.
Table 2.1 Dyad characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dyad</th>
<th>Gender of young person</th>
<th>Age of young person</th>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Participating parent(s)</th>
<th>Age of parent</th>
<th>Parent present during young person’s interview</th>
<th>Young person present during parent’s interview</th>
<th>Type of interview</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Father</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mother &amp; Father</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Mother</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Video</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Key: F = Female, M=Male, NS=Not Specified

Patterns of social media use

Six young people (75%, 6/8) and seven parents (78%, 7/9) returned questionnaires. However, within measures some items were not completed by all participants. Parents reported use of an average of four social media platforms ($n=6$, range = 2-10) compared to six by young people ($n=6$, range = 2-11). Fifty seven percent of parents (4/7) reported using social media for up to an hour per day. Forty percent of young people (2/5) reported use up to an hour per day, equally 40% reported use 3-5 hours per day. Summaries of data collected on platforms used, time spent on types of social media platforms and offline activities are presented in Appendix 15.
Overview of qualitative findings

Four main themes and fourteen subthemes were derived from the data (Table 2.2). ‘Impact of the pandemic on social media use’ presents young people’s and parents’ accounts of the ways in which their social media use changed, how and why it was used and issues that were prominent on social media, as well as their projections around how use might change post pandemic.

Table 2.2 List of themes and subthemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Themes</th>
<th>Subthemes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Impact of the pandemic on social media use</td>
<td>1.a Changes to social media use</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.b Function of social media</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.c Context of the pandemic</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.d Social media use post pandemic</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Role of social media in young people’s lives</td>
<td>2.a Benefits &amp; opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.b Views &amp; opinions of social media use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.c Managing &amp; shaping young people’s views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Challenges of social media</td>
<td>3.a Interface with offline activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.b Interpersonal challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.c Self-evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.d Perceived risks &amp; harms</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Supporting young people to use social media in</td>
<td>4.a Experiences of support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ways that promote wellbeing</td>
<td>4.b Relevance &amp; acceptability of support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.c Ideas for support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘Role of social media in young people’s lives’ documents views on what social media offers, how social media is perceived from the perspective of parents and young people, and how social media can influence ways of thinking. ‘Challenges of social media’ highlights aspects of social media use that can have a negative impact on
wellbeing. ‘Supporting young people to use social media in ways that promote wellbeing’ describes support young people have received to help them navigate social media use, the effectiveness and acceptability of this, and ideas for how support might be enhanced.

**Theme 1: Impact of the pandemic on social media use**

*(1a) Changes to social media use*

Social media use reportedly increased for all young people by their own and parents’ accounts, which was mainly attributed to more time to fill when normal routines and activities were stripped away. Three parents noted increased use across all family members. Increased use was conceptualised by more time spent on social media and devices by all participants. Previously, social media was seen by three parents as “peripheral” (Parent [P]04), and two parents and four young people described use as naturally limited by being at school and leading a busy life.

*...she was very busy and so for me then to spend her downtime as much as she wanted honestly on social media was fine, because I knew that she was at school a chunk of the day and then, you know, kind of doing really, really good <hobby> stuff... (P08)*

A subset of both young people (4/8) and parents (2/9) said they used social media in new ways due to the pandemic, for example using new platforms or features, which may not have felt necessary previously. Two young people reported they were already accustomed to using social media to connect with friends in lieu of in person socialising, for example during holidays. Four young people estimated that their activity and the content they saw online hadn’t really changed a great deal compared to pre-pandemic.
A factor contributing to changes in social media use during the lockdown was the relaxation of rules and boundaries previously implemented in normal routines, principally around time spent on social media and access to devices which was reported by five parents. Three parents felt it would be too challenging to uphold restrictions as phones were needed for some online school activities, they were having to juggle working from home, and there was more free time and fewer activities to fill it. Four parents attributed their permissiveness to the recognition social media was serving an important purpose to maintain social contact.

...we probably would have had a lot more rules in place, certainly over lockdown, where honestly there’s not an awful lot for them to do, a lot of those rules have kind of gone out of the window because they quite rightly are saying, "listen, we can’t see our friends", you know, it’s not safe to see our friends, this is the only way we can do it. (P08)

(1b) Function of social media during the pandemic

A key function of social media during the pandemic reported by all parents and young people was connecting with others remotely through chatting and shared activities (e.g. watching videos, gaming, social gatherings). Communicating via social media was seen as a substitute for in-person contact and was perceived by parents (8/9) to be necessary for young people to meet their need for social contact and to feel less isolated.

For two parents, this was the first instance they could see the value of social media, acknowledging it would be “difficult to continue a normal life” (P03) without it.

...coronavirus and lockdown was the first time I could really see some benefits for social media, I do think, erm, that actually without it, she could have been a lot more anx-... I mean it’s very difficult to know [...] I, I could for the first
time, I could really see a kind of important purpose for it, whereas pre lockdown, I would have said, [...] well, I can see that it’s fun and interesting and also quite dangerous, but you don’t actually need it. (P04)

Three young people expressed the feeling that though social media had been useful, contact over online platforms didn’t make up for seeing people. As well as helping maintain and strengthen current connections, social media enabled three young people and a parent to re-establish connections. Three parents reported using social media to support each other through the uncertainties of the pandemic. Six parents and a young person talked about family WhatsApp groups for sharing information about the virus, checking in on wellbeing, and maintaining moral.

I was posting in our little family chat little, either information about the virus or some positivity stuff. [...] she could see that I was using that social media space to help me keep safe by communicating with each of the kids. [...] some sort of like a support thing for me to know the kids are okay… (P01)

Two young people and four parents said social media was used for schoolwork. Social media was a source of news for young people (4/8), which was consistent with previous use according to young people and parents.

(1c) Context of the pandemic

Four parents talked about the pandemic being a challenging time for young people. Young people and parents described changes to their lives during the pandemic including loss of routines, activities, and socialising.

…my sense is that COVID-19 has had a huge effect… I think that in the same way that, you know, the Second World War shaped that generation of young people.
I think that this generation you know that are in that kind of early teens will be hugely affected by this because, I mean nothing could be taken for granted and I think they see that and I think that's why their beliefs and values and ambition have become more important to them. (P01)

Half of parents reported their children did not seem worried about their or their family's health, with worries around the disruption to their social life, hobbies, and school taking precedence, which corroborated with reports from young people. Two young people described that their parents had given them information about what was happening and two sets of parents from other dyads said there had been more opportunities to discuss events and be responsive to worries given the circumstances.

... I don't think I don't sense that <young person> feels isolated or afraid of what's happening with coronavirus, but that's not only because then of say social media, it's also the news and what we discuss about the news and what we... decisions we make ourselves in terms of kind of going out, not going out. (P02)

Three young people said social media had helped them deal with the impact of the pandemic, making them feel less isolated. Social media helped two young people to feel less concerned, whilst three others felt it had not affected their views or how they felt.

I think I'm less anxious because I know that, like my friends and family are safe and everything, because if there was no social media, then I wouldn't even know if one of my friends were dead probably. And that would not be very nice. (Y02)
Most young people (5/8) spoke about the Black Lives Matter movement, the widespread online participation they had observed, and their own engagement in posting and discussions.

*Well, there’s, what people are posting a lot now, the Black Lives Matter movement, especially in America. There’s a lot of that and just human rights stuff. All of that. I dunno, if corona’s kind of in the background.* (Y03)

Three parents also noted activism on social media, with one feeling as though this represented a shift in both atmosphere online and how the young person used social media.

*…it was a definite shift, sort of, you know, this is what I believe in, campaigning for stuff rather than using it as a friendly… you know, “aren’t we having a great time” like a sort of, um, you know? […] And I think covid, bringing it back to covid, the sort of…we're all getting in touch with our infallibility, you know our mortality. Um.. And I think that the whole energy of social media has shifted quite significantly.* (P01)

The same parent attributed this shift to the conditions of the pandemic, that it had “revealed inequalities” (P01) and was a catalyst for activism. Similar views were expressed by a young person.

*(1d) Social media use post pandemic*

Parents (5/9) and all young people estimated social media use would reduce post pandemic, though one parent and two young people anticipated this would not be “radical” (P07). There was also an expressed sense across all participants of there being less need for it once in person contact resumed.
Theme 2: Role of social media in young people's lives

(2a) Benefits & opportunities

Parents and young people cited multiple benefits of social media including encouragement, support, enjoyment, escapism, entertainment, humour, fun, creativity, and enrichment. The benefit of connecting with friends and like-minded others was raised almost universally across parents and young people, including a positive impact on mental wellbeing. Two young people said social media offered opportunities to meet new people online and offline.

...it's such an important thing and it's, you know, socially it is especially [...] the first thing people ask is "what's your Instagram?" And then you gave it to them and then you texted the next day and you made some friends. (Y04)

Four parents recognised that social media was an important aspect of young people's lives, not only for socialising, but communicating values and beliefs and expressing their identities and self.

...interestingly, I think it can impede their friendships if they don't have absolute kind of clear and open access to it [...] they really are missing out if they're not there, I think, you know, and it's just like anything any other part of life, you want to be there, what you want to be in the room where it happens kind of thing, you know? (P08)

Two young people affirmed these ideas, with one stating it is “the biggest part of my life” (Y04) and another describing it as a way for people to show “what they are like” (Y05).
(2b) Views and opinions of social media use

Reflecting on their young person’s social media use, all parents reported things had been largely unproblematic. Parents views of social media were mixed, with five acknowledging it could be “hugely positive” (P07), particularly if used in moderation and for the “right reasons” (P05). However, six reported disliking certain aspects of use, certain platforms, and its prominence in young people’s lives. Four parents made reference to generational differences in the way social media is both used and viewed.

I think that’s the trouble is that the I know that kids really, really is for them absolutely their real life, er, social media. I do get that. And, and there’s a real kind of generation kind of impasse on that between, between mine and hers. (P08)

Two young people raised generational differences, particularly the feeling that adults found it difficult to understand it and overestimate or homogenise the behaviours of young people.

I feel like older generations, like I don’t think it... cancel culture. I, I feel like older generations kind of like not like 'deep it' but kind of like make it sound like it's like a whole culture, [...] like it's not a whole culture that's just like, I don't know, but like I feel like a lot of like older generations, like kind of find a lot of reasons to like not like younger generations... (Y08)

Half of the parents expressed a wish to see their young person using social media less, which for some would also involve the young person participating in more activities offline.
I can imagine that if there would be no phone <directly to young person> you would play outside a bit more and you would possibly do a bit more drawing or reading a book. It's, it's, it's convenient kind of a way of just kind of isolating yourself, not, not really isolating yourself, but kind of keeping yourself busy and happy, but then not entirely socially. (P02)

These desires of parents were seemingly apparent to the young people as five said they thought their parents would like them to use it less or thought they spent too much time on it. Half of the young people said they believed their current social media use was acceptable to their parents. Young people themselves expressed an interest in spending less time on social media (4/8). Three parents shared that they wouldn't be against their young person using social media more to socialise. This wish was picked up by four young people.

… they want to make sure that nothing happens, but I don't, that's bad for me, but I think that they...they're happy that I'm kind of connecting with people. (Y07)

(2c) The role of social media in managing and shaping young people’s views

Two parents spoke about how powerful social media has become in people’s lives.

…it infiltrates part of your life, there’s no bit of you that, you know, that that feels like it's entirely free from that from that influence, if you engage, you know, if you choose to engage in it, obviously there was a choice about it. (P04)

A parent and two young people suggested social media might exert an influence in implicit ways, outside of conscious awareness. Two parents noticed that
social media could lead to young people doing or creating things both online and offline, not entirely for their own pleasure or intrinsic motivation, but for other people’s viewing.

...a lot of what she does [...] she wants me to film it so she can make, so it's quite focussed on “can we do something now so that you can film it so that you can, I can put it on my Instagram”. And I sort of, I get it, but I also am a bit resistant to that in the sense that I want to just do the <hobby> and enjoy it and do it for its own sake and not because of something she can create from it for other people’s, you know, whatever, viewing or whatever. And obviously it's for other people's viewing but ultimately for her sense of something. (P04)

Six young people talked about social media being able to change and influence views and opinions.

They can introduce me to a new topic and then sort of set like a thought in my head and then I can sort of come up with an opinion from that based off other things as well. (Y05)

Two parents were particularly emphatic about the potential for social media to shape young people’s views and impact their values, voicing concern about the current climate online.

...we asked (young person) [...] what would happen if she didn't agree with Black Lives Matter at school if she, if she didn't, she said “well I can't do that, it’s not possible”. [...] what I believe is happening is that social media is, um, is being manipulated and used as a tool by extremist organizations to, to manage and shape young people's views and that is a bit of a concern for me. (P01)
Similarly, three young people talked about echo chambers online, highlighting that not being exposed to other views could radicalise or polarize opinions.

I guess if you follow a lot of the same sort of people, then all you get from them is very, you know, it’s one of those things like everyone has like the same opinion, so it’s easy to become like super... think that everyone thinks like that... (Y03)

**Theme 3: Challenges of social media**

(3a) *Interface with offline activities*

Across all parents and half of the young people, social media was considered to interfere or distract from other tasks, taking up time they felt could be used for other activities, for instance hobbies, rest and relaxation, and active pursuits.

…I think if somebody spent too much time in their spare time instead of going doing exercise, instead of walking, stretching, you know. If she keeps sitting and watching social media, that's not very good for your health. (P03)

Relatedly, three parents and two young people talked about how absorbing social media can be and that it is easy to spend a lot of time on it without realising, particularly if used passively to scroll through content. However, four young people felt they were able to use social media to the extent they wanted to, as well as keeping up with everything else they needed or wanted to do both before and during the pandemic.
…before like lockdown, I used to be like busy and I used to do everything […] I sort of managed to do everything I wanted to do, like I did like my hobbies and I hung out with my friends […] if I’ve done everything else I want to do, like, there’s not a lot of point in just stopping using social media because then like, what am I meant to do? (Y08)

Eight parents perceived pressure on young people to be constantly responsive to others arising from the constant presence of devices and the increased social capacity social media facilitates, which they felt could be challenging to manage. Five parents considered their own adolescent experiences when it was possible to be unavailable to others.

When I came home after school, that was my space, there was no interference. I was home. I called my friend on the phone if I wanted, but if not, it doesn’t matter […] I could have my quiet time. This is something that doesn’t happen for <young person> […] if she’s happy with her friends, you know, it’s fantastic that she can be connected with them all the time, and on the other hand, if there is an issue, then it’s also magnified because she she’s never isolated. (P06b)

Particularly threatening to four parents was the intrusion of notifications from social media apps that they felt could be “destructive” (P03) and distract or disengage the young person from what they were doing, including conversations and mealtimes.

…the way that’s completely uncontrolled, you know, your phone pings and someone suddenly something pops up telling you something […] I find that absolutely awful about it. (P07)
(3b) Interpersonal challenges

Six parents and five young people cited examples of interpersonal challenges on social media, particularly those used for chatting including messages that had been upsetting or caused offense to others, arguments, conversations being shared beyond intended recipients, sharing of inappropriate content or misinformation, and others being unkind. The quick pace of communication, lack of ability to easily undo what has been said, involvement of multiple people, and social media offering cover for those who wish to “act out resentments and frustrations” (P01) were thought to contribute to these challenges.

... I was quite surprised with, you know, one of the <young people> was quite sort of... you know, everything was really fast, you could see the times, you know, there were short sentences really quick da, da, da, da, da, it was like a very intense dialogue. And you could see <they were> probably not in a very good mood. And it came out on the chat and <they were> sort of attacking <young person> (P05)

Feeling excluded and ‘Fear Of Missing Out’ (FOMO) were highlighted by three parents and three young people as having a negative impact on wellbeing.

I'm quite sure that seeing that maybe some, some of his friends have gone and done something together would immediately put the kind of negative sheen over his day, you know...oh right, they went out and I wasn't included. And that's sad. [...] I do think that's incredibly, erm, kind of insidious thing in life that I don't really want for him. (P07)

Two parents drew on their own pre-social media experiences, pointing out that these social challenges existed before, but had been amplified by the visibility of...
other people’s activities on social media. Similarly, young people who reported experiencing this talked about feeling annoyed or upset when they saw friends doing things without them online or when they had not been included in private stories on platforms like Instagram and Snapchat.

...at my last school, my primary school I, I do, I did sometimes kind of feel maybe a bit left out...from the other, kind of, my friends were all getting together which was mainly because my parents don’t know their parents as well, but I sometimes took it personally. (Y07)

One young person described feeling less anxious about FOMO after they had opened up to friends, and they had revealed similar feelings. Two young people reported spending time socialising on social media and offline to ensure they were not being left out of conversations and activities.

(3c) Self-evaluation

Four parents talked about beauty standards and the “obsession with looks” (P08) perpetuated by social media that they felt was concerning and could negatively impact body image. However, this was only mentioned by one young person (Y06) who added that social media messages around this could be contradictory, with “self-love” videos also being common online.

Comparisons were also seen as having a negative impact on wellbeing by parents and young people. Social media was seen by four parents as a vehicle for exposure to “the possibility of your own inadequacies” (P04). This idea also seemed to resonate with young people, four of whom talked about how seeing other people’s lives online could elicit unfavourable feelings about their own.
… basically that's the worst effect it has that we're talking about, like thinking your life is so much worse than someone else's because of seeing all the amazing stuff they posted [...] it's more of the time when you're kind of sitting in bed with nothing to think about on your own, that you kind of think, oh, I remember seeing this person with these friends and I wasn't there and stuff like that. (Y04)

One young person attributed the propensity to make comparisons to adolescence and alluded to the process of comparison being somewhat subconscious. They also indicated the amount of time spent on visual platforms like Instagram may increase the intensity of the impact on wellbeing.

…I think it can be quite toxic if you just like, I dunno, spend the entire day comparing yourself, which is really easy to do on Instagram. [...] I think it's pretty hard not to (compare), I pretty much compare myself to everything I see. [...] Doesn't really bug me that much but I mean, I dunno, even if you're not doing it consciously I think it's really hard as like a teenager not to do that. (Y06)

Two parents described their concerns were based on their own experiences. It could be difficult for young people to reconcile their feelings with the knowledge that what is presented on social media does not often reflect reality. Two young people described the distinction between content on main feeds and private stories, which were considered a place to post more 'real' content to a select audience.

I have like two private stories. I have one which is like friends and then like close friends and then one which is like really, really close friends, which is good because it means you don't have to like… because then again, I don't want to post stuff because I only really wanna post nice stuff, then I can just post like jokey stuff to like those private stories, which is really good. (Y08)
(3d) Perceived risks & harms to wellbeing

Perceived risks of social media use raised by parents and young people included cyberbullying, exposure to distressing or inappropriate content, fake news, sites promoting self-harm or eating disorders, and privacy. The visibility of young people on social media and the long-term potentially damaging effects of using social media were also raised. Two parents expressed the idea that these risks and harms could arise “out of the blue” (P02) and acknowledged they were unable to entirely prevent this even through moderation of social media use. Indeed, five parents spoke about the difficulties of being aware of what was going on for young people online. Risk and harm tended to be thought of as both coming from other people and happening to others, though all parents and young people reported they hadn’t experienced any of the aforementioned difficulties personally.

And it's not just the bullying. So maybe in general same with the news is that children much earlier on then learn that actually a lot has been said to them or people approach them is out of some kind of self-interest. [...] And reading that and understanding that and then also being able to manage it. (P02)

Three young people said they would be unaffected by unkind comments on their social media and would take steps like blocking people to resolve the issue. They tended to conceptualise unkind behaviour from others as “risky humour” (Y04), rather than cyberbullying.

I've like never really seen it happen on like extreme terms, but sometimes someone says something that's stupid, they don't really mean, they just say it and no one pays too much attention to it. Everyone else gangs up and says that, you know, of course, it's not true, and yeah, no, I've never had any my friends actually break down over anything someone said. (Y06)
The notion that communicating with unknown others may be a risk was implied by five parents, and four young people who explicitly stated they only engaged with people they knew.

**Theme 4: Supporting young people to use social media in ways that promote wellbeing**

**(4a) Experiences of support**

All parents reported ongoing discussions around social media use, often when issues arose, which could be instigated either by them or the young person. Three parents felt their role was to provide advice, facilitate understanding, and assist their young person to curate social media use and content. Ensuring the young person knew the parent was available to them should they need support was highlighted by three parents. Three young people said they would approach their parents if they needed support or talked about times this had happened. Young people (5/8) indicated they were more likely to seek support from peers or similarly aged family members.

… if I were having a problem online, I definitely wouldn't go to my school or any of my teachers, but I like if I were to have something like a problem online, like I would probably go to my friends like definitely, I'd ask my friends. If it was something like really serious then I would def-, I would probably ask my parents or like, like my older cousin or something. (Y08)

Support from school was discussed by all parents and most young people (6/8). Parents and young people reported school delivered teaching (e.g. PHSE, assemblies) and talks, some of which involved parents and covered topics such as media literacy (e.g. spotting fake news), pitfalls and risks (e.g. dark web,
paedophiles, cyberbullying) and what to do if they encountered these (e.g. helplines), and interpersonal challenges (e.g. thinking before messaging).

(4b) Relevance & acceptability of support

The majority of parents (6/9) acknowledged difficulties in providing support to young people around social media use.

I think it's very difficult for me to have an influence, partly because that generation regard us as lacking knowledge or experience or insight into, into what they are experiencing. And that's to some extent, they're right. And I don't know that the parents are often the best guide to a teenage child [...] I love the idea that I could kind of help her find a more positive way through social media. But I don't know that that is really realistic. (P04)

Three parents felt their efforts might not be effective, referring to a perceived tendency of young people wanting to “see for themselves” (P05) and discrepancy in the perception of risk on social media between young people and parents.

I think some you know guidance on the pitfalls, you know, the manipulations you know and, and you know they do get messages at school. Paedophiles, the dark web, all that kind of stuff, but it's almost like putting images on a cigarette packet of people with cancer. They don't think it's going to happen to them. (P01)

Four parents reported discussions around social media were not always “welcome” (P06b) and two said their young person might not disclose concerns to them.
This is probably a typical age obviously where some of the kids will begin sharing not only violent things but maybe kind of very sexual things that are hard to interpret and understand where he wouldn't necessarily feel he could come to us and he feels more kind of inhibitions around that, in spite of all our efforts to make it an easy conversation. (P07)

Lack of knowledge and understanding of social media platforms, habits, and possible risks were seen as barriers, with three parents suggesting school would have superior knowledge based on their contact with so many students, and thus would be in a better position to support young people.

*I also think the school may have some more statistics about their presence online, you know, and how they behave online. So they probably can give a bit more advice to the students than I can do as a parent. So I heavily, heavily rely on school! (P03)*

Lack of experience of platforms was also seen as a limitation of parents in offering support by parents themselves (4/9) and one young person. Both parents (3/9) and young people (2/8) alluded to generational differences as a potential barrier limiting their ability to help.

*I also don't think that like any person that's like of a different age like doesn't quite experience it the same way that this generation does, not sure how much use they could be. (Y06)*

All parents expressed appreciation for support provided by school, which they felt was helpful and effective. Three of the youngest in the sample said they...
valued school support and they were able to talk about what they had learned and how they applied this in their own use.

And we had an assembly at school where, about how if some people post pictures... [...] they showed pictures, which are usually maybe a pristine room or something like that and it shows a zoomed out version and there’s mess all around the room apart from that one little spot so it kind of helped. (Y07)

In contrast, three young people felt support from school lacked relevance as it consisted of the “same yearly talk” (Y01). They spoke about their own and peers’ disengagement.

They, definitely teach you not to do cyberbullying and all that stuff. But instead of giving us the same like yearly talk of like “don’t chat to anyone you don’t know and don’t do that because you can get like creepy people” ’cause like everyone knows that and we’ve had that same thing since year 3 and it’s just really tedious. (Y01)

Two young people said they would not go to a teacher for help. Two young people reported it was easy to tackle challenges like cyberbullying, but more difficult to address the impact of challenges to wellbeing like FOMO and comparisons which tended to arise as a result of continual day to day exposure to content and culture of use. Two young people identified that having knowledge and understanding, for example that a ‘highlights reel’ of people’s lives is presented online, did not stop them from feeling bad about it, describing it could be difficult to remember and rationalise in the moment.
In the moment, I'm often... I don't kind of think of that. I usually at first I just think kind of 'look everyone else is getting together' and then maybe later when I actually think about it, it's not everyone else, and I think, when I think rationally it's not... (Y07)

(4c) Ideas for support

Amongst parents, the majority of ideas to support young people with social media were school-based. Modelling social media skills, teaching young people how to filter and deal with information, updating support in response to the pandemic, and establishing “a culture and awareness and responsibility around social media” (P07) were suggested. Two parents spoke about peer-to-peer support, feeling this would resonate with young people in ways that current support from adults at home and at school could not.

...there could be some sort of peer to peer, um, what's the word I'm looking for, but like, like kids sharing how you know I don't know sort, sort of like a buddy system where kids can share, posit... how they use the Internet, and sort of... in a positive way. It's like checking in with each other, I don't know. (P01)

One parent emphasised the need for collective engagement and culture shift amongst young people for there to be meaningful change.

I mean I think probably peer, like older peers [...] siblings maybe [...] but kind of older peers, or you kind of need the peer group to collectively engage in changing the way they use it because I think they are all, they're real sheep at this age... (P04)
Young people suggested speakers with experience at school, encouraging help-seeking, and opportunities to learn more about how social media works might be helpful. Two young people proposed changes to social media platforms, for example getting rid of the search sections which show content based on algorithms and integrating time tracking to help moderate time spent on platforms.

**Discussion**

**Overview of findings**

The present study offers a ‘snapshot’ of social media use amongst young people and their parents several months into the COVID-19 pandemic and under the conditions of the first wave of restrictions between March and July 2020 and contributes to the understanding of how use was impacted. In line with the broader study aim to explore social media use with respect to wellbeing, young people and parents also gave accounts of their experiences of social media, including the benefits of use as well as everyday challenges that could impact wellbeing and perceived risks and harms. Experiences of support and views on what might be helpful for young people to manage the challenges of social media use were also discussed to inform future development of support strategies.

**Impact of the pandemic on social media use**

*Changes to social media use*

Social media use reportedly increased for all family members during this phase of the pandemic as normal routines and activities were disrupted. The findings of this study corroborate with data on patterns of social media use amongst adolescents during the pandemic (Drouin, McDaniel, Pater, & Toscos, 2020; Paschke, Austermann, Simon-Kutscher, & Thomasius, 2021; Cauberghe, Wesenbeeck, De Jans, Hudders, & Ponnet, 2021).
Consistent with the assertions of Anderson and Jiang (2018), young people felt they were already equipped with the means to stay socially connected with peers across distance as they had used social media in these ways prior to the pandemic. Some changes in how social media was used were also reported, including uptake of gaming and video-based platforms to replicate in person socialising which were sought to foster more meaningful contacts. It appears that young people and parents had intuitively arrived at strategies reflecting advice encouraging use of platforms that more closely resemble in person interactions to enhance feelings of social connectedness (Hamilton, Nesi, & Choukas-Bradley, 2020).

Function of social media use and context of the pandemic

According to young people and parents, social media use principally served the functions of keeping safely socially connected and passing the time in the absence of usual activities. Nabity-Grover, Cheung, & Thatcher (2020) attribute the observed growth in social media in spring 2020 to users’ efforts to keep connected during the first lockdown, reasoning, as young people and parents did in the current study, that increased uptake of social media represented a compensatory strategy for lack of access to usual support networks. Parents and young people emphasised use to mitigate the risk of social isolation. These concerns correspond with the consistent documented associations between social isolation experienced during adolescence and a range of poor mental and physical health outcomes (King & Merchant, 2008; Leigh-Hunt et al., 2017). For adults and young people alike, it has been argued that adoption of digital technologies to connect was necessary to reduce risk of mental health difficulties such as depression and anxiety triggered by social restrictions (Harris, 2020; St. Michel, 2020).

For young people, physical disconnection with peers and lost opportunities for socialising in person during the pandemic may have been particularly difficult,
and perhaps detrimental, as adolescence is typically characterised by a focus on social experiences which are essential to wellbeing and the development of social skills and identity (Hamilton, Nesi, & Choukas-Bradley, 2020). Being in close confines with parents and family during lockdown is seemingly the antithesis of the adolescent drive to increase independence (Moreno & Uhls, 2019). Given this, and that COVID-19 was found to be less of a serious health threat for young people (WHO, 2020), it makes sense that a concern for many young people in the current study was the impact of the pandemic on their social life and hobbies. Similarly, Magson and colleagues. (2021) reported that not being able to see friends was a concern for young people during this time.

Several parents and young people said they shared information about COVID-19 via family WhatsApp groups. The described benefits and uses of these groups mirror those reported in the broader literature outside the pandemic (Procentese, Gatti, & Di Napoli, 2019). Family information sharing in the ways described in the interviews seemed to reflect a parental strategy to counter exposure to alarming or misleading information, which has been a notable public concern, particularly on Facebook and Twitter (Bridgman et al., 2020). In seeking out and discussing information obtained from social media and other sources (e.g. government websites), it appears parents were able to support young people to feel safe and informed. Indeed, young people asserted they were not unduly worried about the virus. The utility of family information sharing amongst participants may be understood from a family systems theory perspective, which suggests that open communications amongst family members founded in mutual acceptance and opportunities to talk with parents can support adolescents to manage stressors (Procentese, Gatti, & Di Napoli, 2019).

Young people viewed social media as an important source of news, particularly that it offers first-hand insights. Of interest to young people in this study were humanitarian crises, American politics, and the Black Lives Matter (BLM)
movement. Young people’s observation that social media was awash with activity around this movement tallies with reports from Twitter (Perez, 2020). Giddens and Petter (2020) applied the just world hypothesis (Lerner, 1980) to understand how people respond to social media posts and calls to engage with social movements online. Young people interviewed spoke about actively supporting by posting and engaging in discussions. The suffering and injustices made visible by social media likely challenged the belief of young people in a just world, which may explain their enthusiasm to demonstrate support (Lerner, 1980).

Some parents asserted that online activism became an interest for young people owing to the circumstances of the pandemic. It has been suggested that online participation in political and social action compensates for engagement in institutional political activities (e.g. voting) which young people lack the resources for whilst they are preoccupied with education and immersed in their transition to adulthood (Keating & Melis, 2017). The pandemic perhaps served to free up resources for young people to engage in activism. Pandemic notwithstanding, the keen interest of young people in online activism makes sense from a developmental perspective. Marked developments in abstract and complex problem-solving and social cognitive skills such as perspective taking and increased sensitivity to social and emotional experience (Blakemore & Mills, 2014) are typically characteristic of adolescence, and may prime young people to have an interest in social and political matters and civic engagement online.

Social media use post pandemic

Data on social media use during the pandemic may challenge concerns around social media displacing face-to-face interactions (Twenge, Spitzberg, & Campbell, 2019). The findings of this study suggest that though social media helped maintain some sense of normality and communication, connection via these means was not experienced as fulfilling contact and young people expressed a desire to
reinstate in person contact and activities post pandemic. Less need for social media was anticipated and, in some cases, young people described plans to reduce their use in a kind of reversal of the ‘displacement hypothesis’ (Shensa, Sidani, Lin, Bowman, & Primack, 2016) whereby the availability of more face-to-face opportunities means less attention and time is available for social media.

**Role of social media use in young people’s lives**

*Benefits and opportunities*

Benefits and opportunities of social media use reported correspond with those described in other studies including enjoyment, entertainment (Goodyear & Armour, 2019), creativity (O’Keeffe Clarke-Pearson, 2011), social and emotional support, enrichment (Third et al., 2017), developing and maintaining friendships (Lenhart et al., 2015) and making new friends (O’Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011). From the accounts of parents and young people of busy lives, it could be assumed that the young people had well developed offline social resources and social capital, thus the social enhancement hypothesis (Kraut et al., 2002) may be applied to account for their ability to derive benefits from their social media use.

*Views and opinions on social media use*

There was a degree of ambivalence in parents’ views of social media. Though parents tended to acknowledge the importance of social media in young people’s lives, they also found it difficult to accept, and perceived some online activities to hold little value, which was similarly noted in a study of parental mediation (Symons, Ponnet, Walrave, & Heriman, 2017).

Very few young people and parents in the current study indicated experiences of negative impacts on their wellbeing or considered their use to be ‘problematic’ prior to or during the pandemic, despite feeling use had increased significantly. As such and as would be predicted by the Interpersonal-Connection-
Behaviour (ICB) framework (Clark, Algoe, & Green, 2017), during the pandemic the benefits and value of social media, particularly in fostering social connection, seemed to eclipse the challenges and parents’ reservations in ways they had not previously.

The views expressed by parents and young people that ‘too much’ time on social media could have an adverse impact on wellbeing are reflected in the broader literature, with arguments that excessive screen time displaces behaviours that maintain and protect mental health such as physical activity (Sandercock, Ogunleye, & Voss, 2012), sleep (LeBourgeois et al., 2017), in-person contacts (Twenge, Spitzberg, & Campbell, 2019), and schoolwork (Busch et al., 2014). However, this interference seemed to be felt less acutely in the pandemic as activities that might normally be disrupted by social media use were unavailable. Noted in this study, in contrast to concerns around social media and schoolwork (Busch et al., 2014) young people were able to maintain commitment to their studies, including attending online classes alongside freer and increased use.

The idea that in-person contact is superior to connection online was expressed by parents who tended to talk about offline and online in a dichotomous sense and, further, to place more value on the ‘offline’ aspects of young people’s lives. According to Carrington (2017) such ‘digital dualism’ (Jurgenson, 2012) perpetuates the idea that activities online are unique and distinct from those offline. However, young people do not make such binary distinctions themselves having grown up with the availability of digital technologies (Carrington, 2014). The online-offline metaphor emerged during the “era of dial-up” (Carrington, 2017, p.4) which parents in this study were in the age range to have experienced. Indeed, most referenced their pre-digital adolescent experiences, perceiving differences in socialising and communication and contemporary challenges for young people arising from the presence of social media and devices in their lives. They also acknowledged some online behaviours, social processes, and social risks were
analogous to those offline. For example, feeling left out, curating an image, or bullying (Clark, Algoe, & Green, 2018).

Managing and shaping young people’s views

Social media was seen by parents as having infiltrated all aspects of life, particularly for young people, which reflects the idea that amongst adolescents, social media is less of an activity as a “way of being” (Griffiths & Kuss, 2017, p.49). Social media has been referred to as a “super peer” (Strasburger & Wilson, 2002) offering young people an abundance of normative information they may not encounter elsewhere which they may be particularly sensitive to, and thus potentially influenced by. Contributing factors that enhance the potential influence of social media may be through the peer-related processes such as acceptance sensitivity, peer obedience, and emotion precedence which characterise this stage of development, and may mean young people are particularly drawn in by fake news or clickbait, unrealistic self-expectations, or regulating emotions through adverse use (Crone & Konijn, 2018).

A salient example of the ways that activity on social media and activity offline may reciprocally perpetuate each other was given by a parent who talked about the young person engaging in behaviours offline for the purposes of being captured to be posted online. The receipt of interaction from the social media audience (e.g. likes) in response likely influenced their continued interest in the offline activity or drove them to seek others that might elicit a more favourable response. The transformation framework offered by Nesi, Choukas-Bradley, and Prinstein (2018) suggests there are a number of characteristics of the social media context such as asynchronicity, permanence, and publicness, which may shape views and behaviour. In this case, publicness and the wish to communicate with an audience was a key influence, and in the view of the parent, a less favourable one than intrinsic motivation.
Parents and young people voiced concerns about the propensity of strong views to prevail on social media, encouraging young people to take strong or radicalised positions on issues or engage in complex discussions they are not emotionally equipped for. Whilst social media can increase exposure to diverse perspectives (Flaxman, Goel, & Rao, 2016), it can by algorithmic design create homogeneous communities (Sasahara, Peng, Ciampaglia, Flammini, & Menczer, 2019) that can become increasingly extreme and certain in their beliefs (Bishop, 2009).

**Challenges of social media**

*Interface with online activities*

Parents perceived young people lacked the ability to be ‘disconnected’ due to devices and social media, viewing this as detrimental for wellbeing and relationships. Echoing the views of parents in a previous qualitative study, parents perceived a lack of opportunity to have time to themselves in this state of constant connection (Symons, Ponnet, Walrave, & Heirman, 2017). Studies have demonstrated negative impacts arising from pressure to be constantly available (Höge, 2009; Sbarra, Briskin, & Slatcher, 2019). Weinstein (2018) suggests upholding connection may be attributed to felt need to respond to communication and notifications, which is driven by volume of content on social media, related time demands, and perceived social obligations. FOMO has also been implicated as a driver (Przybylski, Murayama, DeHaan, & Gladwell, 2013).

Parents talked about how constant connection online could also get in the way of social interactions offline. David and Roberts (2017) note that preoccupation with devices has changed the ways we interact introducing a ‘present-absent’ paradox of being physically present with others yet absent due to attention being focused on devices. Their experimental study concluded this experience can cause
feelings of social exclusion, depression, and lower overall wellbeing, which corroborates with the displeasure expressed by parents.

**Interpersonal challenges**

Interpersonal communication pitfalls of social media were described by parents and young people. The potential for miscommunication and incidents like these may be more likely to occur online given the lack of clarity of physical and social cues in these communications (Baruch, 2005; Nesi, Choukas-Bradley, & Prinstein, 2018). Although young people in this study were provided with support around communication through media literacy efforts at school and via parents, experiences of communications going wrong were catalysts for behaviour change according to the maxim of ‘thinking before messaging’.

**Self-evaluation**

Young people and parents alike identified exclusion, FOMO, and comparisons as the impactful challenges, which makes sense by the ICB framework (Clark, Algoe, & Green, 2018) as all thwart the need for acceptance and belonging and diminish connection. Though these experiences did not necessarily constitute targeted and active negative feedback (Lee et al., 2020), they evoked difficult feelings amongst the young people in this study. Experiences of ostracism and peer rejection have been associated with intense emotions (Lee et al., 2020), reduced self-esteem (Jamieson, Harkins, & Williams, 2010) and identified as risk factors for internalizing problems (Crone & Dahl, 2012). Their salience amongst young people is likely to be because they threaten the need for status and acceptance which are important at this stage of life (Guyer, Caouette, Lee, & Ruiz, 2014). Interestingly, Lee and colleagues (2020) found rejecting feedback such as exclusion was less likely to elicit feelings of rejection than insufficient positive feedback contrasting with the present findings.
Young people described sometimes participating in activities online and offline to avoid being excluded rather than genuine desire, suggesting FOMO can be a motivating factor for use. Similar findings are reported elsewhere (Beyens, Frison, & Eggermont, 2016), and in terms of impact on wellbeing, social media use driven by FOMO has been correlated with higher anxiety and mood-related symptoms (Barry, Sidoti, Briggs, Reiter, & Lindsey, 2017).

Relatedly, making comparisons was considered a threat to wellbeing and self-esteem. The literature suggests propensity to make comparisons is particularly amplified when social media use constitutes passive ‘lurking’ (Lenhart, 2015) on the feeds and profiles of others. According to the ICB (Clark, Algoe, & Green, 2018) lurking does not contribute to interpersonal connection as it is not interactive or social, which may explain why comparisons were considered detrimental.

Young people and parents talked about social media offering a constant supply of content and users to make comparisons with (Clark, Algoe, & Green, 2018) and the difficulty of contending with this given the perceived almost universally upheld norm for impression management via curation of content posted and use of editing and filters (Walther, 2007). They expressed that seeing the seemingly perfect lives of others could erode sense of satisfaction with their lives. This mirrors findings in the literature of associations between comparisons and perception of self-inadequacy, poor self-evaluation (Chen et al., 2016; Tibber, Zhao, & Butler, 2020), envy, and depression (Boyd & Ellison, 2007) and assertions of the ICB Framework that by nature comparisons are not connection-promoting thus can threaten wellbeing (Clark, Algoe, & Green, 2018). These negative feelings were present and impactful for participants despite their well-developed media literacy, explicit awareness that content represents a ‘highlights reel’ of material rather than a holistic depiction of their lives, and insight into their own use which tended to adhere with this norm of only posting the ‘good things’. Hesitance to deviate from norms is
understandable in the context of adolescence during which time young people can be heavily influenced by norms amongst peers (Sasson & Mesch, 2014).

Underwood and Ehrenrich (2018) suggest that constant exposure to the sanitised and positively skewed feeds of peers may pose particular risk for young people related to the stress of constant monitoring for signs of status and exclusion, and comparisons that may seem realistic or achievable as they involve known others.

Young people described a recent trend of posting more ‘real’ content away from main feeds in temporary and audience limited posts, such as private stories. This behaviour may be an extension of a posting trend known as ‘Instagram vs Reality’ (Tiggemann & Anderberg, 2020). Research suggests a limited ability of these kinds of posts to effectively challenge societal and social media standards and yield positive effects for users in ways of thinking or feeling about themselves (Tiggemann & Anderberg, 2020). That young people reported testing out experiences of posting more ‘real’ content may suggest a wish for the online culture to shift away from the established norms that result in behaviours and experiences that erode wellbeing.

**Perceived risks and harms**

Parents and young people highlighted numerous perceived risks and harms they might expect to encounter on social media including cyberbullying (Brown & Marin, 2009), distressing content (Livingstone, Haddon, Vincent, Mascheroni, & Olafsson, 2014), fake news (Middaugh, 2019), sites promoting self-harm or eating disorders (Marchant et al., 2017), and violations of privacy (Livingstone, 2008), which are frequently reported in the literature (Livingstone & Helsper, 2007). Risks were typically thought to come from others and from parents’ perspectives very difficult to monitor, unpredictable, and impossible to prevent. Indeed, ‘stranger danger’ was recently ranked as the top online safety concerns amongst parents.
(Badillo-Urquiola et al., 2019). These concerns and the accompanying instruction to children to keep away from those they don’t know to prevent risk of harm have been prominent for decades both offline and online (Miltenberger et al., 2013). Most of the young people in this study made explicit reference to only engaging with known others via social media, which suggests this message had been internalised, notwithstanding young people choosing not to disclose if this wasn’t the case. That some young people mentioned they used social media to make new friends also brings adherence to this advice into question.

Young people in this study distanced themselves from experiences of cyberbullying and receipt of negative comments, acknowledging these things might happen and be detrimental for others, but estimating their own resilience or indifference. This corresponds with O’Reilly’s (2020) work in which young people tended to talk about difficulties like cyberbullying in abstract rather than personal ways. Young people in this study tended to classify comments and jokes they had encountered online as ‘banter’ rather than bullying, which without intent and between peers of equal power may indeed not be hurtful according to Vandebosch and Van Cleemput (2008). Based on their work around online communication and cyberbullying, Steer, Betts, Baguley, and Binder (2020) posited that young people would benefit from interventions to increase their awareness of social context and nonverbal cues and how their communication might be received to avoid unintentional difficulties and perpetration of cyberbullying or ‘banter’.

**Supporting young people to use social media**

*Experiences of support*

Support from parents, peers, and school around social media use was highlighted. Evidence suggests that evaluative styles of mediation such as those described by parents, involving communication and active efforts to support young people to navigate social media use can be effective as they cultivate critical
thinking skills (Fujioka & Austin, 2003) and open communication is crucial for safe internet use (Symons, Ponnet, Walrave, & Heirman, 2017). Elsewhere in a study of parental mediation, parents emphasised similar approaches which they felt helped them to notice if and when the young person needed support (Symons, Ponnet, Walrave, & Heirman, 2017). However, there is evidence to suggest that parental confidence in detecting issues can be misplaced as they are often unaware of young people’s online experiences (Symons, Ponnet, Walrave, & Heirman, 2017) and levels of actual involvement in the young person’s use are low (Shin, 2015).

Relevance and acceptability of support

Though parents described efforts to provide support and some young people talked about making use of their help, others said they would not approach their parents if they had an issue on social media. Discomfort in speaking with parents about risks of social media have been reported in the literature (Goodyear, Wood, & Armour, 2019). Young people were somewhat open to the idea of seeking support from school, but were more likely to try to resolve the situation themselves or seek peer support from friends or similarly aged family members. An antidote to difficult feelings of FOMO and exclusion was speaking with peers and hearing their concerns, which could provide reassurance. The perceived utility of peer support was also expressed by young people in Goodyear, Wood, and Armour’s (2019) work, namely as peers can be a source of learning, listening, and responding and have an equal understanding of social media.

Again, consistent with Goodyear, Wood, and Armour’s (2019) work, young people felt adults would have difficulty providing adequate support because they lack similar experiences, even if they use social media themselves. In Goodyear and Armour’s (2019) study this lack of understanding was linked to a tendency of adults to over-estimate and focus on risk. Parents and young people in the current study attributed differences in understanding and experience to generational differences.
and parent-child dynamics. This is consistent with the idea there is a ‘digital gap’ (Correa et al., 2015) between generations who have grown up with digital technology connoting an ease with media arising from knowing no different, and those for whom it was introduced later on in life facilitating more of a process of adjustment and learning. As socialising agents, parents typically transfer knowledge and skills via processes of modelling, reinforcement, and social interactions (Laible & Thompson, 2007). However, many parents in this study estimated young people were more skilled and knowledgeable with regard to online activity than themselves, aligning with Ito et al.’s (2009) definition of young people as ‘technology experts or brokers’, which gave rise to the perception their ability to support them might be limited. In terms of typical parent-child dynamics, parental efforts at mediation or advice can elicit resistance as young people attempt to forge their independence and by nature of this seek to find things out for themselves (Sasson & Mesch, 2014).

Parents were positive about the provisions offered at school. However, young people gave a mixed impression. Whilst the youngest participants expressed higher satisfaction and acceptance of support and seemed to have particularly internalised advice around safety, the older members were more critical. Given young people tend to be more inclined to reject messages and attempts at mediation by parents as adolescence progresses, attempts by school may elicit similar responses as observed in this work (Symons, Ponnet, Walrave, & Heirman, 2017).

Parents’ estimation that school might be more ‘in touch’ with current social media issues was refuted by young people. Directly mirroring the recommendations from young people on support provided by parents and school presented by Goodyear, Wood, and Armour (2019), young people in this study considered the talks and assemblies did not reflect current experiences of social media. Consequently, these messages were taken less seriously with repeated presentation. It may be the youngest in this sample were more satisfied as the
issues raised were still novel, though perhaps they may also find continual presentation of the same messages irrelevant in time.

Ideas for support

Young people estimated limited applicability of knowledge obtained from parents or school about social media challenges, even when this knowledge was perceived as helpful. Young people expressed it could be difficult to ‘rationalise’ the situation in moments of distress caused by online experiences as they had been advised, particularly with regard to exclusion, FOMO, and comparisons. They also felt their exposure to things that bothered them online happened on an everyday basis, which meant that it could be less easy to define as a problem compared to big issues like cyberbullying which they felt could be easily tackled by comparison. In a review of help seeking for mental health difficulties amongst adolescents, failure to seek help was attributed to stigma, embarrassment, difficulties recognising the problem, and wishing to deal with difficulties themselves (Gulliver, Griffiths, & Christensen, 2010). It is possible that similar reasons may arise for young people around challenges related to social media, particularly when taken alongside the accounts of young people in this study which revealed struggles to define some experiences online as problematic, including FOMO, exclusion, and as described earlier cyber bullying, views that nothing could be done to help, and a preference for handling problems themselves or amongst peers.

Perhaps based on their satisfaction with school’s approach and view of themselves as less knowledgeable, parents’ suggestions around support tended to be school-based. Similarly, young people recommended school could enhance the relevance of support by inviting speakers by experience in and providing more information about how social media works. Previous studies have also reported a desire amongst young people to learn more about using social media well (Rice, 2013).
Peer support was raised as an option by parents who felt this would resonate more and might elicit collective shifts in behaviour online amongst peer groups, which they estimated could make a tangible different to online and peer culture. There is evidence to suggest peers can be a powerful influence for positive behaviours (Sherman, Greenfield, Hernandez, & Dapretto, 2018) and this may be an effective strategy during adolescence as young people are inclined towards peer rather than parental or adult relationships (Willoughby, Good, Adachi, Hamza, & Tavernier, 2014).

The idea to embed support within social media platforms was proposed, for example to help monitor time spent online or filter content. Young people in Goodyear, Wood, and Armour’s (2019) study implicated the responsibility of social media companies to engage in practices that could support wellbeing, which could feasibly encompass functions such as those suggested in this study.

**Limitations**

This study lacks diversity amongst participants in terms of gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. The demographic characteristics of the sample reflect those of the school population from which the sample was derived, and more broadly in the borough in which the school is located. To address this limitation, a more purposive method of sampling and recruitment across locations may have been an alternative to the single setting ‘first come first served’ recruitment strategy pursued.

The young people participating in this study were, as far as the research team were aware, thriving socially and academically and had no major difficulties online. Neither did the participating families report any major difficulties keeping themselves safe, healthy, and socio-economically stable during the pandemic. However, these affordances are not available to all, and the experiences of being on social media and of the pandemic reported here may not apply or resonate with
young people and families in other circumstances. Intra-pandemic studies have highlighted that some families have struggled to cope, which has placed them at risk of falling into vicious cycles of increasing distress (Ford, John, & Gunnell, 2020). Many of the themes and findings arising from this work, particularly those regarding perceptions of social media use and challenges of social media corroborate with findings from other studies with more diverse samples (e.g. O’Reilly et al., 2018; Goodyear, Wood, & Armour, 2019). That being said, due to the limited breadth of perspectives explored in this study, caution is advised in applying findings elsewhere.

Implications and conclusions

The findings of this study contribute to foundational understandings of the role of social media in young people’s lives and support a number of key qualitative and quantitative findings elsewhere in the body of literature on social media use and wellbeing. The study sits within previous work that emphasises recognition of social media as an important and valuable tool for young people, particularly as a means of social connection (Goodyear & Armour, 2019) but also as a space for friendship, play, self-expression, and learning (Handyside & Ringrose, 2017). These insights have implications in supporting young people to optimise the benefits of use and respond effectively to their needs.

During the pandemic the use of social media as a means of connection was amplified, and use appeared to contribute to coping, helping young people and families to avoid social isolation, maintain morale and sense of normality, and harness support from peers and within their family. These observations of responses to social restriction and the challenges of living through a disrupted and challenging time may be useful should there be any further restrictions related to the current pandemic, in the transition phase between easing and complete removal of restrictions, or future potential global challenges.
The potential benefits and challenges of social media and impact of these uses and experiences on wellbeing raised in this study were broadly congruent with the ICB framework (Clark, Algoe, & Green, 2018) and the transformation framework (Nesi, Choukas-Bradley, & Prinstein, 2018) which place social connectedness and peer interactions as central factors in the impact of use and consider how social media is used, in contrast to a large proportion of the literature in the field throughout which there has been widespread focus on amount and frequency of use. The findings therefore support recent calls in research (Orben, 2020) for more nuanced exploration of the ways young people use social media in order to understand impact on wellbeing. For parents, this may also have implications for mediation strategies, which in this study and documented elsewhere in the literature can focus on boundaries around time spent online.

Regarding clinical practice, this work suggests that social media is an important and central aspect of young people's lives with implications for wellbeing, thus in agreement with O'Reilly's (2020) assertions, clinicians should explore social media use in assessment and intervention with young people and families. The findings imply social experiences like FOMO, comparisons, and exclusion warrant particular attention and exploration when considering possible detrimental impacts. However, the impact of use should not be presumed entirely negative as young people derive benefits and opportunities like social connection, learning and enrichment, entertainment, and civic engagement that might be protective or constitute useful resources or strengths, as highlighted in this study.

Finally, in terms of research and applied implications, this work offers future directions for wellbeing support strategies for young people that may be of interest to policy makers, researchers, and educators. Based on the key learning that parents, school, and other adults in young people's lives might not be sufficiently meeting their needs in terms of provision of support, a proposal arising from this work is the development of peer-led models of support in school settings with young
people playing a central leading role (further details in Part Three). This approach may offer a more useful and impactful option for young people through which they may feel their experiences are more fully understood and relevant issues can be raised. Further, this model aligns with the key developmental goal of autonomy (Moreno & Uhls, 2019). The proposal supports recommendations derived from discussions with young people conducted by Goodyear, Wood, and Armour (2019) and is in line with rights-based perspectives on young people's digital lives which advocate access and maximisation of opportunities and benefits as well as mitigation of risks (Livingstone, Marscheroni, & Staksrud, 2017).
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Part 3: Critical Appraisal
Introduction

In this chapter, I reflect on the personal and professional experiences that I believe influenced my interest in social media use amongst young people and my approach to the work described in Parts One and Two. The challenges of conducting research in the context of a pandemic are also discussed. Finally, I consider key learnings around clinical practice, my development as a researcher, and potential future directions for work to support young people to use social media in ways that promote wellbeing.

Ontology, epistemology, and philosophical orientation of the work

Clinically and in this work, I have tended to align with the philosophical position of contextualism, which carries relativist ontological assumptions that there are multiple potentially competing versions of reality in existence, and produces constructivist / relativist knowledge. However, I would caveat that at my very core is the somewhat pragmatic sensibility around ontology well expressed by Carter and Little (2007, pp.14) that “we have to act as if the physical and social world is real to get by in our daily lives”.

Epistemology influenced my selection of methodology (Carter & Little, 2007). Interviews were selected as the primary method of data collection to generate rich accounts of the experiences of young people and parents of social media use in the context of wellbeing congruent with constructivist / relativist epistemology (King, Horrocks, & Brooks, 2019). The decision to interview both parents and young people was also driven by an interest in the potential contrasting realities and contexts of young people and their parents in an attempt to bring together multiple perspectives. According to the framework for qualitative research proposed by Carter and Little (2007), epistemology is discernible through methodology in that it influences: (1) the participant-researcher relationship, (2) the way research quality is demonstrated, and (3) form, voice, and representation in analysis and writing.
Regarding the participant-researcher relationship, I viewed the young people and parents I interviewed as active contributors with whom I attempted to jointly create an understanding of social media use in relation to wellbeing during the pandemic, acknowledging that the knowledge obtained would be a specific product of these interactions and relationships established in the context of this study, and in this case the specific time of a global crisis, though there might be commonalities with knowledge constructed with different participants in different contexts. As an active co-creator of the research, I engaged in reflexivity and aimed to be transparent about and aware of my own subjectivities around social media use. My approach in interviews was to be responsive and conversational, to be open to perspectives and directions the young people and parents wished to pursue.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested the quality of qualitative work can be assessed through the domains of credibility, transferability, confirmability, and trackable variance. An oversight I acknowledge in the application of the constructivist epistemology and with regard to credibility is that I did not build in opportunities to return to participants to elicit reflections on their transcripts (King, Horrocks, & Brooks, 2019).

Trackable variance is analogous to reliability and refers to consideration of the ‘inherent instability’ of the phenomenon being studied, which may be attributable to the research context and what is introduced by the researcher throughout the process (Murphy et al., 1998). To account for this I established a running account of the work (see Appendices 13, 14,16-18). I also engaged in double checking transcripts for accuracy against recordings and several rounds of coding during analysis to establish a consistent system of coding.

In pursuit of transferability and confirmability, I have attempted to report the work and processes around data collection and analysis in this and previous chapters in a way that is sufficiently detailed enough for readers to assess: (1) whether conclusions from this work might be applicable in other settings (Mays &
Pope, 2000), and (2) how I reached the conclusions presented. I also collaborated with course peers undertaking qualitative projects in independent coding to facilitate my own reflexivity (King, Horrocks, & Brooks, 2019).

In terms of communicating this work in a way that is congruent with constructivist epistemology, this chapter has provided me with the opportunity to write in a blend of my own voice and the more empirical style I became accustomed to in my previous research work. I have enjoyed documenting my experiences of the work and reliving the various highs and lows I experienced in the process, as well as looking back on my own experiences of social media use to examine how my views on social media and wellbeing likely came to be. Excerpts from my bracketing interview, analytic memos, and research journal are provided in Appendices 16-18.

**Personal reflexivity**

Reflexivity is considered a marker of rigour in qualitative research (Berger, 2013). It requires the researcher to critically self-reflect on the ways their social background, assumptions, positioning and behaviour influence all aspects of the research process (Finlay & Gough, 2003) including interest in the research questions, decisions around what is attended to or pursued and how, and who is involved along the way (Koopman, Watling, & LaDonna, 2020). Pillow (2003) suggests reflexive self-appraisal should be actively acknowledged and recognisable in both the process and products of research.

A key part of this process was examining my own subjective positions in relation to the topic of social media use and wellbeing and in relation to the relationships and interactions I had with the young people and parents participating. This involved continuous and repeated consideration of my personal experiences and biography within the context of the work (Peshkin, 1988) through journaling, conversations with peers and my supervisor, and engaging in a bracketing interview. Additionally, prior to embarking on this work, I wrote an expression of interest in
joining my supervisor’s social media workgroup, which was a subjectivity statement of sorts. Completing my expression of interest helped me to identify my assumptions and possible biases early on as it required me to engage in a process of reflection and familiarisation with prominent discourses in the field in order to really connect with and articulate my ‘whys’ around the topic area and population group. Once aware, I attempted to ‘bracket’ (Fischer, 2009) and actively challenge my assumptions throughout the work, particularly pushing against discourses around risk and harm when they arose for me and trying to hold a more balanced stance on the prospect of intervention development to maintain openness to the experiences of the young people and parents I interviewed.

**Biography and relationship with social media**

I first encountered social media in my late teens, accessing MySpace and subsequently Facebook on desktop computers or laptops until I got my first smartphone after university. For me these platforms functioned as an additional means of socialising. Online I could chat with friends without using precious phone credit, re-live nights out through hundreds of pictures that would be uploaded, tagged and captioned with ‘in jokes’, and start conversations with classmates or potential romantic interests. There was a degree of curation and a desire to express my self-identity through status updates and profile design, particularly on MySpace for which I recall meticulously choosing colour schemes, updating my profile song, and completing surveys with what I believed at the time were my best and wittiest responses.

I don’t recall there being prominent negative media or societal discourses around social media and wellbeing in these early years of my own use and as far as I remember my parents didn’t express specific worries that may have reflected any ‘of the time’ narratives around risk or pitfalls of use. This may have been because I rarely actually did anything overt to cause concern about my online activities, other
than very occasional grievances such as running up a phone bill through using too much data, or using my phone during some family activity or other. Herring (2008) points out that awareness of adult perspectives tends to be brought to a young person’s attention when they knowingly break rules. However, I was permitted completely free and unmoderated access to the internet and social media. There were no rules. Neither were there explicit conversations around how to navigate online life or how my wellbeing might be impacted, therefore my learning was experiential. It bears questioning whether I would have taken moral panic narratives or concerns fully on board as a young person as my encounters and activities online had been very benign as plainly illustrated above.

I’d left home by the time social media started to feature in conversations in my family. These were ignited by my younger sister and brother reaching the age where social media presented as a more pressing parenting issue than it had been with me several years before given the boom in social media. My dad expressed an intense dislike of it that neither I nor my siblings could quite fathom at the time and simply wrote his view off as the opinion of an older person who didn’t know what it was about, particularly since he didn’t have his own account. Herring’s (2008) commentary on mass media discourse resonates with this experience in its description of young people finding it hard to reconcile their own and friends’ experiences with adult disapproval or expressions of concern about the dangers of online activity. My dad retained his stance throughout the years, though now I’m older I have come to view his criticisms of the platform as reasonable and legitimate and can notice when these views are ventriloquised in my own opinions.

On aggregate, the skills I learned over the years through self-discovery have served me well and my experiences of social media have been largely unproblematic, save for a period of time in my twenties when Instagram and Tumblr showed up and I was not entirely immune to the upwards comparisons passive consumption of aspirational, visual content can foster (Fardouly et al., 2017a). For
me these comparisons centred around body image but the messages I was absorbing from social media did not necessarily feel different to print and other medias that had been present throughout my life in terms of level of influence, thus things did not become overwhelming. Interestingly, this impression corresponds with the current, albeit limited, research which suggests the impact of traditional and social medias on body satisfaction is comparable (Fardouly et al., 2017b).

I currently use social media daily, idly looking at Facebook and Instagram throughout the day or in moments of empty time, and post very occasionally. The content that shows up for me on these platforms is self-curated, which means I only really see people I know, a handful of public figures I like, and gentle interests. My stance is to take everything I see on social media lightly, and I have made efforts to ring fence my own privacy, harbouring the belief that things should never get ‘overly personal’ on social media. I believe this combination of personal and social curation through which I have actively shaped my experiences of information according to my preferences (Donsbach & Mothes, 2012) and in service of my wellbeing has been key to maintaining a workable relationship with social media. However, the extent to which individuals want or feel able to actively shape their personal information environment can be variable (Garrett, Carnahan, & Lynch, 2011), notwithstanding that even curated channels of interest can also throw out content that is not under your control (Thorson & Wells, 2016).

Key voices in the field of young people’s social media and internet use such as Livingstone (2017) have advocated for young people to have access to opportunities to learn by experience online as a fundamental right (Livingstone & Third, 2017). Whilst my own experiences of learning as I went along certainly resonate with this idea, I lacked the additional component of media literacy, delivered for instance by parents or school, that Livingstone and colleagues (2017) suggested in supplement for optimal empowerment and effect. Reflecting back, particularly on times when social media did have an impact on the ways I viewed
myself, albeit to a relatively minor extent and at an older age than the young people involved in this work, I think some kind of guidance may have been helpful, particularly at the start of my social media use.

**Approach to the work**

The speculative sense that my own experiences might have been optimised by support and that I may have arrived at some of my current wellbeing practices around my use much sooner was perhaps one of the reasons why, when introduced to the idea of projects exploring social media use and wellbeing amongst young people, I was immediately drawn to the question of what could be done to help young people to navigate these experiences. An additional primer for this direction was undoubtedly my research specialism of intervention development, which means I can tend to operate on the principle that where there is a challenge or problem, there’s an opportunity for an intervention to be the solution. Consequently, from the start I located this project as a potential precursor for further intervention development work. I recognise that thinking ahead to this as a projected conclusion or plan could run the risk of biasing me towards evidence in favour of and overlooking evidence to the contrary.

My way of thinking about the project at the beginning of the research process carried with it implicit and potentially unhelpful assumptions that social media poses a threat to wellbeing and that young people lack the ability to effectively manage these experiences themselves. Reflecting on this, I am somewhat surprised that I landed at these assumptions as they don’t reflect my own personal experiences of social media use when I was a young person. Rather, they correspond with risk-saturated public and adult discourses of social media use amongst young people (boyd, 2014). According to Walsh (2020), these fear-based discourses often arise when communicative and informational conditions change, and often centre around anticipated damaging effects on younger generations (Cohen, 1972), reflecting deep
anxieties about social change. It may be that as I have become an adult myself and more distant from this period of my own life, I have absorbed these kinds of narratives around young people in the perhaps inevitable way most people tend to do. However, the work of O’Reilly and colleagues (2018) suggests that isn’t only adults that drive these discourses, in fact young people themselves re-enact and thus perpetuate negative societal portrayals of social media use.

My instinctual response to the increased popularity of social media, availability of new platforms and technology, and ubiquity of social media use in everyday life from an increasingly younger age is to associate these factors with greater and new challenges and correspondingly risk. To counter this assumption, a perspective I have tried to hold in mind throughout this work is that although things have undoubtedly changed significantly in terms of online activities and social media since I was a younger person, with these changes young people have adapted and honed their resiliences, as Gardner and Davis (2013) put it, young people develop with and through social media.

Particularly helpful in calibrating and re-orienting myself away from my own assumptions and biases was familiarisation with the works of Sonia Livingstone and colleagues, danah boyd, and Michelle O’Reilly which centre on empowering young people as highly skilled and knowledgeable agents online and raise the importance of acknowledging the myriad opportunities and benefits of social media and online activities.

Experience of conducting the project during the pandemic

I consider myself lucky that this study was able to go ahead as I was aware of peers whose projects were no longer feasible or extremely delayed. The decision to make minor amendments in response to the pandemic was made quickly to give the study the best possible chance of being able to continue and keep to original timelines, but also to capture a snapshot of this particular time as it was happening.
By the time the interviews took place in early summer, I wondered whether I had just missed this window of opportunity as lockdown restrictions were easing and public amenities were beginning to open again, which created an optimism that things were starting to get back on track despite ominous references to winter potentially heralding a ‘second wave’. Revisiting the interviews during analysis in the months afterwards when the forewarned difficult winter had indeed arrived and brought with it second and then third lockdowns, it was quite difficult for me to hear back this optimism. I had the feeling, as I’m sure many people did, of expecting a sprint when in fact the experience has been, and at the time of writing continues to be, more like a marathon.

The sense of collecting data ‘after the fact’ I felt at the time of the interviews was further reinforced by the impression from young people and parents that there were more prominent concerns and issues at hand, for instance the Black Lives Matter movement, and so the virus did not seem as dominating a presence as I’d initially expected. Although this was perhaps in some ways related to the general mood, situation, and other significant global events happening at this stage of the pandemic, most if not all of young people and parents I interviewed also acknowledged they were in privileged positions to have been able to fare the situation relatively well, despite the disruptions and stress. None of the young people or parents reported having had the virus, knowing anyone who had, bereavement, or significant changes or hardships to their socio-economic status. I was aware the young people I spoke with were accessing school online and some parents made reference to working from home, which may have contributed to their ability to effectively manage risk of exposure. Nonetheless, given I didn’t directly ask about these things and young people and parents may not have wished to disclose these aspects of their experience of the pandemic in the context of our conversations, I can only make speculative inferences. During the pandemic, although I have had to shield and experienced family bereavements, I am also
mindful that my experience has been privileged in a multitude of ways including being able to continue with work and training from my own home.

Key learnings and future work

For personal and broader clinical practice

A key learning I have taken from this work is to consider the role of social media in assessment and treatment (O’Reilly, 2020) when working with young people and families. From the conversations with young people in the interviews, it seemed like aspects of use that were consistently flagged as being potentially corrosive to wellbeing were comparisons, exclusion, and Fear Of Missing Out (FOMO), thus I would advocate for clinicians to explore these issues. Whilst I would agree that issues like cyberbullying and online exploitation should be considered when thinking about risk and harm, I believe the more commonplace or everyday experiences young people report encountering such as comparisons, exclusion, and FOMO which appear to be driven by subtle and consistent exposure to social media and online culture may affect more young people on aggregate and therefore should not be overlooked.

The interviews and project write up were concurrent with two clinical placements involving work with young people (in a Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service and in a specialist clinical health setting), thus being at the forefront of my mind in my academic work, the topic of social media use and wellbeing spilled over into my clinical work, prompting me to have conversations with young clients about their social media use. However, although I have argued for the acknowledgement of both risks and opportunities of social media (Livingstone & Third, 2017) throughout this work and through my experiences of this project have come to believe a completely risk-focused stance is unhelpful and does not resonate with young people’s experiences (O’Reilly et al., 2018), clinically I noted myself being far more interested in potential risks and harm than benefits. This may be in
part because of my own implicit assumptions around social media use which I became progressively more aware of during this project. Indeed, O’Reilly (2020) points out that the way clinicians think about social media in assessment and treatment is influenced by their personal views and knowledge of benefits and risk amongst the general population of young people, and thus advises clinicians to be reflective and well-informed in order to work effectively with young people and families. I wish to develop a more balanced approach to exploring social media use with young clients as a point for further improvement moving forwards in my clinical work.

I would also perhaps argue social media should now be a consideration when working clinically with adults, as social media has been present in people’s lives for almost two decades and though young people are still the most prolific users, it has become increasingly popular across age brackets therefore it is likely more and more clients will have had some kind of experience or contact with it. For instance, people like myself who began using social media in their late teens and have continued to engage with activities online.

For my development as a researcher

The involved and explicit process of personal reflexivity and consideration of epistemology, ontology, and philosophical orientation I undertook in this work was a new experience for me and challenged me to develop my qualitative research skills. Whilst my previous PhD had qualitative components, their purpose alongside the main quantitative study was to seek specific information and feedback to develop an intervention, thus it was oriented to solving practical problems and fitted within a pragmatist research paradigm (Creswell & Clark, 2011). My experience of the current project has illuminated the fact that my previous work could have been enriched by engagement in reflexive activities and consideration of epistemology
For future work to support young people with social media use

My views on the format of potential support and intervention for young people to support them to use social media in ways that promote wellbeing changed over the course of this work. At the outset of this project, based on my background of developing manualised and structured interventions, I imagined a similar package could be devised and implemented in schools. From appraising a range of school wellbeing interventions in my scoping review, I feel there is evidence that schools could be suitable and feasible settings to provide support and the interview data appeared to corroborate with this. Though to caveat, I don’t believe schools should carry the entire burden of supporting young people. However, a crucial question I have been very interested in throughout this work is how to ensure support around social media use and online activity either embedded into wellbeing programmes or specifically focused packages feels and remains relevant to young people given: (1) the rapid pace and constant development and evolution of social media and the online landscape, (2) adult-led approaches to support may be perceived to be and actually be inherently ‘out of touch’ as one young person pointed out in an interview, “any person that’s like of a different age doesn’t quite experience it the same way than this generation does…” (Y06), and (3) from experience intervention development is often a years-long process (Morris, Wooding, & Grant, 2011), thus content may be out of date and of limited utility by the time implementation is considered.

I puzzled over these issues for some time, my thinking constrained by the idea of a standardised intervention ‘package’ developed in ways I was familiar with, for example according to the Medical Research Council (MRC) Framework for development and evaluation of complex interventions (Craig et al., 2008).
Collaboration with young people as stakeholders in the development of any sort of intervention programme would be essential (O'Reilly et al., 2018) and in theory address issues around relevance. However, this would not fully resolve the problem of maintaining relevance over time as young people would be able to speak to issues around social media at the time of development.

In the interviews, young people and parents suggested some kind of peer support might be helpful as peers, even slightly older ones, might feel less ‘outside’ the experience of social media and ‘other’ than the school or adults. Something else that really stuck with me about the influence of peers was a young person speaking about their experience of opening up to friends about FOMO having seen people socialising on social media, and how they had found this beneficial in reducing their anxieties (“I've just talked to some of my friends about it [...] and turns out all my friends feel the same way, which is quite a relief to find out.” Y04). I got the sense from interviews that there are lots of unspoken ‘rules of engagement’ that seem to direct how young people operate on social media and in online spaces. An example cited by several young people was of only posting the ‘good things’ on social media, which they identified could breed unhelpful comparisons and have a negative impact on wellbeing and were conscious of the fact that by engaging in this themselves they were perpetuating this. Despite this awareness, however, they did not feel able or want to buck the trend by posting things that were more ‘real’.

I reflected on how peer support could be drawn on and the school setting, which led me to think about the wellbeing committee at the school involved in this project, run by Year 12 students and involving students across all year groups. Based on this, I wonder if a responsive and effective way of supporting young people with social media use and wellbeing in school settings might be to allocate a series of lesson slots in the timetable, possibly offering a combination of learning and peer group support. Providing opportunities for young people to share their experiences, perhaps with a mix of year groups, might be a powerful way to
normalise the difficult everyday experiences of social media that can impact wellbeing (e.g. FOMO), but that in focusing on risk and harms like cyberbullying, current interventions and support from adults can’t quite tap into. Furthermore, if named and talked about, young people might feel empowered to challenge established online practices (e.g. only posting the good things) that don’t seem to support their wellbeing. Rather than having a curriculum as such, young people could be invited to set the agenda themselves by bringing issues around social media and online activities they feel have relevance to them at that particular time. As part of this agenda setting, they might also be invited to suggest particular topics they want to learn about, which might cover media literacy, or perhaps even external speakers with some kind of expertise or personal experience.

The ideas I have outlined here for a potential direction for support were influenced by Quennerstedt’s (2019) call for pedagogy with young people, focusing on issues they deem are important, implicating an approach which: (1) steers away from teaching young people risks of social media use as identified and perceived by adults as current support tends to, (2) invites young people to critically examine their values, norms, and knowledge of social media to inform their own opinions and actions, and (3) does not attempt to direct young people towards pre-defined goals based on perceptions of what health is or indeed isn’t established by society, adults, and education (Goodyear & Armour, 2019).

I am aware that I, as an adult, am proposing ideas on behalf of young people, whilst taking a critical view of such approaches. In this work it has become very clear to me that young people operate in online spaces that adults can never understand, belong to, or experience in the same way, and from the snapshots obtained from the interviews and other accounts in the wider literature, the message from young people seems to be that adults tend to fail to address issues that matter when it comes to support and intervention (Quennerstedt, 2019). Consequently, to increase the chances of clinicians, educators, and researchers ‘hitting the mark’ in
future work to develop and implement support strategies for young people, I would advocate for close collaboration with and opportunities for young people to take a lead at every stage in the process, as they hold the knowledge and experience.
References


Morris, Z. S., Wooding, S., & Grant, J. (2011). The answer is 17 years, what is the question: understanding time lags in translational research. *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine, 104*(12), 510-520.


Appendix 1 – Search strategy examples for scoping review
Search 1: Broad wellbeing and mental health interventions

Strategy example extracted from Ovid

**Key concepts forming search:** Young people (population), school-based (setting), intervention (intervention), wellbeing (outcomes)

1. Schools/
2. Education/
3. Health Education/
4. Curriculum/
5. Health Promotion/
6. School Health Services/
7. School Mental Health Services/
8. Psychology, Educational/
9. school*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
10. high school.mp.
11. secondary school.mp.
12. school based.mp.
13. classroom based.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
14. intervention*.mp.
15. program*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
16. mental health intervention.mp.
17. health intervention.mp.
18. wellbeing intervention.mp.
19. educational intervention.mp.
20. Early Intervention, Educational/
21. early intervention.mp.
22. school based intervention*.mp.
23. school intervention*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
24. skill*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
25. coping*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
26. coping skill*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
27. coping strateg*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
28. life skill*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
29. life skills training.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
30. (social and emotional learning).mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
31. stress management.mp.
32. Meditation/
33. meditation.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
34. Mindfulness/
35. mindfulness.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
36. psychoeeducat*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
37. psycho educat*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
38. (CBT or cognitive behavioural therapy or cognitive behavioral therapy or cognitive behaviour therapy or cognitive behavior therapy).mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
39. Psychology, Positive/
40. positive psychology.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
41. educational mental health.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
42. mental health literacy.mp.
43. mental health prevention.mp.
44. mental health promotion.mp.
45. mental health lesson*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
46. Mental Health/
47. mental health.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
48. (wellbeing or well being or well-being).mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]

49. (mental wellbeing or mental well being or mental well-being).mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]

50. (emotional wellbeing or emotional well being or emotional well-being).mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]

51. (psychological wellbeing or psychological well being or psychological well-being).mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]

52. personal wellbeing.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]

53. Adaptation, Psychological/ or Resilience, Psychological/

54. resilien*.mp.

55. adolesc*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]

56. teen*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]

57. young person*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]

58. young people*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]

59. youth*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]

60. 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 or 9 or 10 or 11 or 12 or 13

61. 14 or 15 or 16 or 17 or 18 or 19 or 20 or 21 or 22 or 23 or 24 or 25 or 26 or 27 or 28 or 29 or 30 or 31 or 32 or 33 or 34 or 35 or 36 or 37 or 38 or 39 or 40 or 41 or 42 or 43 or 44

62. 46 or 47 or 48 or 49 or 50 or 51 or 52 or 53 or 54

63. 55 or 56 or 57 or 58 or 59

64. 60 and 61 and 62 and 63

65. limit 64 to (185nglish language and yr="2003 -Current")

66. 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 or 9 or 10 or 11 or 12 or 13

67. 14 or 15 or 16 or 17 or 18 or 19 or 20 or 21 or 22 or 23

68. 24 or 25 or 26 or 27 or 28 or 29 or 30 or 31 or 32 or 33 or 34 or 35 or 36 or 37 or 38 or 39 or 40 or 41 or 42 or 43 or 44

69. 46 or 47 or 48 or 49 or 50 or 51 or 52 or 53 or 54

70. 55 or 56 or 57 or 58 or 59

71. 66 and 67 and 68 and 69 and 70

72. limit 71 to (185nglish language and yr="2003 -Current")
Search 2: Repeat of search 1 including additional social media terms

Strategy example extracted from Ovid

**Key concepts forming search:** Social media (problem/focus), young people (population), school-based (setting), intervention (intervention), wellbeing (outcomes)

*NB: Bold text denotes additional terms included in this search, which did not feature in main search (see above)*

1. Schools/
2. Education/
3. Health Education/
4. Curriculum/
5. Health Promotion/
6. School Health Services/
7. School Mental Health Services/
8. Psychology, Educational/
9. school*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
10. high school.mp.
11. secondary school.mp.
12. school based.mp.
13. classroom based.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
14. intervention*.mp.
15. program*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
16. mental health intervention.mp.
17. health intervention.mp.
18. wellbeing intervention.mp.
19. educational intervention.mp.
20. Early Intervention, Educational/
21. early intervention.mp.
22. school based intervention*.mp.
23. school intervention*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
24. skill*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
25. coping*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
26. coping skill*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]

27. coping strateg*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]

28. life skill*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]

29. life skills training.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]

30. (social and emotional learning).mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]

31. stress management.mp.

32. Meditation/

33. meditation.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]

34. Mindfulness/

35. mindfulness.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]

36. psychoeducat*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]

37. psycho educat*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]

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43. mental health prevention.mp.

44. mental health promotion.mp.

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54. resilient*.mp.
55. adolesc*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
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58. young people*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
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60. 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 or 9 or 10 or 11 or 12 or 13
61. 14 or 15 or 16 or 17 or 18 or 19 or 20 or 21 or 22 or 23 or 24 or 25 or 26 or 27 or 28 or 29 or 30 or 31 or 32 or 33 or 34 or 35 or 36 or 37 or 38 or 39 or 40 or 41 or 42 or 43 or 44
62. 46 or 47 or 48 or 49 or 50 or 51 or 52 or 53
63. 55 or 56 or 57 or 58 or 59
64. 60 and 61 and 62 and 63
65. limit 64 to (english language and yr="2003 -Current")
66. 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 or 9 or 10 or 11 or 12 or 13
67. 14 or 15 or 16 or 17 or 18 or 19 or 20 or 21 or 22 or 23
68. 24 or 25 or 26 or 27 or 28 or 29 or 30 or 31 or 32 or 33 or 34 or 35 or 36 or 37 or 38 or 39 or 40 or 41 or 42 or 43 or 44 or 45
69. 46 or 47 or 48 or 49 or 50 or 51 or 52 or 53 or 54
70. 55 or 56 or 57 or 58 or 59
71. 66 and 67 and 68 and 69 and 70
72. limit 71 to (english language and yr="2003 -Current")
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79. social media platform*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
80. "social network* website*".mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
81. "social network* site*".mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
82. digital literacy.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
83. online literacy.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
88. digital media literacy.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
89. online media literacy.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
90. social media literacy.mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, organism supplementary concept word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]
91. 73 or 74 or 75 or 76 or 77 or 78 or 79 or 80 or 81 or 82 or 83 or 84 or 85 or 86 or 87 or 88 or 89 or 90
92. 60 and 61 and 62 and 63 and 91
93. limit 92 to (english language and yr="2003 -Current")
Appendix 2 – Summary of studies assigned to category four in scoping review
Supplementary Table 1. Studies allocated to category four: no evidence of inclusion of social media in intervention.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Study title</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Participated in consultation (Yes/No)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pössel, Baldus, Horn, Groen, &amp; Hautzinger (Germany)</td>
<td>Influence of general self-efficacy on the effects of a school-based universal primary prevention program of depressive symptoms in adolescents: a randomized and controlled follow-up study</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horowitz, Garber, Ciesla, Young, &amp; Mufson (USA)</td>
<td>Prevention of Depressive Symptoms in Adolescents: A Randomized Trial of Cognitive–Behavioural and Interpersonal Prevention Programs</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fridrici &amp; Lohaus (Germany)</td>
<td>Stress-prevention in secondary schools: online- versus face-to-face-training</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merrell, Juskelis, Tran, &amp; Buchanan (USA)</td>
<td>Social and Emotional Learning in the Classroom: Evaluation of Strong Kids and Strong Teens on Students' Social-Emotional Knowledge and Symptoms</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacker &amp; Dobie (USA)</td>
<td>MasterMind: Empower Yourself With Mental Health. A Program for Adolescents</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of the Authors</td>
<td>Title of the Intervention</td>
<td>Description of the Intervention</td>
<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ruini, Ottolini, Tomba, Belaise, Albieri, Visani, Offidani, Caffo, &amp; Fava (Italy)</td>
<td>School intervention for promoting psychological well-being in adolescence</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Vliet &amp; Andrews (Australia)</td>
<td>Internet-based course for the management of stress for junior high schools</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boyle, Lynch, Lyon, &amp; Williams (UK)</td>
<td>The use and feasibility of a CBT intervention</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomba, Belaise, Ottolini, Ruini, Bravi, Albieri, Rafanelli, Caffo, &amp; Fava (Italy)</td>
<td>Differential effects of well-being promoting and anxiety-management strategies in a non-clinical school setting</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gueldner &amp; Merrell (USA)</td>
<td>Evaluation of a Social-Emotional Learning Program in Conjunction with the Exploratory Application of Performance Feedback Incorporating Motivational Interviewing Techniques</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivet-Duval, Heriot, &amp; Hunt (Mauritius)</td>
<td>Preventing Adolescent Depression in Mauritius: A Universal School-Based Program</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnes, Johnson, Williams, &amp; Williams (USA)</td>
<td>Impact of Williams LifeSkills® training on anger, anxiety, and ambulatory blood pressure in adolescents</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authors</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Success</td>
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<tr>
<td>de Villiers &amp; van den Berg</td>
<td>The implementation and evaluation of a resiliency programme for</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(South Africa)</td>
<td>children</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Essau, Conradt, Sasagawa, &amp;</td>
<td>Prevention of Anxiety Symptoms in Children: Results From a Universal</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ollendick (Germany)</td>
<td>School-Based Trial</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foret, Scult, Wilcher,</td>
<td>Integrating a relaxation response-based curriculum into a public high</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chudnofsky, Malloy, Hasheminejad, &amp; Park (USA)</td>
<td>school in Massachusetts</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ruiz-Aranda, Castillo,</td>
<td>Short- and Midterm Effects of Emotional Intelligence Training on</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salguero, Cabello, Fernández-Berrocal, &amp; Balluerka (Spain)</td>
<td>Adolescent Mental Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wong, Fu, Chan, Chan, Liu,</td>
<td>Effectiveness of a universal school-based programme for preventing</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law, &amp; Yip (Hong Kong)</td>
<td>depression in Chinese adolescents: A quasi-experimental pilot study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kuyken, Weare, Ukoumunne,</td>
<td>Effectiveness of the Mindfulness in Schools Programme: non-randomised</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vicary, Motton, Burnett,</td>
<td>controlled feasibility study</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cullen, Hennelly &amp; Huppert</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(UK)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Shoshani &amp; Steinmet</td>
<td>Positive Psychology at School: A School-Based Intervention to</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Israel)</td>
<td>Promote Adolescents' Mental Health and Well-Being</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gigantesco, Del Re, Cascavilla, Palumbo, De Mei, Cattaneo, Giovannelli, & Bella (Italy) A Universal Mental Health Promotion Programme for Young People in Italy 2014

Nielsen, Meilstrup, Nelausen, Koushede, & Holstein (Denmark) Promotion of social and emotional competence: Experiences from a mental health intervention applying a whole school approach 2014

Johnson, Burke, Brinkman, & Wade (Australia) Randomized Controlled Trial: A Web-Based Adolescent Positive Psychology Program in Schools 2015

Perry, Petrie, Buckley, Cavanagh, Clarke, Hadzi-Pavlovic, Manicavasagar, & Christensen (Australia) Effects of a classroom-based educational resource on adolescent mental health literacy: A cluster randomised controlled trial 2014

Tak, Kleinjan, Lichtwarck-Aschoff, & Engels (The Netherlands) Secondary outcomes of a school-based universal resilience training for adolescents: A cluster randomised controlled trial 2014

Buchkardt, Manicavasagar, Bellatnian, Miller, Boniwell, Ooi, & Martinez (UK) Teaching happiness at school: Non-randomised controlled mixed-methods feasibility study on the effectiveness of Personal Well-Being Lessons 2015

Burckhardt, Manicavasagar, Batterham, Miller, Talbot, & Lum (Australia) A Web-Based Adolescent Positive Psychology Program in Schools: Randomized Controlled Trial 2015

Johnson, Burke, Brinkman, & Wade (Australia) Effectiveness of a school-based mindfulness program for transdiagnostic prevention in young adolescents 2015

Bekker, Meiers, Nieuwenhoven, & Westerhuis (Netherlands) Secondary outcomes of a school-based universal resilience training for adolescents: A cluster randomised controlled trial 2014

Hossein (Iran) A Universal Mental Health Promotion Programme for Young People in Iran 2014
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Title and Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Melynk, Jacobson, Kelly, Belyea, Shaibi, Small, O'Haver, &amp; Marsiglia (USA)</td>
<td>Twelve-Month Effects of the COPE Healthy Lifestyles TEEN Program on Overweight and Depressive Symptoms in High School Adolescents 2015 Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice, Rawal, Riglin, Lewis, Lewis, &amp; Dunsmuir (UK)</td>
<td>Examining reward-seeking, negative self-beliefs and over-general autobiographical memory as mechanisms of change in classroom prevention programs for adolescent depression 2015 Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith-Carrier, Koffler, Mishna, Wallwork, Daciuk &amp; Zeger (Canada)</td>
<td>Putting your mind at ease: findings from the Mindfulness Ambassador Council programme in Toronto area schools 2015 Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veltro, Ialenti, Iannone, Bonanni, &amp; García (Italy)</td>
<td>Promoting the Psychological Well-Being of Italian Youth: A Pilot Study of a High School Mental Health Program 2015 Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluth, Gaylord, Campoa, Mularkey, &amp; Hobbs (USA)</td>
<td>Making Friends With Yourself: A Mixed Methods Pilot Study of a Mindful Self-Compassion Program for Adolescents 2016 Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank, Kohler, Peal, &amp; Bose (USA)</td>
<td>Effectiveness of a School-Based Yoga Program on Adolescent Mental Health and School Performance: Findings from a Randomized Controlled Trial 2016 Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lang &amp; Schmitz (Germany)</td>
<td>Art-of-Living Training: Developing an Intervention for Students to Increase Art-of-Living 2016 No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanger, Thierry, &amp; Dorjee (UK)</td>
<td>Effects of school-based mindfulness training on emotion processing and well-being in adolescents: evidence from event-related potentials</td>
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<tr>
<td>Terjestam, Bengtsson, &amp; Jansson (Sweden)</td>
<td>Cultivating awareness at school. Effects on effortful control, peer relations and well-being at school in grades 5, 7, and 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomyn, Fuller-Tyszkiewicz, Richardson, &amp; Colla (Australia)</td>
<td>A Comprehensive Evaluation of a Universal School-Based Depression Prevention Program for Adolescents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson, Burke, Brinkman, &amp; Wade (Australia)</td>
<td>A randomized controlled evaluation of a secondary school mindfulness program for early adolescents: Do we have the recipe right yet?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunariu, Tribe, Frings, &amp; Albery (UK)</td>
<td>The iNEAR programme: an existential positive psychology intervention for resilience and emotional wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flynn, Joyce, Weihrauch &amp; Corcoran (Ireland)</td>
<td>Innovations in Practice: Dialectical behaviour therapy – skills training for emotional problem solving for adolescents (DBT STEPS-A): evaluation of a pilot implementation in Irish post-primary schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freire, Lima, Teixeira, Araújo, &amp; Machado (Portugal)</td>
<td>Challenge: To Be+ A group intervention program to promote the positive development of adolescents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authors</td>
<td>Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>McAllister, Knight, Hasking, Withyman, &amp;</td>
<td>Building resilience in regional youth: Impacts of a universal mental</td>
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<td>Dawkins (Australia)</td>
<td>health promotion programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pannebakker, Van Genugten, Diekstra,</td>
<td>A Social Gradient in the Effects of the Skills for Life Program on</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gravesteijn, Fekkes, Kuiper, &amp; Kocken</td>
<td>Self-Efficacy and Mental Wellbeing of Adolescent Students</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Netherlands)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Amaris Knight, Haboush-Deloye, Goldberg, &amp;</td>
<td>Strategies and Tools to Embrace Prevention with Upstream Programs:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grob (USA)</td>
<td>A Novel Pilot Program for Enhancing Social and Emotional Protective</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factors in Middle School Students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ma &amp; Shek (Hong Kong)</td>
<td>Objective Outcome Evaluation of a Positive Youth Development Program:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Project P.A.T.H.S. in Hong Kong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McGeechan, Richardson, Wilson, Allan &amp;</td>
<td>Qualitative exploration of a targeted school-based mindfulness course</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newbury-Birch (UK)</td>
<td>in England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langer, Medeiros, Valdés-Sánchez, Brito,</td>
<td>A Qualitative Study of a Mindfulness-Based Intervention in Educational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steinebach, Cid-Parra, Magni, &amp; Krause</td>
<td>Contexts in Chile: An Approach Based on Adolescents’ Voices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Chile)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veltro, Latte, Ialenti, Bonanni, Di Padua, &amp;</td>
<td>Effectiveness of psycho-educational intervention to promote mental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gigantesco (Italy)</td>
<td>health focused on emotional intelligence in middle-school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volanen, Lassander, Hankonen, Santalahti, Hintsanen, Simonsen, Raevuori, Mullola, Vahlberg, Butb, &amp; Suominen (Finland)</td>
<td>Healthy learning mind – Effectiveness of a mindfulness program on mental health compared to a relaxation program and teaching as usual in schools: A cluster-randomised controlled trial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3 – Summary of consultation with young people
School Consultation Session

Setting / context: Youth Advisory Group meeting – for students who are interested in issues around wellbeing. Usually run with a teacher and led by year 12 students.

Attendance: Dr Emma Silver, Dr Lauren Yates, teacher, seven students (F=6, White British which is reflective of the demographics of the general school population) from Years 9-12.

Procedure: Just under an hour spent in discussion. Quant questionnaire and qual topic guide questions presented. Quant questionnaire split (pages 1–4, 5–8) and allocated between students to review. Students invited to ask questions, consider the clarity of the phrasing of questionnaire items and scales (e.g. Likert responses), feeding back verbally or writing notes on the questionnaire drafts.

Quant study feedback
Suggestions from students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire item</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media use definition</td>
<td>Some students asked what counted as SM e.g. Netflix? Suggested it might be good to bolden the definition at the start of the questionnaire and make sure the researcher reads it out loud.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographic questions
Q1 What do you parents or guardians do for a living / as a job?
Student wrote names of parents then crossed these out. Possibly suggests the question may not be clear?

Q3 During term time, how many hours per week do you typically spend...? (offline activities)
"Maybe per day? As I don’t know per week" (004)
Students said they would find it difficult to know this and said there is a difference between week days and week ends as well as a difference between spending blocks of time on SM vs. checking throughout the day. Felt it would be important to have some way to distinguish between different ways of using SM.

Social media use
Q2 Which top three social media sites / apps do you use?
1. Snapchat, 2. Instagram, 3. (left blank) (003)

Q5 In the past week on average how many times per day did you log on or check a social media site?
“I have no idea a lot” (003)
“Wouldn’t know” (004)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Amendment</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q6 I have used social media to check out someone I met socially</td>
<td>“How do you strongly agree?” (003)</td>
<td>Sense that the Likert scale responses didn’t quite fit for this question. Suggested alternatives include ‘all the time, sometimes, often, never’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“How do you strongly agree?” (004) Amendment from student:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, I don’t know, agree, strongly agree, often” (006)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q20 When comparing yourself to others offline, to what extent do you focus on people who are better off than you?</td>
<td>Amendment from student: “When comparing yourself to others offline, to what extent do you focus on people who are better off than you?” (005)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not at all, very little, somewhat, quite a bit, a great deal (005)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q21 When comparing yourself to others offline, to what extent do you focus on people who are worse off than you?</td>
<td>“Makes them sound poorer” (005)</td>
<td>Students asked for clarity on what ‘worse off’ means.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q25 I use social media to belong to a group</td>
<td>“As in be part of a group chat with friends or like general online?” (001)</td>
<td>Students felt it would be useful to distinguish between use of SM involving people you know vs. people/groups you don’t know or know through online activities (e.g. climate activism)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Specific group of people?” (002)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“people you know socially, a group and shared interest not online” (ES)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q26 I use social media to occupy my time or to pass the time when I’m bored</td>
<td>“Pointless question” (005)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q30 I use social media to have fun and be entertained</td>
<td>Amendment from student: “I use social media to have fun and be entertained make myself happy” (005)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q32 I use social media to post new photographs</td>
<td>Amendment from staff:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“I use social media to post new photographs / videos” (ES)

Q37 I use social media to avoid face-to-face communication
Amendment from student:
“I use social media to avoid face-to-face communication because I don’t like personal contact” (005)

Sharing social media use data item
“People might not want to share this as it’s personal” (005)
Disagreement amongst students about whether this would be okay or not. Most felt they wouldn’t mind sharing this information, but some highlighted that it was private and sensitive.

Other annotations / comments:
- “+ privacy settings! (questions on how to report someone or when you should) + hate? comments?” (006)

Qual study feedback
Suggestions from students:
- Consider how to capture the distinction between SM / apps that feel like a ‘waste time’ when being used vs. SM / apps that provide more engagement / enjoyment.
  “Are there some apps you feel are more beneficial than others? -> not wasting time” (006)

- Consider adding something about non-SM/tech activities. For example, a question asking what you would be doing if you weren’t using SM.
  “Have you found any social media alternatives? Something you love doing in your spare time” (006)

- Consider adding a question about how the person started using SM.
  “How did you start using it?” (006)

- ‘What kinds of things happen for you when you use SM?’ question seemed ambiguous and open. Students suggested use of prompts (e.g. positive things, negative things) if the interviewee isn’t sure how to answer.

- To help the interviewee feel comfortable, the interviewer should not ask directly about some of the more sensitive issues (e.g. cyberbullying), but should try to warm into those sorts of topics, and where possible phrase questions so that the interviewee has a choice about what they do/do not share.

- Preference to be interviewed separately from parents.
- Easier to talk to someone you don’t know about things like cyber bullying, trolling, ‘hate’.

Possible themes / reflections:
• Issues around maintaining privacy: public vs personal accounts, using multiple accounts or adjusting settings (e.g. private stories on Snapchat) to navigate this. Consider exploring which accounts people use more often, trust, and worries around access to different ‘parts of self’ (could draw in the idea of ‘context collapse’).

• Issues around the impact of seeing private stories and knowing you have / haven’t been included. Private stories analogous to things you would tell only close friends. Awareness that information may be shared more widely than intended even if presented in a private story or closed group.

• Something about possible age differences in how challenging it is to choose and manage which parts are shown and to who on SM. Impression that students have a good understanding of steps to take and knowing which parts of self are appropriate for different SM platforms / different online audiences. Perhaps adults who have not grown up with this technology have found this more of a challenging which may lead to concerns about young people which are actually unfounded.

• How SM is represented in the media (e.g. celebrities, films, TV) and how this may not represent the ways people use SM in real life. Possible that this links to perception of risk, more negative ideas about young people using SM?

  “Do you think films / entertainment industry portray it well? -> agree” (006)

General points about the studies:
• Students asked whether it would be acceptable to miss a question if students felt it was too personal. There was acknowledgement amongst students that questions would be acceptable for some, but not for others. ES highlighted that missing questions might have an impact on the studies.

• One student raised the idea of feeling isolated on social media and setting meet ups.

• ES mentioned that some of the questions in the final booklet would be around mental health and SM use. A student felt that how often people speak about mental health issues / whether this has been disclosed or not in general might impact how students answer questions related to mental health.

• The students were very interested in hearing about the findings of the study. We spoke a little bit about our aim to get a realistic and balanced view of SM use as there have been a lot of narratives around risk and the negative impact of SM use. Students were very keen about this.
Appendix 4 – Interview topic guides for young people and parents
CLINICAL, EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY

Topic guide (Version 2) for young people (aged 11-18 years)

Study: Using social media to support wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic

The researcher will welcome the young person, introduce themselves, and talk about the study and procedure for the session at the start of the session.

Before the interview part of the session begins, the researcher will ask the young person again for permission to audio/video record, remind them it will be okay stop to take a break or pause the recording at any time, and that they don’t have to talk about anything they would prefer not to. They will also offer the young person an opportunity to ask questions.

### Interview schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Example questions / prompts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Patterns of social media use (behaviour*)** | To explore:  
- The ways the young person uses social media sites / apps, and other digital technologies (e.g. House Party, Skype) now, i.e. during the COVID-19 pandemic  
- Whether this has changed and why  
- How often the young person uses social media in comparison with peers, other family members  
- What the young person thinks their parent / guardian feels about their social media use | What kinds of social media sites and other social apps or games do you use at the moment?  
What do you typically do on social media? (Do you normally interact with others online, e.g. post things and comment on / like others’ posts or mainly just read others’ posts and online material? Have the types of things you engage in changed during covid-19?)  
Has this changed for you? (Further prompts - When / in what ways? Why do you think this might be? Because of coronavirus and changes that have happened since it?)  
Why do you use social media? (Further prompts - What makes you want to spend time using social media now? Who do you connect with online? What about before the coronavirus and all the changes that have happened since it?)  
What does your parent / guardian think about you using social media? (Further prompt – How do you know? Were things like this before the coronavirus and changes that have happened since it?) |
| **Reflections on social media** | To explore: | Have there been any good things / bad things about using social media for you |
### Perception of control over social media use (perceived behavioural control*)

**To explore:**
- Whether the young person sees themselves as an active agent in their social media use during COVID-19
- What are some of the factors that impact perceived control (e.g. social media trends, group norms, addiction, COVID-19)?
- The young person’s perceived involvement of their parent / guardian in their social media use before and during COVID-19

**During coronavirus?** (Further prompts – Do you feel in charge of how you use social media at the moment? (Further prompts – Did you before the coronavirus? Do you think anyone else or anything else has an influence on how you use social media? e.g. friends, family, celebrities. Do you feel that you able to stop using it when you want to?))

Do you feel in charge of how you use social media at the moment? (Further prompts – Did you before the coronavirus? Do you think anyone else or anything else has an influence on how you use social media? e.g. friends, family, celebrities. Do you feel that you able to stop using it when you want to?))

### Use (beliefs, attitudes, intentions*) and its impact

- Whether and how the young person thinks using social media affects them (e.g. positive and negative impact) before and during COVID-19.
- Whether and how the young person thinks using social media affects the way they think, feel, and behave during COVID-19.
- Whether and how the young person reflects on the impact of social media on them.
- Whether views are shared by their parent / guardian.
- Whether and how the young person thinks their use of social media impacts on others (e.g. peers, parent/guardian).
- Whether and how the young person reflects on the impact of social media on others.

**During coronavirus?** (Further prompts – Do you think other people have had experiences like this too?)

Do you think that social media affects the way you think about things at the moment? …feel about things at the moment? …influences how you behave or the things you do at the moment? (Further prompts – In what ways? Has this changed since the coronavirus and all the changes that have happened since it? Can you think of any examples related to the coronavirus?)

Do you think that social media has made you feel more or less worried about coronavirus? (Further prompts – Can you think of specific examples)

Have you ever thought about the way social media affects your mental or physical health? (For better or for worse). (Further prompts – When? What makes you think about it? What happens next?)

Researcher to recap some of the young person’s responses and then ask – Do you think if your parent / guardian was here with us they would see things the same way?

Are there times when you think about how what you do on social media affects other people? (Further prompts – When? E.g. your family? What makes you think about it? What happens next?)

### Do you ever think about changing how you use social media? Before or since the coronavirus? (Further prompts if yes – Can you talk about a time when you thought about this? What happened? Did you make any changes?)
Have you made any changes to how you use social media during the coronavirus? (Further prompts if yes, was this because of the pandemic or something else?)

If you wanted to change the way you use social media now, how would you go about it?

If you have already changed how you use social media, how have you gone about it?

Do you think your parent / guardian thinks about changing the way you use social media? (Further prompts - Do you think they would be able to do this if they wanted to? What might stop them being able to? What might help them? Do you think COVID-19 has made them think about this, or do something about this?)

If a parent / guardian has tried to intervene or instigate changes to the young person’s social media use ask — How do you feel about your parent/guardian asking/telling you to change the ways you use social media? (Further prompts – Why do you think they have asked/told you to make changes? Has this caused any trouble between you? Do you think you share the same point of view about the situation? Will you make these changes?)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers and facilitators to using social media in a way that supports wellbeing, (intention*)</th>
<th>To explore:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• How beliefs and attitudes facilitate intentions to use social media in a way that supports wellbeing during COVID-19</td>
<td>What would get in the way of you using social media in a positive way that helps you feel good about things in your life? Can you think of anything that would get in the way of using social media in ways that keep you feeling okay/good about things in your life at the moment… or making the changes you want to make? (Further prompts – Do you think you would be able to overcome the things that get in the way for you? What about in the future after the coronavirus has passed?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How beliefs and attitudes act as barriers to intentions to use social media in a way that supports wellbeing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Whether there are any non-psychological barriers and facilitators to social media use? (e.g. COVID-19)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ideas about what measures or action would support young people use social media in a way that supports their wellbeing that would address identified barriers or capitalise on identified facilitators.</td>
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</table>

**What would help you to use social media in a positive way that helps you feel good about things in your life? Can you think of anything that would help you to use social media in ways that keep you feeling okay/good about things in your life at the moment… or**
making the changes you want to make? (Further prompts – What would you do to get these things that would help you? What about in the future after the COVID-19 pandemic?)

Do you have any ideas about who might help you to do this? (Further prompts – suggest school, family, friends, wider systems like the media)

Have you felt like you needed to learn new ways of using social media during since the coronavirus? (Further prompts – Why? What news ways have you found or learned? What happened when you did this?)

Have you felt like you need to find new ways of using social media to help you feel better about things during the coronavirus?

What do you think will happen to your social media use after the COVID-19 pandemic? (Further prompts – Do you think there will be any differences or changes?)

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**Key**

* Components of Ajzen’s Theory of Behaviour Model (Ajzen, 1991)
**Topic guide (Version 2) for parents and guardians**

**Study:** Using social media to support wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic

The researcher will welcome the parent / guardian, introduce themselves, and talk about the study and procedure for the session at the start of the session.

Before the interview part of the session begins, the researcher will ask the parent / guardian again for permission to audio/video record, remind them they can request a break or pause the recording at any time, and that they don’t have to talk about anything they would prefer not to. They will also offer the parent / guardian an opportunity to ask questions.

The researcher will use the term [parent / parents / carer / carers / guardian / guardians or other] as appropriate after they have determined what is appropriate given the family structure.

### Interview schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Example questions / prompts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Their child’s / children’s patterns of social media use (behaviour*)</td>
<td><strong>To explore:</strong>&lt;br&gt;• The ways their child/children use/s social media sites / apps, and other digital technologies (e.g. House Party, Skype) now during the COVID-19 pandemic&lt;br&gt;• Whether this has changed and why&lt;br&gt;• What the parent / guardian feels about their child / children’s social media use</td>
<td>Does your child / do your children use social media? (Further prompts - What about other members of the family?)&lt;br&gt;What kinds of social media apps / sites / games do they use? (Further prompts – Has this changed since COVID-19 in any way? How?)&lt;br&gt;How much do they use social media? (Further prompts - A lot? A little? Relative to you and other people’s [child/children]? When are you most likely to see them using social media? At what times? Has this changed since COVID-19 in any way? How?)&lt;br&gt;Why do you think they use social media? What do you think they use it for? (Further prompts – Has this changed since COVID-19 in any way? How?)&lt;br&gt;What do you think about their use of social media? (Further prompt – has this changed since COVID-19? In what ways?)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Reflections on child / children’s social media use (beliefs, attitudes, intentions*) and its impact

**To explore:**
- Whether and how the parent/guardian thinks using social media affects their child/children (e.g. positive and negative impact) during COVID-19
- Whether and how the parent/guardian thinks using social media affects the way their child/children think, feel, and behave
- Whether and how the parent/guardian reflects on the impact of social media on feelings of concern and anxiety around COVID-19 and general impact of social media
- Whether the parent / guardian thinks their child / children reflect on their social media use

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**Do you think that there are any good things / positives about your child / children’s social media use? Particularly during the coronavirus and the changes that have happened since it?**

**What about any bad things / negatives about it?**

**Do you think that social media affects the way they think, feel or behave / act? (Further prompts – In what ways? Has this changed since the coronavirus and all the changes that have happened since it? Can you think of any examples related to the coronavirus?)**

**Are there times when you have thought about the impact of your child’s / children’s social media use on their mental or physical health / wellbeing? (For better or for worse) (Further prompts – When? Can you give specific examples? What makes you think about it? What happens next?)**

**Do you think that social media has helped or hindered your child / children to manage their possible concerns and anxieties about COVID-19? Or had an impact on their response and thoughts about the situation? (Further prompts – Can you think of specific examples)**

**Are there times when you have thought about the impact of your child’s / children’s social media use on the family or their relationships with family members or peers? (For better or for worse) (Further prompts – When? Can you think about specific examples? What makes you think about it? What happens next?)**

**Do you think that your child has / children have ever thought about their own social media use or been concerned about it in anyway?**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception of control over social media use (perceived behavioural control*)</th>
<th>To explore:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Whether the parent/guardian sees their [child/children] as an active agent in their social media use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What are some of the factors that impact perceived control (e.g. social media trends, group norms, addiction, COVID-19)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Whether the parent/guardian has felt they needed to intervene in their [child/children’s] social media use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think your [child/children] feel able (or are able) to control how they use social media at the moment? (E.g. what they do on it… when they use it… how often… how long… do they seem to be able to stop when they want to or when you ask them to… does it get in the way of their sleep or other activities… etc.).</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you think anyone or anything else has an influence on how they use social media at the moment? (E.g. friends, family, celebrities, covid-19 situation)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think your [child/children] ever think about changing the way they use social media at the moment? Have they tried? (Further prompts - Do you think they would be able to do this if they wanted to? What might stop them being able to? What might help them? Do you think they thought about this before COVID-19?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you felt that you need to take steps to intervene in your [child/children’s] social media? Either before or since the COVID-19 (Further prompts – What are your reasons for this? What specifically has this involved e.g. increased control, monitoring, providing advice, limiting use?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If so, how has your [child/children] responded? (Further prompts – has this caused any conflict or tension? Between who?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you think your [child/children’s] understanding of changes in your rules or views about social media or your attempts to intervene in their use is?</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers and facilitators to using social media in a way that</th>
<th>To explore:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How beliefs and attitudes facilitate intentions to use social media in a way that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you think of anything that would get in the way of your [child/children] using social media in ways that are positive and helpful at the moment… or making</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
supports well-being (intention*)

- How beliefs and attitudes act as barriers to intentions to use social media in a way that supports well-being
- Whether there are any non-psychological barriers and facilitators to social media use? (e.g. COVID-19)
- Ideas about what measures or action would support young people use social media in a way that supports their well-being that would address identified barriers or capitalise on identified facilitators.

appropriate changes to their use? (Further prompts – Do you think they would be able to overcome the things that get in the way? What about in the future after the COVID-19 pandemic? Anything that would help you to support their positive use?)

Can you think of anything that would help your [child/children] to use social media in ways that are positive and helpful at the moment… or making appropriate changes to their use? (Further prompts – What would they do to get these things that would help? What about in the future after the COVID-19 pandemic? Anything that would help you to support their positive use?)

Do you have any ideas about who might be able to help your [child/children], or help you to support them, to do this? (Further prompts – suggest school, family, friends, services, professionals, wider systems like the media)

Do you think your [child/children] have needed to learn new ways of using social media during the COVID-19 pandemic (Further prompts – Why? What new ways have they found or learned? How did this happen? What resources did they use? What happened when they did this?)

Do you think your [child/children] have needed to find new ways of using social media to help them feel better about things during the COVID-19 pandemic?

What do you think will happen to your [child/children’s] social media use after the COVID-19 pandemic? (Further prompts – Do you anticipate any differences or changes?)

Key * Components of Ajzen’s Theory of Behaviour Model (Ajzen, 1991)
Appendix 5 – Questionnaire measures
Thank you for agreeing to take part in the study. For the multiple-choice questions, please select the answer that describes you the best.

1.1. Age: ________________________________

1.2. What year group are you in?
   [ ] Year 7
   [ ] Year 9
   [ ] Year 10
   [ ] Year 12

1.4. Are you attending school at the moment (i.e. since schools closed on Friday 20\textsuperscript{th} March)?
   [ ] Yes
   [ ] No
   [ ] Remotely

1.5. What gender were you assigned at birth?
   [ ] Male
   [ ] Female
   [ ] Prefer not to say

1.6. What gender do you self-identify as now?
   [ ] Male
   [ ] Female
   [ ] Other (please specify: ___________)
   [ ] Prefer not to say

1.7. What is your ethnicity? (Please choose one)
   [ ] White (British; Irish; Any Other White Background)
   [ ] Mixed (White and Black Caribbean; White and Black African; White and Asian; Any Other Mixed Background)
   [ ] Asian or Asian British (Chinese; Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; Any Other Asian Background)
   [ ] Black or Black British (Caribbean; African; Any Other Black Background)
   [ ] Any Other Ethnic Group
   [ ] Prefer not to say

1.8. On a weekday (Monday-Friday) how many hours do you typically spend…?
   [ ] Sleeping per night
   [ ] Studying or doing school-related activity during the day
   [ ] Exercising during the day
2. Digital Screen Use

We would like to ask you some questions about your digital screen use, including your use of social media, video-gaming, video chatting and messaging apps.

2.1. In the past week, on an average weekday (i.e. Monday to Friday), approximately how much time per day have you spent using messaging apps (e.g. WhatsApp and Messenger)?

[ ] Less than 10 minutes
[ ] 10-30 minutes
[ ] 31-60 minutes
[ ] 1-2 hours
[ ] 3-5 hours
[ ] More than 5 hours

2.2. In the past week, on an average weekday (i.e. Monday to Friday), approximately how much time per day have you spent using video chatting apps (e.g. House Party and Skype)?

[ ] Less than 10 minutes
[ ] 10-30 minutes
[ ] 31-60 minutes
[ ] 1-2 hours
[ ] 3-5 hours
[ ] More than 5 hours

2.3 In the past week, on an average weekday (i.e. Monday to Friday), approximately how much time per day have you spent gaming? Note: this includes standard computer games as well as virtual social worlds (e.g. Second Life) and virtual game worlds (e.g. Fortnite, Minecraft, World of Warcraft).

[ ] Less than 10 minutes
[ ] 10-30 minutes
[ ] 31-60 minutes
[ ] 1-2 hours
[ ] 3-5 hours
[ ] More than 5 hours

2.4 Did this include multiplayer gaming (i.e. playing with others over the internet?)

[ ] Yes
[ ] No

2.5. Do you use social media? Note: We are defining social media broadly to include social networking sites (like Facebook and Instagram), blogs and microblog sites (like Tumblr and Twitter) and content communities (like YouTube).

[ ] Yes → please continue to 2.6
[ ] No → please can you tell us why not before continuing to 3.1

___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

2.6. Which top three social media sites/apps do you use? Please state up to three. If you only use one or two, please just name those and leave other spaces blank.

1. ____________________ 2. ____________________ 3. ____________________

2.7. How many social media sites/apps do you use in total? [  ]

2.8. In the past week, on average, approximately how much time per day have you spent using social media sites?

[ ] Less than 10 minutes
[ ] 10-30 minutes
[ ] 31-60 minutes
[ ] 1-2 hours
[ ] 3-5 hours
[ ] More than 5 hours

For each statement below, please select the answer that describes you the best.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.9. When comparing yourself to others on social media, to what extent do you focus on people who are better off than you?</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Very little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Quite a bit</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.10. When comparing yourself to others on social media, to what extent do you focus on people who are worse off than you?</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>Very little</td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>Quite a bit</td>
<td>A great deal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.11. When comparing yourself to others offline (i.e. not on social media but in day-to-day interactions), to what extent do you focus on people who are better off than you?</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>Very little</td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>Quite a bit</td>
<td>A great deal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.12. When comparing yourself to others offline (i.e. not on social media but in day-to-day interactions), to what extent do you focus on people who are worse off than you?</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>Very little</td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>Quite a bit</td>
<td>A great deal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.13. I use social media to hook up (i.e. to start a relationship with a boyfriend or girlfriend).</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.14. I use social media to look for a date.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.15. I use social media to seek a romantic partner (i.e. to find a boyfriend or girlfriend).</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.16. I use social media to make new friends.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.17. I use social media to extend my circle of friends.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.18. I use social media to meet new people.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.19. I use social media to ask for information about what to study for exams.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.20. I use social media to ask or share class notes.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.21. I use social media to check or share group assignments.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.22. I use social media to not feel disengaged from the world.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.23. I use social media to feel connected with people.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.24. I use social media to feel socially integrated.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.25. I use social media to keep up-to-date with what my contacts are doing in their day-to-day life.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.26. I use social media to know the details of my friends' lives.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.27. I use social media to snoop on people that I am interested in (i.e. to check out what others are doing)</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.28. I use social media to fill my free time.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.29. I use social media to kill time when I am bored.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.30. I use social media to entertain myself.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.31. I use social media to stand out from others.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.32. I use social media for other people to comment on my posts.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.33. I use social media to check that others like my posts.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.34. I use social media to express my feelings and thoughts.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.35. I use social media to give my opinion on a topic.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.36. I use social media to discuss some subject (with other people).</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.37. I use social media to keep up about what happens in the world.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.38. I use social media to be informed about the news.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.39. I use social media to find information about topics that I like and am interested in.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
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<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.40. I watch videos or pictures posted on social media sites.</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Less than once a week</td>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>2-6 times a week</td>
<td>Less than once a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.41. I read online discussions on social media sites.</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Less than once a week</td>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>2-6 times a week</td>
<td>Once a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.42. I read user comments/ratings/reviews on social media sites.</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Less than once a week</td>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>2-6 times a week</td>
<td>Once a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.43. I comment on others’ posts on social media sites.</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Less than once a week</td>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>2-6 times a week</td>
<td>Once a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.44. I “like” posts on others’ social media sites (clicking the like button)</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Less than once a week</td>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>2-6 times a week</td>
<td>Once a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.45. I share comments on social media sites with my connections.</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Less than once a week</td>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>2-6 times a week</td>
<td>Once a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.46. I post contents on my own social media page.</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Less than once a week</td>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>2-6 times a week</td>
<td>Once a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.47. I use social media to stay informed about COVID-19 (the coronavirus).</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Less than once a week</td>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>2-6 times a week</td>
<td>Once a day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thank you for agreeing to take part in the study. For the multiple-choice questions, please select the answer that describes you the best.

1.3. Age: ________________________________

1.4. What year group is your child in?
   [ ] Year 7
   [ ] Year 9
   [ ] Year 10
   [ ] Year 12

2.4. Is your child attending school at the moment (i.e. since schools closed on Friday 20th March)?
   [ ] Yes
   [ ] No
   [ ] Remotely

2.5. What gender were you assigned at birth?
   [ ] Male
   [ ] Female
   [ ] Prefer not to say

2.6. What gender do you self-identify as now?
   [ ] Male
   [ ] Female
   [ ] Other (please specify:___________)
   [ ] Prefer not to say

2.7. What is your ethnicity? (Please choose one)
   [ ] White (British; Irish; Any Other White Background)
   [ ] Mixed (White and Black Caribbean; White and Black African; White and Asian; Any Other Mixed Background)
   [ ] Asian or Asian British (Chinese; Indian; Pakistani; Bangladesh; Any Other Asian Background)
   [ ] Black or Black British (Caribbean; African; Any Other Black Background)
   [ ] Any Other Ethnic Group
   [ ] Prefer not to say

2.8. On a weekday (Monday-Friday) how many hours do you typically spend…?
   [ ] Sleeping per night
   [ ] Studying or doing school-related activity during the day
   [ ] Exercising during the day
   [ ] Spending time with family (face-to-face) during the day
3. Digital Screen Use

We would like to ask you some questions about your digital screen use, including your use of social media, video-gaming, video chatting and messaging apps.

2.1. In the past week, on an average weekday (i.e. Monday to Friday), approximately how much time per day have you spent using messaging apps (e.g. WhatsApp and Messenger)?
[ ] Less than 10 minutes
[ ] 10-30 minutes
[ ] 31-60 minutes
[ ] 1-2 hours
[ ] 3-5 hours
[ ] More than 5 hours

2.2. In the past week, on an average weekday (i.e. Monday to Friday), approximately how much time per day have you spent using video chatting apps (e.g. House Party and Skype)?
[ ] Less than 10 minutes
[ ] 10-30 minutes
[ ] 31-60 minutes
[ ] 1-2 hours
[ ] 3-5 hours
[ ] More than 5 hours

2.3 In the past week, on an average weekday (i.e. Monday to Friday), approximately how much time per day have you spent gaming? Note: this includes standard computer games as well as virtual social worlds (e.g. Second Life) and virtual game worlds (e.g. Fortnite, Minecraft, World of Warcraft).
[ ] Less than 10 minutes
[ ] 10-30 minutes
[ ] 31-60 minutes
[ ] 1-2 hours
[ ] 3-5 hours
[ ] More than 5 hours

2.4 Did this include multiplayer gaming (i.e. playing with others over the internet?)
[ ] Yes
[ ] No

2.5. Do you use social media? Note: We are defining social media broadly to include social networking sites (like Facebook and Instagram), blogs and microblog sites (like Tumblr and Twitter) and content communities (like YouTube).
[ ] Yes → please continue to 2.6
[ ] No → please can you tell us why not before continuing to 3.1
2.6. Which top three social media sites / apps do you use? Please state up to three. If you only use one or two, please just name those and leave other spaces blank.

2. ____________________ 2. ____________________ 3. ____________________

2.7. How many social media sites / apps do you use in total? [ ]

2.8. In the past week, on average, approximately how much time per day have you spent using social media sites?

[ ] Less than 10 minutes
[ ] 10-30 minutes
[ ] 31-60 minutes
[ ] 1-2 hours
[ ] 3-5 hours
[ ] More than 5 hours

For each statement below, please select the answer that describes you the best.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.9. When comparing yourself to others on social media, to what extent do you focus on people who are better off than you?</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Very little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Quite a bit</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.10. When comparing yourself to others on social media, to what extent do you focus on people who are worse off than you?</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>Very little</td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>Quite a bit</td>
<td>A great deal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.11. When comparing yourself to others offline (i.e. not on social media but in day-to-day interactions), to what extent do you focus on people who are better off than you?</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>Very little</td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>Quite a bit</td>
<td>A great deal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.12. When comparing yourself to others offline (i.e. not on social media but in day-to-day interactions), to what extent do you focus on people who are worse off than you?</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>Very little</td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>Quite a bit</td>
<td>A great deal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
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<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.17. I use social media to hook up (i.e. to start a relationship with a boyfriend or girlfriend).</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.18. I use social media to look for a date.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.19. I use social media to seek a romantic partner (i.e. to find a boyfriend or girlfriend).</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.20. I use social media to make new friends.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.17. I use social media to extend my circle of friends.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.18. I use social media to meet new people.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.19. I use social media to ask for information about what to study for exams.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.20. I use social media to ask or share class notes.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>-----------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.22. I use social media to check or share group assignments.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.22. I use social media to not feel disengaged from the world.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.23. I use social media to feel connected with people.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.24. I use social media to feel socially integrated.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.25. I use social media to keep up-to-date with what my contacts are doing in their day-to-day life.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.26. I use social media to know the details of my friends' lives.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.27. I use social media to snoop on people that I am interested in (i.e. to check out what others are doing)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.28. I use social media to fill my free time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.29. I use social media to kill time when I am bored.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.30. I use social media to entertain myself.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.31. I use social media to stand out from others.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.32. I use social media for other people to comment on my posts.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.33. I use social media to check that others like my posts.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.34. I use social media to express my feelings and thoughts.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.35. I use social media to give my opinion on a topic.</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.36. I use social media to discuss some subject (with other people).</td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.37. I use social media to keep up about what happens in the world.</td>
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<td>Somewhat untrue</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.40. I watch videos or pictures posted on social media sites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Less than once a week</th>
<th>Once a week</th>
<th>2-6 times a week</th>
<th>Less than once a day</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>All the time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2.41. I read online discussions on social media sites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Less than once a week</th>
<th>Once a week</th>
<th>2-6 times a week</th>
<th>Once a day</th>
<th>Several times a day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2.43. I read user comments/ratings/reviews on social media sites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Less than once a week</th>
<th>Once a week</th>
<th>2-6 times a week</th>
<th>Once a day</th>
<th>Several times a day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2.44. I post “like” posts on others’ social media sites (clicking the like button).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Less than once a week</th>
<th>Once a week</th>
<th>2-6 times a week</th>
<th>Once a day</th>
<th>Several times a day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2.45. I share comments on social media sites with my connections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Less than once a week</th>
<th>Once a week</th>
<th>2-6 times a week</th>
<th>Once a day</th>
<th>Several times a day</th>
</tr>
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</table>

2.46. I post contents on my own social media page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Less than once a week</th>
<th>Once a week</th>
<th>2-6 times a week</th>
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2.47. I use social media to stay informed about COVID-19 (the coronavirus).

<table>
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<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Less than once a week</th>
<th>Once a week</th>
<th>2-6 times a week</th>
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<th>Several times a day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Appendix 6 – School partnership approval letter
5th February 2020

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to confirm that I am willing to collaborate in the research with Dr Marc Tibber, Lecturer in Clinical Psychology at UCL, and Trainee Clinical Psychologists Lauren Yates, Ghiselle Green and Maya Bowri.

The research is a qualitative and quantitative study looking at social media in young people, and its putative positive and negative effects on mental health and wellbeing. It will involve approximately 300 secondary school students completing self-report questionnaires and 8 pairs of child/adolescent and carer/parent dyads undertaking more in-depth interviews. The study protocol has explained to and approved by the Heads and Pastoral Care Leads for Highgate School and London Academy of Excellence Tottenham. As a clinical psychologist and Director of Wellbeing at Highgate School and Consultant to London Academy of Excellence Tottenham, I will be the main point of contact at the schools. Dr Marc Tibber, Lecturer in Clinical Psychology, Research Department of Clinical, Educational and Health Psychology, will be the main point of contact and internal supervisor at UCL.

In my role at Highgate School as the Director of Wellbeing, I oversee the school’s strategy for the psychological wellbeing of the pupils and staff, and I am part of the Senior Leadership Team. This research fits with the school’s pupil wellbeing strategy to gain a snapshot of mental health across several year groups as a baseline measure for future interventions/resources. The research will also inform the PSHE programme on topics of social media and mental health for pupils, and staff and parent workshops.

Highgate School is a Partner school with London Academy of Excellence Tottenham (LAET), which is a 6th form school. As the lead educational sponsor, Highgate School seconds staff to LAET. In this way, I am seconded to LAET to provide consultation on mental health and wellbeing to staff. I work closely with Mr. Paul Spraggs, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead at LAET, to develop their mental health and wellbeing strategy, and together with Assistant Head Pastoral, we will be implementing this research at LAET. We will be
able to ensure appropriate administration of the questionnaires and ensure safe follow up of pupils as needed.

The study protocol has been explained to, and approved by, the Head Teachers and Heads of Pastoral Care for both [redacted] schools. There are clear risk assessment and safeguarding procedures in place in both schools, that the schools agree to, and can support. The schools have agreed to data sharing with the research team at UCL for the purposes of the research and mental health screening of the pupils, as stated in the ethics application, which I have reviewed.

Yours faithfully,

Dr E Silver
Director of Wellbeing
Consultant Clinical Psychologist
Dear parent/guardian and pupil,

We are getting in touch to invite pupils and their parents/carers to take part in a research project involving a collaboration between your school, the school’s Director of Wellbeing (Dr Emma Silver) and researchers at University College London (UCL).

The coronavirus pandemic has brought many changes to people’s lives and we would like to know whether this has affected the ways that people use social media, but also, the role that social media has played for you during this time. To find out, we would like to interview young people and their parents/carers (separately) about their experiences over the last few months.

Since we are still social distancing, the interviews will take place over a video-app called Microsoft Teams, although if you prefer the video can be switched off so that we use audio only. These will take about 30-45 minutes per person and will be arranged at a time that suits you. If you take part, you will receive a £15 voucher as a small token of thanks for your time.

We hope that the findings from this study will help us identify ways to help young people use social media in a way that is safe and supports their wellbeing.

If you are interested in finding out more about the study, have any questions, or would like to be involved, please email Lauren (lauren.yates@ucl.ac.uk).

Key points:

- We are looking for young people and their parents/carers to speak about their use of social media during the Corona virus pandemic.
- Interviews will be online and can be video or just audio.
- Interviews will last 30-45 minutes for each person.
- Each person who takes part will receive £7.50.

Best wishes,

Dr Lauren Yates (Trainee Clinical Psychologist, UCL),
Dr Marc Tibber (Clinical Psychologist & Lecturer in Clinical Psychology, UCL),
Dr Emma Silver (Consultant Clinical Psychology and Director of Wellbeing, Highgate School)
Appendix 8 – Microsoft Teams guide
Microsoft Teams set up guide

There are a few steps to move through in order to be able to use Microsoft Teams for the interview. UCL ethics have expressed a preference for use of this software for research studies because it has end to end encryption.

1. You will receive a calendar invitation for the interview to your email address.

2. When given the option to respond – please select ‘yes’.

3. When it comes to the date / time of the interview, you will have the option to press the ‘Join Teams Meeting’ link.

4. You will be asked whether you wish to use the Microsoft Teams app or proceed using the web browser version. Please select an option according to your preference. If you do not have the Teams app, it should automatically allow you to join via the web version of the programme.

5. If you have a Microsoft Teams account, you may automatically be joined to the meeting using this account. If you do not have a Microsoft Teams account, you will be offered the option of joining as a guest. Type in the name you wish to be referred to in the meeting.

6. You will be placed in the ‘lobby’ which is a bit like the Zoom ‘waiting room’. Lauren will accept and add you to the meeting.

7. You may enter the meeting muted and without video – this is the default setting. Please unmute yourself (muted and camera off shown in the screen shot to the right – when there is no line strikethrough, you are off mute and on camera) and if you feel comfortable, turn on your camera.
Appendix 9 – Participant information sheets for young people and parents
Study information for young people aged 11-18 years

**Study title:** Using social media to support wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic

We would like to invite you to take part in a research study about using social media. Before you decide, it's important for you to understand why we are doing this research and what it will involve.

Take some time to read the information. If you have any questions, please ask. You can talk about it with others, to help you decide whether or not you would like to take part. You don’t have to decide right now, so take as much time as you need to think about it.

**What is this study and why are we doing it?**

Social media has become a common part of everyday life. We would like to speak with people during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic to see whether this unique time has had an impact on the ways social media is used or thought about. Social media may affect our relationships too, so in this study we would like to get the views of young people and their parents or guardians. We hope this will help us to find out how to help young people to use it in ways that support their wellbeing.

**Why have I been asked to take part?**

We are doing this study in partnership with your school, so we are asking young people from Year 7 up to Year 12 to take part.
Do I have to take part?

No. It is up to you. If you change your mind, it is okay to stop taking part at any time without giving a reason, just let the researcher know. No one will be upset, and nothing will change for you at school.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

The interviews are a chance to speak about your experience of using social media during the COVID-19 pandemic. We hope this might be interesting and your views and experiences will be heard and valued. If you take part, as a small token of thanks, you will receive a voucher for £15.

We hope that the things we learn from this study might help us to design support for young people to use social media in ways that support their wellbeing.

What will I be asked to do if I take part?

If you and your parent or guardian decide you would like to take part, an online interview will be arranged with a Trainee Clinical Psychologist (Lauren) from UCL. The interview meeting will be at a time that suits you and will be arranged with your parent or guardian. It will take place using Microsoft Teams video conferencing software or over the telephone.

Lauren will email you a short questionnaire about using social media to fill in before the interview in your own time. This should not take too long. In the interview, Lauren will ask you some questions about your experiences of social media during COVID-19. This will probably last 30-45 minutes. You can miss out questions you don’t want to answer, and only need to talk about things you feel comfortable with. Your parent or guardian may be with you if you wish.
Lauren will use the Microsoft Teams video and audio recording feature to record the interviews. During the interview, she will be at her home in a safe, quiet space that is separate from other people. This is to make sure that interviews are not heard by anyone else. At the beginning of the interview, Lauren will check that you also have a private space to talk. If at any point you want to stop the recording or take a break, this is okay, just say so. Once you’ve finished talking to Lauren, she will spend a similar amount of time talking to your parent or guardian. She will also ask them similar sorts of questions.

**Is there anything to be worried about if I take part?**

There should not be any risks with this study. However, sometimes talking about experiences in interviews can remind people of difficult experiences. We also know that things may feel quite uncertain and worrying at the moment because of COVID-19. You do not have to talk about anything you don’t want to. If you find any of the discussion upsetting or if there’s something about the study you are unsure of, please tell Lauren or your parent or guardian. We can arrange for you to speak with a wellbeing officer at your school, or a Clinical Psychologist from our research team if you feel you need to think about your experiences with someone after the interview.

If anything comes up that makes Lauren worried there might be risk of harm to you or to other people, she may have to tell someone from the school who helps with safeguarding. She may also have to tell your parent or guardian. This is to ensure you and others are safe. If this happens, she will try her best to let you know what is going on, and involve you in making decisions about the best thing to do.

**Who will know I am taking part in the study?**

We will keep the information you provide private. We will write about the study, but no names will be used and any information that gives clues about who you are will be taken out of the written copies of the interviews.

**What will happen to the findings of the study?**
When the study is finished, Lauren will write up the findings for her studies and may present these at conferences or in research articles so that others can learn from the findings. She will also write a summary and share this with the people and schools who took part. We think it is important to tell you the kinds of things we found out and what will happen next. As mentioned above, it will not be possible to tell who you are from findings in these write ups.

Who has organised this research?

The UCL Research Ethics Committee checks all studies before they are allowed to go ahead. This is to make sure the research is fair and safe.

Who can I speak to if I have further questions or worries?

Your parent or guardian also has information about this study so you can speak to them if you have any questions or worries. You can also contact the research team if you have any questions.

School Contact: Dr Emma Silver
Email: [email protected]

Research Contact: Dr Marc Tibber
Address: Research Department of Clinical, Educational and Health Psychology, University College London, Gower Street, London, WC1E 6BT
Email: [email protected]
Telephone: 020 7679 1673

Will you keep information about me safe and private (GDPR)?

The UCL Data Protection Officer looks after UCL activities, such as this research study, that involve collecting, using, and keeping information. There are laws about what can happen to information about you. The researcher and UCL will make sure that:

- Your information is kept safe and private during the study. It may be kept on a computer or on paper. If it is on a computer, it will be protected using a password. If it is on paper, it will be locked away in a filing cabinet. For
now, paper copies of information will not be made as we cannot travel to UCL where we would normally be able to store the information safely.

- When the study is over, any information saved on the computer is deleted and information kept on paper is shredded and thrown away.
- They only ask you for information they need.
- Your information is not sent or shared outside of the United Kingdom.

If you would like to know more about data and how your information is saved, used or deleted, you can ask someone on the research team or you can speak to Alexandra Potts (UCL’s data protection officer). Her email is: data-protection@ucl.ac.uk
Study information for parents or guardians

Study title: Using social media to support wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic

We would like to invite you and your child to take part in a research study about using social media. Before you decide whether you wish to take part and / or give permission for your child to take part, it is important for you to understand why we are doing this research and what it will involve for both of you.

Please take the time to read the following information carefully. You can talk about the study with others if you wish to help you decide whether or not you would like to take part. We think it will be useful to discuss the study with your child. You don’t have to decide right now, so take as much time as you need to think about it. The research team are more than happy to answer any questions you may have or explain any points in more detail if anything is not clear.

What is the purpose of the study?

Social media has become a common part of everyday life for lots of young people and adults. We would like to speak with people during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic to see whether this unique time has had an impact on the ways social media is used or thought about. We are interested in whether the ways we use social media can affect relationships with friends and family too, so in this study we would like to get the views of young people and their parents or guardians.

We hope learning more about using social media from young people and their parents or guardians during the COVID-19 pandemic will help us to find out how to help young people to use it in ways that support their wellbeing.
Why have I / my child been asked to take part?

We are doing this study in partnership with your school, so we are asking young people from Year 7 up to Year 12 and a parent or guardian to take part.

Do I / my child have to take part?

No, you do not have to take part and neither does your child. It is up to you and your child to decide whether you would like to or not. If you would like to take part, you will be asked to sign a consent form. It is important to note that:

(i) If your child is under 16 years of age, they will be asked for their assent to participate. You will also be asked to give permission for them to participate. However, they may still decline to participate even if you have given permission.

(ii) If your child is over 16 years of age, they will be asked for their consent to participate.

You are both free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason. Withdrawing will have no impact on the standard of care, education, or legal rights of your child.

What will my child and I be asked to do if we take part?

If you and your child decide you would like to take part, an interview meeting will be arranged with a Trainee Clinical Psychologist called Lauren. Lauren is studying at University College London (UCL). The interview meeting will be at a time that suits you and your child. It will take place using Microsoft Teams video conferencing software or over the telephone depending on what you and your child would prefer.

Before the interview part of the meeting, both you and your child will each be asked to complete a short questionnaire about your social media habits. Lauren will send this to you via email. Lauren would ideally like to interview you and your child separately, unless you and/or your child would prefer to be
together. It is up to you and your child who would like to speak with Lauren first.

In the interview part of the meeting, Lauren will ask some questions about your experiences of using social media during COVID-19. She will ask your child very similar questions when she speaks with them. You can miss out any questions you don’t want to answer, and you only need to talk about things you feel comfortable talking about. This will probably last 30-45 minutes, and she will spend a similar amount of time speaking with your child.

Lauren will use the Microsoft Teams video and audio recording feature to record the interviews. If at any point you want to stop the recording or take a break, let Lauren know. This will also be explained to your child.

While Lauren is speaking with your child, you can relax or it may be a good time to complete the short questionnaire about your social media habits if you have not already done this.

By means of a small gesture of appreciation for participating in this study, your child will receive £7.50.

Is there anything to be worried about if my child and I take part?

There should not be any major risks with this study. However, sometimes talking about experiences in interviews can remind people of difficult experiences they’ve had. These might be things that happened in the past, or things happening now. For instance, we know that things may feel quite uncertain and worrying at the moment because of COVID-19. If your child finds any of the things they talk about with Lauren upsetting, they will be encouraged to discuss this with you. Lauren can also support you both to think about the best way to make sure they have the support they need. For instance, we can arrange for your child to speak with a wellbeing officer at their school, or a Clinical Psychologist from our research team if they feel they need to think about their experiences on social media together with someone after the interview. Similarly, if you would like the opportunity to debrief with a member of the team and discuss any concerns raised or experience of
distress, please contact Lauren or Dr Marc Tibber (contact details are provided on page 7).

It is important that you understand that there are some limits to confidentiality. If anything comes up during your participation in the study that makes Lauren worried there might be serious risk of harm to you, your child or to other people, she is required by law to disclose this information to relevant professionals and authorities.

Any information disclosed that is criminal in nature or any other information that is required by the law to be disclosed by the research, will be passed on to the relevant authorities. If a safeguarding concern is raised, or risk is identified, Lauren will try her best to let you and your child know what is going on, and involve you both in making decisions about the best thing to do to keep the young person and / or others safe, except if doing so would put someone at risk of harm or danger.

**Will our information be kept confidential?**

*Confidentiality:* We will keep any personal information and the information you and your child give in the questionnaires confidential. Your questionnaire responses or what you say in the interview will not be shared with your child, or vice versa unless in circumstances where there may be a safeguarding issue as described above. Lauren will conduct the interviews from home in a safe, quite space that is separate from other members of her household. This will minimise the risk that interviews will be overheard or any sensitive information inadvertently disclosed. At the beginning of the interview, Lauren will check that you also have a private / confidential space to talk.

*Anonymising data:* You and your child will be given a unique ID number (e.g. YP001, PG001) so that the data collected from the questionnaires and interviews will be anonymous. When Lauren transcribes the interviews (listens back to the video/audio recording and writes out what is said), all identifiable or sensitive personal information (e.g. names, locations) will be deleted so that
neither you nor your child will be identifiable from reading the full transcripts (written copies) or extracts from your interviews.

Secure processing, storage, and disposal of data: Only Lauren and the Chief Investigator supervising the study, Dr Marc Tibber, will have access to any personal identifiable information (e.g. names, demographic information, contact details) about you or your child. Once names and contact details are no longer required for the research project, they will be deleted, and all data will then become fully anonymised. Only Lauren or Dr Marc Tibber will have access to your child’s name and contact details, which may be required if they meet with one of the clinical team to think about available support and resources.

All electronic documents will be stored securely as password-protected and encrypted files on the UCL server. Paper copies of any documents (e.g. questionnaires) will not be made until the research team are able to access UCL premises to store them securely. However, if it is necessary to have paper copies of any documents when restrictions to travelling to and working on UCL premises are lifted, they will be kept in a locked filing cabinet on UCL premises. Documents such as consent forms including names will be kept separately from questionnaires so they cannot be linked. Once the study is complete, and electronic copies of the data have been checked, all paper copies of documents will be shredded and disposed of as confidential waste.

Microsoft Teams software securely records audio/video sessions without recourse to third-party software, and sessions are encrypted in real-time therefore will be protected. Lauren will be the only person to have access to the Microsoft Teams account created specifically for this project. Prior to being transcribed, sessions will be saved on a secure UCL drive, and will be deleted as soon as possible once transcribed.

What will happen if we do not want to continue with the study?

You and your child are free to withdraw from the study at any time. Your child’s care or education will not be affected.
If you do withdraw from the study, the information from the questionnaire measures that you have completed up to that point will be used in the analysis of the study results. If you prefer for this data not to be used, please let Lauren know.

**What if there is a problem during the study?**

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should ask to speak to Lauren or Dr Marc Tibber (Chief Investigator - contact details provided at the end of this information sheet), who will do their best to answer your questions. If you feel that your complaint has not been handled to your satisfaction, you can contact the Chair of the UCL Research Ethics Committee at ethics@ucl.ac.uk. If something happens to your child during or following their participation in the study that you think may be linked to taking part, please contact the Chief Investigator.

In the event that something does go wrong and your child are harmed during the research and this is due to someone’s negligence then you may have grounds for a legal action for compensation against UCL but you may have to pay your legal costs.

**What will happen to the findings of the study?**

When the study is finished, Lauren will write up the findings for her Clinical Psychology doctoral thesis and as scientific articles to be published in peer-reviewed journals or conference abstracts. She will also write a summary and share this with parents / guardians, young people, and the schools that took part. We think it is important to inform you about the kinds of things we found out and what will happen next. As mentioned above, it will not be possible to identify you or your child from findings in these write ups.

**Who has organised and approved this research?**
A Research Ethics Committee at UCL checks all studies before they are allowed to go ahead. This is to make sure the research is fair and safe. This study was checked and approved, and is sponsored by UCL.

**Local Data Protection Privacy Notice**

The controller for this project will be University College London (UCL). The UCL Data Protection Officer provides oversight of UCL activities involving the processing of personal data, and can be contacted at data-protection@ucl.ac.uk

This ‘local’ privacy notice sets out the information that applies to this particular study. Further information on how UCL uses participant information can be found in our ‘general’ privacy notice:

For participants in health and care research studies, click here

The information that is required to be provided to participants under data protection legislation (GDPR and DPA 2018) is provided across both the ‘local’ and ‘general’ privacy notices. The categories of personal data used will be as follows: Your child’s personal data (name, age, gender, and ethnicity) and your personal data (name, age, gender, and ethnicity).

The lawful basis that will be used to process your personal data are: ‘Public task’ for personal data and ‘Research purposes’ for special category data. Your personal data will be processed so long as it is required for the research project. If we are able to anonymise or pseudonymise the personal data you provide we will undertake this, and will endeavour to minimise the processing of personal data wherever possible.

If you are concerned about how your personal data is being processed, or if you would like to contact us about your rights, please contact UCL in the first instance at data-protection@ucl.ac.uk
If you remain unsatisfied, you may wish to contact the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO). Contact details, and details of data subject rights, are available on the ICO website at: https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/data-protection-reform/overview-of-the-gdpr/individuals-rights/

Thank you for taking the time to read this information and to consider participation in the study.

Contact for further information

Research Contact: Dr Marc Tibber (Chief Investigator for the study, Clinical Psychologist & Lecturer in Clinical Psychology)
Address: Research Department of Clinical, Educational and Health Psychology, University College London, Gower Street, London, WC1E 6BT
Email: [redacted]
Telephone: 020 7679 1673

School Contact: Dr Emma Silver (Consultant Clinical Psychologist & Director of Wellbeing)
Email: [redacted]

Please note: While UCL systems are secure and updated regularly, UCL cannot ensure the security of external email systems. By using email communication you are accepting of these potential risks. If you would like more information on this please ask and more details can be provided before you send on any confidential data.
Appendix 10 – Consent and assent forms for young people and parents
Participant Consent Form (Young people aged 16-18 years)

Participant Identification Number: YP___________

Study title: Using social media to support wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic

Please circle yes or no for each:

Has somebody explained this study to you? Yes / No

Do you understand what the study is about? Yes / No

Have you had the chance to ask questions about the study? Yes / No

Were your questions answered in a way you understand? Yes / No

Do you understand it is ok to stop taking part at any time? Yes / No

Do you understand that the research team will keep the information you provide private and confidential? Yes / No

Do you understand that the only time information would not be kept private is if you say anything to us that makes us think you or someone else could be harmed? Yes / No

Do you understand that the researcher will keep information given by you on the computer and on paper, and will make sure it is safe and private during the study? Yes / No

I have read the information about keeping my information safe (GDPR), have had the opportunity to ask questions and understand how my information will be used, stored and shared. Yes / No
Do you agree to take part in the study?  

Yes  /  No

If you would like to take part in the study, please write your name below:

Name: ________________________________________________________________

Signature: _________________________________

Date: ____________________

Researcher Name: __________________________________________

Signature: _________________________________

Date: ____________________

If you would like to know more about the study or have any questions or worries, you can speak to: Dr Marc Tibber (Chief Investigator for the study)

Address: Research Department of Clinical, Educational and Health Psychology, University College London, Gower Street, London, WC1E 6BT

Email: m.tibber@ucl.ac.uk

Telephone: 020 7679 1673

If you would like to know more about data and how your information is saved, used or deleted, you can speak to: Alexandra Potts (UCL’s data protection officer)

Email: data-protection@ucl.ac.uk

Please note: While UCL systems are secure and updated regularly, UCL cannot ensure the security of external email systems, by using email communication you are accepting of these potential risks. If you would like more information on this please ask and more details can be provided before you send on any confidential data.
Participant Assent Form (Young people aged 11-16 years)

Participant Identification Number: YP___________

Study title: Using social media to support wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic

Please circle yes or no for each:

Has somebody explained the study to you? Yes/No

Do you understand what the study is about? Yes/No

Have you had the chance to ask questions about the study? Yes/No

Were your questions answered in a way you understand? Yes/No

Do you understand it is ok to stop taking part at any time? Yes/No

Do you understand that the research team will keep the information you provide private and confidential? Yes/No

Do you understand that the only time information would not be kept private is if you say anything to us that makes us think you or someone else could be harmed? Yes/No

Do you understand that the researcher will keep information given by you on the computer and on paper, and will make sure it is safe and private during the study? Yes/No

I have read the information about keeping my information safe Yes/No
(GDPR), have had the opportunity to ask questions and understand how my information will be used, stored and shared.

Are you happy to take part in the study? Yes/No

If you would like to take part in the study, please write your name below:

Name: __________________________________________________________
Date: ______________

The person who explained this study to you will also write their name here:

Name: __________________________________________________________
Signature: _______________________________________________________
Date: ______________

If you would like to know more about the study or have any questions or worries, you can speak to: Dr Marc Tibber (Chief Investigator for the study)
Address: Research Department of Clinical, Educational and Health Psychology, University College London, Gower Street, London, WC1E 6BT
Email:  
Telephone: 020 7679 1673

If you would like to know more about data and how your information is saved, used or deleted, you can speak to: Alexandra Potts (UCL’s data protection officer)
Email: data-protection@ucl.ac.uk
Parent / Guardian Consent Form

Participant Identification Number: PG___________

Study title: Using social media to support wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic

Name of researchers: Dr Marc Tibber (Chief Investigator), Dr Lauren Yates (Trainee Clinical Psychologist)

Please note: This form is for parents or guardians to give consent to participate in the research. If you are participating alongside a young person who is under 16 years old, you will also be asked to complete a form to give permission for them to participate.

Please circle yes or no for each:

I have read and understand the information sheet for this study. Yes/No

I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study and my questions have been answered satisfactorily. Yes/No

I understand that I am participating in the study voluntarily and that I can withdraw at any time without giving a reason. Yes/No

I understand that all information given by me or about me will be treated as confidential by the researcher. Yes/No

I understand that safeguarding procedures are in place for this study and have been informed of the circumstances in which the researcher is legally obliged to break confidentiality. Yes/No

I understand that the interviews will be video and/or audio recorded using Zoom software. Yes/No
In the event that I decide to stop taking part in the study, Yes/No
I agree to the information I have previously provided being used in the analysis of the study results.

I understand that according to the Data Protection Act (2018) and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), data gathered in this study will be securely stored, processed, and destroyed, the researcher will only collect data they need, and these data will not be transferred outside the EEU.

I agree to take part in this study. Yes/No

Parent / Guardian Name: ________________________________

Signature: ___________________________________________
Date: _______________________________________________

Researcher Name: _______________________________________

Signature: ___________________________________________
Date: _______________________________________________

Contact for further information
Contact: Dr Marc Tibber (Chief Investigator for the study)
Address: Research Department of Clinical, Educational and Health Psychology, University College London, Gower Street, London, WC1E 6BT
Email: data-protected@ucl.ac.uk
Telephone: 020 7679 1673

UCL Data Protection Officer: Alexandra Potts
Email: data-protection@ucl.ac.uk

Please note: While UCL systems are secure and updated regularly, UCL cannot ensure the security of external email systems, by using email communication you are accepting of these potential risks. If you would like more information on this please ask and more details can be provided before you send on any confidential data.
Form for parents / guardians giving consent on behalf of a young person (11-16 years)

Participant Identification Number: PG___________

Study title: Using social media to support wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic

Name of researchers: Dr Marc Tibber (Chief Investigator), Dr Lauren Yates (Trainee Clinical Psychologist)

Please note: You are being asked to complete this form because you are participating alongside a young person who is under 16 years old. We will ask them for assent to participate in the study, but as their guardian you are also required to give permission for them to participate.

Please circle yes or no for each:

My child has read, and to my knowledge understands the information sheet for this study. Yes /No

My child has had the opportunity to ask questions about the study and has had their questions answered satisfactorily. Yes /No

I understand that my child is participating in the study voluntarily and that they can withdraw at any time without giving a reason. Yes/No

I understand that all information given by or about my child will be treated as confidential by the researcher. Yes/No

I understand that my child will have the opportunity to speak with a clinical member of the team if they should become distressed by anything discussed in the interviews about social media use. Yes/No

In the event that my child decides to stop taking part in the study Yes/No
study, I agree to the information they have previously provided being used in the analysis of the study results.

I understand that according to the Data Protection Act (2018) and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), data gathered in this study will be securely stored, processed, and destroyed, the researcher will only collect data they need, and these data will not be transferred outside the EEU.

I agree for my child to take part in this study. Yes/No

I believe my child has the capacity to assent to take part in the study Yes/No

I believe my child has the capacity to participate in the study. Yes/No

Name of young person:
__________________________________________

Parent / Guardian Name:
__________________________________________

Signature:
__________________________________________

Date:
__________________________________________

Researcher Name:
__________________________________________

Signature:
__________________________________________

Date:
__________________________________________
Contact for further information
Contact: Dr Marc Tibber (Chief Investigator for the study)
Address: Research Department of Clinical, Educational and Health Psychology, 
University College London, Gower Street, London, WC1E 6BT
Email: 
Telephone: 020 7679 1673

UCL Data Protection Officer: Alexandra Potts
Email: data-protection@ucl.ac.uk

Please note: While UCL systems are secure and updated regularly, UCL cannot ensure the security of external email 
systems, by using email communication you are accepting of these potential risks. If you would like more information 
on this please ask and more details can be provided before you send on any confidential data.
Appendix 11– Debrief resource package
INFORMATION ON MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT
FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN

If you feel that you have been affected by any of the issues raised in this questionnaire / interview, or if you are concerned about your mental health or that of your child, please follow the advice below.

- **What should I do in an emergency, e.g. if my life or my child’s life is at risk?**
  - Call 999 or go to your local A&E. You can find this information at: https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/other-services/Accident-and-emergency-services/LocationSearch/428

- **What should I do if I need urgent mental health support, but it’s not an emergency?**
  - If you have already been given a Crisis Team number to use, ring this number.
  - Otherwise, contact your local urgent mental health helpline, which can be located at: https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-urgent-mental-health-helpline
  - Alternatively, call 111 and you will be directed to the appropriate service.
  - During working hours you can also book an urgent appointment with your local GP.

- **What should I do if I feel like I just need to talk to someone (day or night)?**
  - Call 116 123 for the Samaritans, or email: jo@samaritans.org for a reply within 24 hours.
  - Text "SHOUT" to 85258 to contact the Shout Crisis Text Line.

- **What should I do if I would like to access mental health support, but it is not urgent?**
  - Book an appointment with your GP. They will be able to refer or signpost you to appropriate services.
  - For further information on available mental health support, visit: https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/mental-health-services/how-to-access-mental-health-services/

- **What should I do if I would like to access mental health support for my child?**
  - Book an appointment with your GP. They will be able to refer or signpost your child to appropriate services.

- **Access support via school** - Talk to your child’s Head of Year/Head of House who will be able to help you to access support for your child either within school (e.g. school counselling) or outside of school with liaison with Dr Emma Silver, Director of Wellbeing, to direct you to or refer to appropriate services outside of school.
  - For further information on mental health services for young people visit:
For ideas and strategies about how to cope during a crisis, please visit: https://www.mind.org.uk/need-urgent-help/what-can-i-do-to-help-myself-cope/

INFORMATION ON MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE (<18y)
If you are struggling with difficult thoughts and feelings, you should if possible speak about it to an adult that you trust, e.g. a teacher, parent or guardian, and follow the advice below.

- What should I do if my life is at risk?
  Call 999 or go to your local A&E. You can find this information at: https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/other-services/Accident-and-emergency-services/LocationSearch/428

- What should I do if I want urgent support but my life is not at risk?
  - Support from the school: During term-time / school opening times you can contact welfare office – she provides drop-in support when in school (in medical centre top site) and while school is remote you can email her to arrange a phone call within school hours – This may not be an immediate response.
  - Urgent Support outside of school:
    - Weekdays 9am-10:30pm contact your nearest support hub:
      Holly Oak, Edgware Community Hospital: 020 8702 3444
      Northern Health Centre, Holloway Road: 020 3316 1824
    - Out of these hours contact a mental health crisis line:
      Barnet Enfield and Haringey: 0300 0200 500
      Camden and Islington: 020 3317 6333

- What should I do if I feel like I just need to talk to someone (day or night)?
  - Call 116 123 for the Samaritans, or email: jo@samaritans.org for a reply within 24 hours.
  - Call 0800 1111 for Childline.
  - Text "YM" to 85258.

- What should I do if I would like to access mental health support, but it is not urgent?
  - You can refer yourself to a school counsellor. This will be confidential so that other staff or pupils in school will not know. – email
  - Arrange to meet with your GP. They will be able to help you find the best service for you outside of school.
Other services and resources that might be of interest:

- **Smart phone apps for self-care:**
  https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/category/mentalhealth/

- **Kooth - online professional counselling and peer support for 11-25 year olds:**
  https://www.kooth.com

- **Mind’s advice for coping with the coronavirus:**
  https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/

- **Young Minds Looking after yourself:**
  https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/looking-afteryourself
Social Media – What the Research Tells Us
Dr Marc Tibber & Dr Emma Silver

Some people, including social psychologists and researchers, have become worried that using social media (SM) is not good for you. However, others think that using SM can actually be good for you. This information sheet explores why it is that people can have very different opinions about SM (including researchers) and what the research tells us about it. The second section (What Social Media – Practical Advice) explores ideas about what you can do to maximize the benefits of SM while minimizing any potential negative effects.

WHY THE SCIENCE IS MISLEADING
The way we view whether something is helpful or harmful to people is based on tradition. Conventional science starts from scientific studies, in which researchers look at things like whether people who use SM a lot struggle with their emotions more than people who use it less. This is what we call it: correlation. Many people have come out this kind of research and found correlations between SM and people’s mood. There are a number of problems with this. First, as every researcher knows, correlation is not causation. In simple terms, just because two things occur together (correlate) it does not mean that one causes the other (residual). Instead, some other thing that you have not measured may be the cause of both the things you have measured. If we return to our example, it might just be that people who have few friends (something you have not measured) are both less likely to use SM (something you have asked about). As the silly example below shows, if you look hard enough you can find lots of things that correlate but aren’t necessarily meaningfully connected.

Another problem is that even if you find that two things occur together (correlate), for example that people who use SM a lot struggle more with their emotions, you still do not know how they are becoming anxious use SM more, or does using SM make you feel anxious? Or are both true?

On top of all this, there are many different types of questions we can ask people about their SM use and how they feel and many of these studies get us many different results depending on which of these questions we ask.

Social Media – Practical Advice
Dr Marc Tibber & Dr Emma Silver

SOCIAL MEDIA IS A BIT LIKE FOOD – THE DIET ANALOGY
On the basis of the research we think that social media (SM) is a bit like food. Whilst consuming huge amounts of it is unlikely to be all that good for you, for most people, a little is likely to be fine. However, if you eat too much of it, you may get sick. And, a particular diet will not suit everyone. What does your digital diet look like? Is it a healthy balanced diet? And does it suit you and your lifestyle?

HOW MUCH TO EAT
In terms of what constitutes a healthy SM diet, we think that you can have too little, just as you can have too much. SM is a great way to stay in touch with friends and family and organize your social life, and can help you feel connected and part of a group. It can also open up opportunities for learning, and provide a way to switch off and unwind. However, if you are spending HUGE amounts of time on SM, and your sleep, studies or friendships are suffering as a result, it may be that you need to reconsider how you use SM. Rather than thinking of SM as a problem, it may mean stopping using SM completely, but might involve switching limits on your time.

WHEN TO EAT
One thing that most researchers agree on is that using screens before bedtime is a bad idea. This is because the blue light from screens activates sensors in your eyes that send signals to your brain’s internal clock, tricking it into thinking it is day time. If you want to have a good night’s sleep – which is vitally important for mental health and academic performance – you should try to avoid using SM before bedtime,

SMALL WATER BALANCED DIET
In general, the research suggests that when people benefit from using SM use it because they are using it to connect with friends and family. Actively engaging with SM, for example liking each other’s posts, sharing images and videos and engaging in supportive exchanges, are all great ways to feel closer to the people you care about. In contrast, research suggests that spending lots of time on SM is unhelpful for people’s lives in general. For example, people who use SM a lot are more anxious and lonely than those who use it less. However, if you know you have anxiety about other people’s lives and feeling less about yourself when using SM, it may be time to think about how you are spending your time online.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND SOCIAL DISTANCING
We have seen and lots of evidence that our connections with others play impact on our mood. Spending time with friends and family that we care about makes us feel good. Having people who we can turn to for support and we feel close is also important. The convergence and social distancing measures that we are going through have posed challenges to this. However, SM and other online activities, such as reading, video-

ONLINE DANGERS
In addition to the helpful and harmful effects of SM use that we have described above, there are a number of risks and dangers associated with being online. These include: being bullied or harassed, cheated out of money, manipulated into giving personal or sensitive information, threatened or coerced into doing something you don’t want to, and being exposed to degrading images or videos (amongst others). This point of making these is not to say that people should not use SM, but simply to make you aware of the dangers so that you can make your time online as safe as possible. It is also important to note that many of the dangers are specific to people who use SM a lot, and not all SM use is harmful. However, if you are concerned about anything you have seen or heard online, stop and talk to an adult about it.

TIPS FOR A HEALTHY AND BALANCED SOCIAL MEDIA DIET
- Set your SM profiles to private.
- Protect your identity. Don’t share personal information like your address, phone number or passwords.
- Read the terms before you post. Remember that anything you post is searchable (anyone, anywhere, anytime can find it), so be careful (especially if you are under 20 years of age).
- Limit your daily screen time to an amount that leaves you enough time to do other activities that are important to you.
- Notice how you feel during and after using SM. Do you feel the opposite or feel better? Do you feel anxious, relaxed or bored?
- Be selective in what you do online and who you connect with. Do more of the things that make you feel good and fewer of the things that makes you feel bad.
- Use SM to connect with friends and family that you care about. Particularly when other ways of connecting are harder or not possible.
- Be kind to others when you are on SM. Help create the online world that you want to be part of.
- Remember that people’s posts only show a small part of their life. Usually the best bits with all the money, people and stuff collected.
- Don’t use any digital screens at one hour before bed. That includes phones, tablets, laptops, desktops and computers.
- If you feel concerned about anything you have seen or heard online, stop and talk to an adult about it.
- If you are concerned about your mental health, talk to an adult you trust.
- Remember that people’s posts only show a small part of their life. Usually the best bits with all the money, people and stuff collected.

RESPONDING TO ONLINE RISK
If you or someone else is in immediate danger you should contact the police by calling 999.

- To report harmful online content visit: https://report.content.com/
- To report abuse or grooming: http://www.gov.uk
- Anti-bullying website: https://www.antibullyingcentre.org.uk/
Social Media – Worksheet
Dr Marc Tibber & Dr Emma Silver

Complete this worksheet, ticking boxes to indicate thoughts, emotions and behaviors that you commonly experience when using social media (SM) or the internet more generally. If you tick several of the boxes you might want to go back to the Social Media – Practical Advice worksheet to think about ways you can manage your SM use and get the best out of it. You may also want to list three changes you want to make to your online life in the space below.

**THOUGHTS**

- What THOUGHTS commonly occur to you when you are using SM?
- I'm not good enough
- Nobody will like my post
- I can’t get enough likes
- SM is better than mine
- I wish I had that life
- Everyone is having more fun than me

**BEHAVIOURS**

- How do you typically behave or act when on SM?
- Scroll for hours
- Compare myself to others
- What have I posted?
- What others have posted
- Use it...
- Late into the night

**EMOTIONS**

- What EMOTIONS do you commonly feel when on SM?
- Anxious
- Low
- Lonely
- Angry

Three changes you would like to make to improve your online life:

1. 
2. 
3. 

Useful Resources at a Glance

**Using SM safely – more tips**
- Advice for all ages:
- Advice for 8-10, 11-13 and 14+ years olds:
- Advice for 11-18 year olds:
  - https://www.kidsafe.org.uk/advice/advice-for-young-people/how-to-protect-your-self/

**Using SM safely – platform specific advice**
- Facebook:
  - https://www.facebook.com/help/201238812855608/;
- Instagram:
  - https://www.instagram.com/
- Snapchat:
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fb6fbb67b7d

**If you are experiencing bullying**
- Advice for all ages:
  - https://www.carolbullingfrance.org.uk/

**To report abuse, groomsing or harmful content**
- All ages:
  - http://www.complain.co.uk/
  - http://www.childmash.org.uk/physical-abuse

**Useful apps**
- BBC Own It Keyboard and App:
- General self-care and mental health apps:

**Reviews of Apps**
- Age specific reviews:
  - https://www.commonsensemedia.org/app-reviews

If you have found any other resources useful in managing your SM use or online life more generally that are not included here, please email me on: mtibber@bas.ac.uk

Created by Dr Marc Tibber and Dr Emma Silver:
mtibber@bas.ac.uk; Version 1.0 June 2020
Appendix 12 – Ethical approval letter and ethics amendment approval
27th February 2020

Dr Marc Tibber
Research Department of Clinical, Educational and Health Psychology
UCL

Cc: Dr Lauren Yates

Dear Dr Tibber

Notification of Ethics Approval with Provisos
Project ID/Title: 17431/001: Reflections on social media participation in young people and parents/guardians: towards an understanding of the barriers and facilitators to use that supports wellbeing

Further to your satisfactory responses to the Committee's comments, I am pleased to confirm in my capacity as Chair of the UCL Research Ethics Committee (REC) that your study has been ethically approved by the UCL REC until 1st October 2021.

Ethical approval is subject to the following conditions:

Notification of Amendments to the Research
You must seek Chair's approval for proposed amendments (to include extensions to the duration of the project) to the research for which this approval has been given. Each research project is reviewed separately and if there are significant changes to the research protocol you should seek confirmation of continued ethical approval by completing an 'Amendment Approval Request Form'
http://ethics.grad.ucl.ac.uk/responsibilities.php

Adverse Event Reporting - Serious and Non-Serious
It is your responsibility to report to the Committee any unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risks to participants or others. The Ethics Committee should be notified of all serious adverse events via the Ethics Committee Administrator (ethics@ucl.ac.uk) immediately the incident occurs. Where the adverse incident is unexpected and serious, the Joint Chairs will decide whether the study should be terminated pending the opinion of an independent expert. For non-serious adverse events the Joint Chairs of the Ethics Committee should again be notified via the Ethics Committee Administrator within ten days of the incident occurring and provide a full written report that should include any amendments to the participant information sheet and study protocol. The Joint Chairs will confirm that the incident is non-serious and report to the Committee at the next meeting. The final view of the Committee will be communicated to you.
Final Report
At the end of the data collection element of your research we ask that you submit a very brief report (1-2 paragraphs will suffice) which includes in particular issues relating to the ethical implications of the research i.e. issues obtaining consent, participants withdrawing from the research, confidentiality, protection of participants from physical and mental harm etc.
In addition, please:

- ensure that you follow all relevant guidance as laid out in UCL’s Code of Conduct for Research: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/srs/file/579
- note that you are required to adhere to all research data/records management and storage procedures agreed as part of your application. This will be expected even after completion of the study.

With best wishes for the research.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Professor Michael Heinrich
Joint Chair, UCL Research Ethics Committee

Approved: Ethics amendment request - 17431/001

VPRO.Ethics
Wed 13/05/2020 11:08
To: Yates, Lauren
Cc: Tilber, Marc; Emma Silver <emma.silver@highgateschool.org.uk>

Dear Lauren

Apologies for the delay in reviewing your application. The REC Chair has now approved your attached amendment request. Please take this email as confirmation of that approval.

IMPORTANT: For projects collecting personal data only
You should inform the Data Protection Team – data-protection@ucl.ac.uk of your proposed amendments to include a request to extend ethics approval for an additional period.

Best wishes and take care,

Lola

Lola Alaska
Research Evaluation Administrator

Office of the Vice-Provost (Research)
University College London, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT
Email: LolaAlaska@ucl.ac.uk
Web: www.ucl.ac.uk/research
Appendix 13 – Independent coding of transcripts
Supplementary Figure 1 – Excerpt of multiple-rater coding of a transcript. (L-R) LY coding, GWM coding, HS coding
Appendix 14 – Coding and analysis process example
Supplementary Figure 2 - Thematic map used in analysis process to help develop and refine codes and themes
Supplementary Table 2 – Excerpt of coding process 1. Initial long coding taken from transcripts. Dyads were assigned a colour and the frequency with which the code / point was mentioned within the interview was noted.

**THEME 1: Impact of the pandemic on social media use**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Changes to social media use</th>
<th>Function of social media use</th>
<th>Context of the pandemic</th>
<th>Social media use post pandemic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents (P)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased due to / during pandemic (P01 I, P02 I, P03 I, P04 III, P05 III, P06 I, P07 II, P08 II)</td>
<td>Connecting with family (P01 I, P02 II, P03 I, P07 I)</td>
<td>Worries about covid (P01 I, P03 I)</td>
<td>F2F contact displaces SM (P02 I, P08 II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used much more (across family) (P02 II, P03 I, P05 I)</td>
<td>Connecting with friends (P02 II, P03 II)</td>
<td>No worries/fears (P02 I, P04 I, P06 I, P08 I)</td>
<td>Less need for SM (P02 I, P04 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced use over time (P02 II, P05 I)</td>
<td>Study (P03 I)</td>
<td>Anxious about social life / activities (P04 I)</td>
<td>Will reduce (P02 I, P05 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use naturally limited by school (P04 I, P08 I)</td>
<td>News source (P01 I, P05 I, P08 I)</td>
<td>Worried about school (P06 II)</td>
<td>Will be very different once back at school e.g. priority, rules (P04 I, P06 I, P08 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showing activities with friends (previously) (P01 I)</td>
<td>Keeping in touch (P01 III, P03 I, P04 II, P08 II)</td>
<td>More aware, less worried (P03 I)</td>
<td>Start real life again (P08 II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peripheral part of life (P04 I)</td>
<td>Connecting / communicating with friends (P01 II, P02 I, P03 I, P04 II, P05 III, P06 III, P07 I)</td>
<td>Covid generation defining moment (P01 I)</td>
<td>Have time to do all activities inc. SM (P07 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use more SM options (P03 I, P05 I)</td>
<td>Need social contact (P04 I, P05 III, P08 III)</td>
<td>Lost normal routines (P04 II)</td>
<td>Going to be difficult (P04 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovered new options / new ways of SM use (P03 II, P05 II)</td>
<td>Replacing F2F communication (P04 I, P06 I, P08 I)</td>
<td>First time could see benefits (P04 I)</td>
<td>Need weaning off (P04 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work out how to change communication (P04 I)</td>
<td>Safe socialising (P08 I)</td>
<td>Misses school (P06 I)</td>
<td>New ways to sustain relationships e.g. over distance (P02 II, P05 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discover new options for SM (parent) (P03 I)</td>
<td>Connecting with family (P01 I, P02 III, P03 I, P07 I)</td>
<td>Misses friends (P06 I)</td>
<td>Continue what was useful (P02 I, P03 I, P05 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning experience (P03 I)</td>
<td>Gaming (P07 III)</td>
<td>World has closed in (P07 I)</td>
<td>Learn more features (P03 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Watching things together (P05 I)</td>
<td>When life was normal (P08 I)</td>
<td>(Parent) Using things not used before (P03 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintaining morale (P01 I, P02 I)</td>
<td>Really challenging for kids (P08 II)</td>
<td>Further evolution of YP's use (more grown up (P02 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nothing to compare this time to (P05 I)</td>
<td>No radical shift (P07 II)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Help each other to go through this fear (P03 I)
Sharing information (P01 I, P03 I)
Study groups (P05 I)
Information about school work (P03 II, P04 I, P05 I, P07 I)
Keeping safe (P01 I)
Difficult to continue a normal life without SM (P03 I)
Real function (P04 I, P07 I)
Feel less isolated (P02 I, P07 II, P08 II)
More ways to communicate (P02 II, P07 I)

Reassured YP (P06 I)
Family What’s App group (P01 I, P02 I, P03 I, P06a&b I)
Activism (political, social) (P01 III, P08 I)
Black Lives Matter (P01 III, P07 I)
Need for order & justice (P01 I)
Seeing things firsthand (P01 I)
Window to the world (P01 III, P08 I)
Heard before I did (P08 I)
Generational differences (P01 I, P08 I)
Affected by what is seen and heard online (P01 I)
Discuss very serious & challenging ideas without emotional development (P07 I)
Not posting, not supporting (P07 I)
Revealed inequalities (P01 I)
People are not distracted, more time (P01 I)
The world isn’t quite as it seemed (P01 I)
Shift in mood / energy – darker/serious (P01 III I)
Shift in content (more political) (P01 II)
Pandemic catalyst for activism (P01 I)
Will continue post Covid (P01 I)

Irreversible shifts in SM atmosphere/energy (P01 I)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Young people (Y)</th>
<th>News source (Y01 I, Y05 II, Y08 I)</th>
<th>Always been concerned about it (Y01 I)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased as nothing else to do / more time available (Y01 III, Y02 I, Y03 II, Y05 II, Y06 III, Y08 II)</td>
<td>Share news / info (Y04 I)</td>
<td>Seeing other people breaking rules (Y01 I, Y04 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced use over time (craze at beginning) (Y04 II)</td>
<td>Keeping in touch with friends (Y01 II, Y05 IIII, Y07 I, Y08 I)</td>
<td>Sensitisation to breaking rules (Y04 II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posting less (Y04 I, Y06 I)</td>
<td>Talking to friends (Y02 II, Y03 III, Y05 II, Y08 I)</td>
<td>SM less concerned about pandemic (Y02 I, Y07 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normally naturally limited by school (Y01 I, Y03 II, Y05 I, Y08 I)</td>
<td>Reconnecting with old friends (Y02 I, Y05 III, Y07 II)</td>
<td>Neutral (Y03 I, Y06 I, Not affected views of coronavirus (Y08 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started using FaceTime (Y02 I)</td>
<td>Replaces F2F contact (Y01, Y02 II, Y03 III, Y04 I, Y05 III (but doesn’t make up for it / nicer to talk F2F Y04 I, Y05 II, safe socialising Y08 I &amp; better than nothing Y03 I))</td>
<td>Not worried (Y08 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use different apps (Y03 I)</td>
<td>Connecting with family (Y04 I)</td>
<td>Better to be worried &amp; understand (Y05 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes use not content (Y01 II)</td>
<td>Gaming (Y05 II, Y07 I)</td>
<td>Minimal impact on everyday life (Y01 II, Y04 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Party bigger in lockdown (Y04 I, P07 I)</td>
<td>Pass time vs. passing the time (Y01 II, Y03 II, Y06 III, Y08 I)</td>
<td>Privilege (Y01 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never done video call before (Y06 I)</td>
<td>Information about school work / for school activities (Y01 I, Y05 I e.g. replicates learning environment (Y05 I))</td>
<td>School online (Y01 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used all apps before (Y04 II, Y08 I e.g. in holidays (Y04 I))</td>
<td>Checking on wellbeing of others (Y02 I)</td>
<td>Parents WFH (Y01 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hasn’t changed (Y01 II, Y04 I, Y07 I, Y08 I)</td>
<td>Useful (Y05 I, Y07 I)</td>
<td>Eclipse by political activism / awareness (Y01 I, Y03 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Glad to have SM (Y03 I)</td>
<td>Been at home the whole time (Y02 I)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>World has closed in (Y02 I)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Not seeing a lot of content on covid (Y03 I)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Followed rules (Y01 I)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Less isolated &amp; lonely due to SM (Y03 I)</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>SM helped deal with impact (Y03 I)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Will reduce (Y01 I, Y02 I, Y03 II, Y04 I, Y05 I, Y06 I, Y07 I, Y08 I)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>F2F contact will displace (Y01 I, Y02 I, Y03 I, Y07 I)</td>
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<td>Less need for SM e.g. Zoom (Y02 I, Y05 IIII, Y07 I)</td>
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<td>More stuff to do (Y08 I)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Delete &amp; stop using post covid (Y06 I)</td>
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<td>New ways to sustain relationships e.g. over distance (Y02 I)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Adjustment to F2F contact (Y02 I)</td>
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<td>Won’t struggle (Y08 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>People won’t just stop (Y03 I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nothing too dramatic (Y04 I)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Parents gave a lot of information (Y04 I, Y05 I)

Feels less like crisis (Y07 I)

Less distant from everything (Y08 I)

Family WhatsApp (Y04 I)

Activism (political, social) Y01 I, Y03 I, Y04 I, Y05 I, Y06 I, Y08 I

Power to enact change (Y01 I)

Positive use of SM (Y01 I)

Black Lives Matter (Y01 I, Y03 I, Y04 II, Y05 II, Y06 I)

Changing views (Y01 I)

Everyone posting (Y03 I, Y04 III)

Human rights (Y03 I)

Can talk about it (Y03 I)

Always been like this / posting (Y03 I, Y04 II, Y06 I)

Sudden worldwide movement (Y04 I)

Temporary trend / performative (Y04 III)

Slowed down (Y04 I)

Great change (Y06 I)

Take part (Y06 I)

Posting isn't going to change anything (Y06 I)

Seeing things firsthand (Y01 III, Y03 I)
Window to the world (Y01 III, Y03 I, Y05 I, Y08 I)

Increased awareness (Y01 III, Y03 I, Y04 I, Y05 II)

Different sides to a story (Y01 I, Y05 I)

Our side of the story (Y08 I)

Not posting, not supporting (Y04 I)

Some people don't use Insta for activism (Y04 III)

Being ignorant is a choice (Y06 I)

Revealed inequalities (Y01 I)

Shift in content (more political) (Y01 I)
Supplementary Table 3 – Excerpt of coding process 2. Initial codes condensed and refined within subthemes.

**THEME 1: Impact of the pandemic on social media use**

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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased use</td>
<td>Parent’s use</td>
<td>Worries &amp; concerns</td>
<td>Displaced by face-to-face activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How things were before</td>
<td>Connecting and maintaining connection</td>
<td>Impact of pandemic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New ways of using SM</td>
<td>Young people’s use</td>
<td>Activism &amp; awareness</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Connecting and maintaining connection</td>
<td>Window to the world</td>
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<td></td>
<td>News source</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Supporting each other</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Value of SM</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Young people</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>How things were before</td>
<td>Connecting and maintaining connection</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New ways of using SM</td>
<td>Passing the time</td>
<td>Coping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stabilities in use</td>
<td>Supporting each other</td>
<td>Activism &amp; awareness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Value of SM</td>
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### THEME 1: Impact of the pandemic on social media use

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**THEME 1**: Impact of the pandemic on social media use

**Changes to social media use**

- **Increased use**
  - She uses that <Whats app> a lot. (P01)
  - ... definitely kind of, err, much more used [...]But had reduced over time. (P02)
  - In the family, we’ve been using it much more, even though everyone is at home. (P02)
  - ...once the contact has been re-established, the frequency reduced again, which is fine... (P02)
  - Yes, I think we all spend much more time on social media, particularly when it was a strict lockdown. You know, we can only go for a quick walk or run. (P03)

**Function of social media use**

- **Parent / family use**
  - **Connecting and maintaining connection**
    - So what it has done, which I think is very nice, I could reach out to people I hadn’t spoken with that much. So also of people I know professionally. [...] So it kind of much more focussed, reaching out to people that has I think it has been very effective... (P02)
    - my husband uses Twitter a lot like <YP>. I think that’s how <YP> has been influenced, mainly for news. My other son, because <YP’s> brother who is 10 years old started using during lockdown because we saw it as a way for him to connect with friends. So what they would do is they would have a device with a

**Context of the pandemic**

- ...I don’t think I don’t sense that <young person> feels isolated or afraid of what’s happening with coronavirus, but that’s not only because then of say social media, it’s also the news and what we discuss about the news and what we... decisions we make ourselves in terms of kind of going out, not going out [...] So, yeah, I my impression is that you <addresses YP> find it kind of a not too scary and manageable (P02)
  - ...she didn’t display any anxiety about coronavirus, just mainly just anxious about the fact it was hindering her social life and her and her ability to (sport redacted for anonymity), because they cancelled all the competitions... (P04)

**Social media use post pandemic**

- **Displaced by face-to-face activities**
  - I think she will still use it for, you know, coordinating meeting to their friends and perhaps sharing funny little videos of each other, uhm, but I think, you know, some, some of the... you know the, um, kind of issues based stuff will continue, I think. (P01)
    - Um, I can imagine, a, a, some kind of further evolution to kind of a grown up use of social media. She will be seeing her friends more at school also after school. Sport will be more more of a factor and possibly also some kind of after school activities.
    - Well, then there are some... How much you still need to speak with those same people via social media? No, you don’t. But maybe with
I feel like it’s been the same, it’s just the usage. She used it more frequently. (P03)

Oh, yes, she’s used it much more. (P04)

…it changed my sense of social media in terms of her use of it, it was just way more. It just increased massively. (P04)

So she basically had her phone all day and it became very difficult to impose any sort of restrictions on that. Also we were trying to work from home. And it’s quite difficult juggling different things. So she’s had, I would say, has had much greater use of it in the last three months than she would normally. (P04)

to answer your question about whether the other members of the family have been using more social media, he’s discovered in the last three or four weeks Google Hangouts... (P05)

<YP> uses it, especially at the beginning of lockdown. (P05)

yeah, usage has gone up, but at the same time, I think he’s generally

FaceTime going on and at the same time play fortnight (P05)

<YP> didn’t play Fortnight until the lockdown. He started because <brother> started doing it more and so the two of them have played a lot more fortnight during lockdown. And actually, it’s been it’s been a real positive because it gives them something common to talk about and less to fight, less reason to fight. And also, less so in the last month, but for the first two months let’s say of lockdown, my my husband also started playing fortnight with them (P05)

Since lockdown. In the... In a way it's it's very nice that he connects with his friends, because that’s the only mean, <NAME OF BROTHER> is in year seven, so he’s very young. And for him, being in lockdown was very difficult, you know, because when the social aspect is completely missing, I guess the older you are, the simpler it is to handle. (P06)

Young person’s use Connecting and maintaining connection

I think it’s really important during lock down and you know during the period we’ve just been through as a

P06a I think she was massively worried about school, the effect of the virus on school...

P06b But nothing to do with social media!

P06a She had zero worries about her health. I think...

P06b Yes, but, all of us...

P06a I think we’ve always mean, I believe that I think we’ve always communicated to her that in her age bracket, she’s totally...

P06b Safe

I don’t think <YP> worries, I mean she worries very much about the impact on these exams and whatnot. And she I think she misses school quite badly. (P06a)

I don’t, neither of them are particularly kind of like health conscious or anxious, I should say. So I don’t think they’ve been that bothered, really. I mean, I might be wrong, but, you know, they don’t seem to have been that concerned about it. (P06a)

Well, I think she will continue using what was useful, you know, she will probably learn some more features. More features about different social medias now and she probably will keep using whatever was useful for her. In my case, I will be using a lot of things that I never used before. (P08)

Impact of pandemic

…my sense is that COVID-19 has had a huge effect…I think that in the same way that, you know, the Second World War shaped that

friends from the previous school. So just just kind of harping on what I just mentioned, if it could be kind of a created, a kind of multiple communities to be part of. And I could definitely see that there could be a, a, how’d you say increased usage with a certain group of people. (P02)

Also kind of triggered by a corona that now we find actually had learned that, yeah, there are multiple ways to communicate, but also multiple groups of people that we would like to reach out to that actually we hadn’t spoken with for a while and keep that kind of going where social media is an extremely efficient way of doing so. Total time, I would imagine it should reduce once <YP> goes back to school and spends more time on other activities. (P02)
been using it for the right reasons (P05)

So, yes, it definitely increased since lockdown (Y06)

Now, she's on, I would think, kind of seven, probably minimum, probably seven hours a day at the moment, you know, a hell of a lot. (P08)

So this has all definitely increased since lockdown. (P07)

How things were before
Showing activities with friends (previously) (P01)

...she’s always had social media used it, it'd be more kind of, it had been kind of more more a peripheral part, I think for her socialising. It had been used to made arrangements or to, for quick communication and they'd sort of had prior communication. So there were three or four weeks when she was anxious (P04)

...she was very busy and so for me then to spend her downtime as much as she wanted honestly on social media was fine, because I knew that she was at school a chunk of the day and then, you know, kind of doing as a way of staying connected and she's very, erm, I'm, I'm very trusting of her, you know, she's very good at getting up and going online, you know for her lessons she's conscientious, but also staying in touch with her, her friends so you know group what's app which I guess is a form of social media. (P01)

My parents are divorced and could motivate them by just sending something every day, but also not just me, but also the children and my wife. So, so very deliberately, kind of a using social media. But then yeah. The WhatsApp to share kind of some jokes, or just kind of informing or something we'd done. So I find it a very efficient way. (P02)

...the connecting with friends from school, the previous school. (P02)

I would assume so, yeah, just I think so. (using social media to connect) (P03)

So I think positive thing is keeping in touch with people who she see less frequently than, you know. (P03)

generation of young people. I think that this generation you know that are in that kind of early teens will be hugely affected by this because, I mean nothing could be taken for granted and I think they see that and I think that's why their beliefs and values and ambition have become more important to them. (P01)

She’s had all her routines taken away from her, her normal routines and structures. (P04)

Our horizon has kind of drawn inwards, closer and closer. (P07)

Activism & awareness
SM is a place for activism …it was a definite shift, sort of, you know, this is what I believe in, campaigning for stuff rather than using it as a friendly… you know, “aren’t we having a great time” like a sort of, um, you know? […] And I think covid, bringing it back to covid, the sort of…we’re all getting in touch with our infallibility, you know our mortality. Um.. And I think that the whole energy of social media has shifted quite significantly. (P01)

She said that, uhm, someone […] had posted a message […] and this person's post, you know, was met Oh, I think it's going to be difficult. I think they’re going to need to be weaned off it. And so, err, yeah, I, but I think these are... these are kinds of patterns of behaviour and I think you can't reverse it immediately. So I don't know is the answer. Erm, I'll be interested to see. (P04)

I would hope that by having a lot of face to face contact, it might mean that she has less need for social media come September (P04)

if when when things go back to normal, he will probably stop using social media as much. I suspect that, but it won't it won't go back to what it was before because it’s now very easy to jump on a Zoom call […]I think he’s going to be doing Zoom calls from there with his friends, which he wouldn't have done last year. (P05)

I have the feeling that in September <YP> first priority will be school. (P06a)

I don't think it will change enormously, just because I don't think he is such a heavy user...of social media. You know, he's not handled lockdown by spending 12
really, really good <hobby> stuff... (P08)

New ways of using SM
Erm, I think… Probably the usage is about the same, but I think what she’s using it for is different now. (P01)

So the beginning of the coronavirus, another channel came in, which is the video chat, video speaking. So not only Skype, but also Zoom. I was in meetings and those were multiple and also particularly, as <YP> just mentioned, with the family in <location> (P02)

I wouldn’t know exactly. I think they probably use more social media options because there are new things like teams and Zooms are introduced. And I know they probably have hangout rooms and some other erm some other social media that they used for to get together during the coronavirus. (P03)

So obviously, yeah, the usage of social media, I, I discovered the options for social media that I never used before, you know. (P03)

So the one thing that I’ve noticed that seems different is playing

Communication, obviously, to maintain her friendships definitely. (P04)

As I said, I think some of that was a kind of, was because it had a f-, a real function and it was replacing another form of communication. (P04)

With lockdown it became really impossible to do that, partly because I thought she needed to have social contact and that was her means of social contact (P04)

So it’s, it’s some kind of social interaction which they’re missing right now because of lockdown and home schooling. (P05)

Absolutely yeah, but but I think there’s also connecting with her friends, I think she likes so. (P06)

I think well, they interact with their friends in a way. Right, especially with the lockdown. That’s not a bad thing. (P06)

Ah! Something I really liked, <YP> and her friends organised the Zoom parties on Friday night, and I think that was very nice. So the fact that and a, and <YP> was all dressed up

with complete derision, you know, it was shocking that this person could post this, you know which to me sounds like a kid like you know, being a bit, bit cheeky, a bit irreverent messing around, but it’s been completely derided… (P01)

You know their views to be heard, so I thought that’s really what inspires her and I think that’s why with, with black lives matter she feels, she feels a real sense of injustice about what continues to happen. (P01)

Erm… Say that you’ve you’ve talked about coronavirus. I feel that you know, it’s it’s the black lives matter thing that’s come up during and prob...perhaps as a result of coronavirus. Um, at this time, and it’s quite hard to separate the two now, because I think that’s… that kind of um… The sense of inequality in the world. You know, the people that are dying from coronavirus in greater numbers is related to poverty, uhm, and ethnicity. So it’s like the virus has lifted the lid on that and I think. Um, what social media is doing is that people have had the liberty taken away from them and have had time to reflect on the injustices. (P01)

hours a day on social media at all […] I think once we’re out of this at the other end, there will be time to do all the other things that would suddenly become possible and still use social media. I can’t imagine it would disappear completely […] It would be nice to think that maybe some of the people that he’s connected with through social media, he then begins to see in person, physically. I’m not convinced that’s what will happen, though […] Erm, I don’t imagine there’ll be any radical shift if I’m honest. (P07)

I think that she’ll start her real life again […] I think that I think yeah, once she’s back doing real stuff, you know, it will take more of a backseat. (P08)
games with, connecting with old friends and playing games and actually it's really quite charming. It's really nice, I hear him chatting away. I don't know what's happening, but it's a little bit like, say, playing football with someone, it's a kind of, quite a nice, low pressure way to socialise... (P07)

to meet her friends on Zoom, I thought that you know in lockdown time, it was a very good idea. That I fully second something like this. Because I mean, obviously, if your friends are not available, then think it's a very good idea. (P06)

definitely felt that we have to relax it a bit in the light of being so isolated and, you know, not having social contact. (P07)

But, you know, these were young people dealing with something pretty serious and, erm, there were questions to be asked around that idea of posting a black square and whether it was actually a really good gesture or, you know, and it sounded like people just being a bit more reflective of how adults don't seem to be behaving well online, you know, just shouting at one another rather than trying to understand one another. (P07)

Challenges

And it's been quite nice because I think he's reconnected with friends from the past during this time, who he hasn't spoken to for ages. And done that via some game, gaming thing which he'll explain to you (P07)

And it's something that seems quite necessary, given the loneliness and given the horrible lack of peers that he's got around him to play with, you know. Yes, erm, that's been positive, you know, and that's not been a bad thing. (P07)
...we probably would have had a lot more rules in place, certainly over lockdown, where honestly there's not an awful lot for them to do, a lot of those rules have kind of gone out of the window because they quite rightly are saying, "listen, we can't see our friends", you know, it's not safe to see our friends, this is the only way we can do it. (P08)

it makes the kids realise that they're not alone in the way that they feel if they're feeling frustrated or, you know, angry, they can see that that's not unique to them. (P08)

she's she's in touch with people where she wouldn't be normally. I think there'd have been a much, much, much bigger sense of isolation had she not been able to keep in touch with people (P08)

**News source**
Yeah, and also reading the news, I think he has found it interesting (P05)

It's it's how that it's how they are informed, it's where they get their news from [...] But definitely, you know, they they they have identified they've received news that way and
become aware of issues that way. (P08)

And erm, the big one for him is news stories popping up. <YP>, he’s just gone out of the room actually but he, his, I hope he doesn’t mind me saying he can get extremely anxious... (P07)

Supporting each other
I was posting in our little family chat little, either information about the virus or some positivity stuff. [...] she could see that I was using that social media space to help me keep safe by communicating with each of the kids. [...] some sort of like a support thing for me to know the kids are okay… (P01)

...once the contact has been re-established, the frequency reduced again, which is fine because they know that at least someone cares or someone is happy to just kinda share a happy moment or just kind of realise that they are there, so that’s, that’s definitely I’ve been using social media a lot for it. (P02)

Of of sharing some some messages or something that we read in the newspaper or whatever it is. So it’s it’s a. Yeah. Additional way of
because the first week I remember me and my friends, we were all kind of scared but didn't know what to do. And how can we manage to stay at home most of the time without culture, cultural events and getting together, but to find this here. So we spend a lot of time discovering different apps and zooms, you know, and figuring out how we can get together and help each other to go through this fear at the very first stage. So it was very helpful. (P03)

...their, the route, the school day, even though they doing zoom school, there was this thing "oh I have to have my phone while I do it, because some of the stuff", you know, there's always some excuse I can't, I have to access hero on my phone or there'll be some reason why it was vital. (P04)

They would organise it between them and it was fine because it never interfered with lessons. They're all quite serious and quite focussed and studious like <YP> so it worked, they're all quite, you know, similar mentality, let's say. And and it was it was a real, a real saviour, you
know, because it was regular, it was predictable, it was safe because it was the four of them. (P05)

...he, he watched a lot of educational videos. (P05)

I think he was using it kind of, um, during term time, the classmates would exchange questions about work or things or maybe comment on what's happening in the lessons. (P07)

**Value of SM**

So in that context, yeah, I found that quite important, that <YP> could use WhatsApp to then be in touch also with children from the previous school, the friends from the previous school, who then could share some jokes or just say the good morning or whatever it is. And so feeling kind of not not that isolated. (P02)

I think without having social media, it would be very difficult for everyone, you know, to continue a normal life and to have the same level of socialising. (P03)

...coronavirus and lockdown was the first time I could really see some benefits for social media, I do think, erm, that actually without it, she
could have been a lot more anx... I mean it's very difficult to know [...] I could for the first time, I could really see a kind of important purpose for it, whereas pre lockdown, I would have said, [...] well, I can see that it's fun and interesting and also quite dangerous, but you don't actually need it. (P04)

### Young people (Y)

<table>
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<th>Connecting and maintaining connection</th>
<th>Worries &amp; concerns</th>
<th>Displaced by face-to-face activities &amp; other responsibilities</th>
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<td>I think, mm, yeah, you maybe might post more on it or you're on it more because you have nothing else to do, but I don't think the content on the stuff has changed so too much because of lock down, I generally don't think that. (Y01)</td>
<td>Umm... I don't think coronavirus has really changed anything for me. Um, apart from the fact that I probably might use it more to stay in contact with my friends because I don't see them at school. (Y01)</td>
<td>I've always been concerned of it [coronavirus] and like I don't see... I only see like a maximum of like three people at time [...] It [social media] hasn't made me more nervous or less nervous, I guess. (Y01)</td>
<td>I think it will go down a lot because I'll be at school and I'll, um, be with my friends and stuff, because, um, usually at home um when life is normal, before coronavirus, the times I would use my phone were like four till like I don't know later in the evening, but now I use it for like the whole day because I have nothing else to do and stuff. (Y01)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I think I use it a bit more than before because there’s more time, because you don’t have to wake up earlier, wait that and that gives &lt;inaudible&gt; sorry, you don’t have to go take the time to go to school and back to school. It’s just like you’re straight away at home because you’ve just been there the whole time. So, I mean, I don’t use it that often I think. But more often than earlier. (Y02)</td>
<td>Well, what’s app so that I can just talk to my friends (Y02)</td>
<td>I think I’m less anxious because I know that, like my friends and family are safe and everything, because if there was no social media, then I wouldn’t even know if one of my friends were dead probably. And that would not be very nice. (Y02)</td>
<td>I feel like at the very beginning it will go slightly down, but mostly the same and then after that it'll go down more because at the beginning you still have to get used to still like seeing each other that way and after that it'll be like normal again and then you won’t have to FaceTime...</td>
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<td>Yeah, I mean, if I can’t go out and meet friends and talk to people, I talk to them online, so I remain social. It’s, it’s been something to do, meet new people, talk to people from, talk to people that I don’t usually talk to from school or something. (Y03)</td>
<td></td>
<td>We, um, I don’t know, not, neutral to be, to be honest, pretty neutral on that people... I haven’t been getting much stuff about the coronavirus</td>
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I use them, quite... I use them a lot, for sure [...] I mean, I can't go out and meet my friends, but I can talk to them online or I'm bored and I don't have stuff to do a lot of the time so I can go online and do stuff. (Y03)

...now I talk to people a lot more and I use different types of apps as well to meet different people so yeah. I play games a lot more, which is also a way to meet other people. (Y03)

Yeah, I've been using texting a lot more to talk to people and playing like gaming more so more fortnight because there's more time. (Y05)

...now back to normal, but it has increased how much I spend on each app. (Y06)

But then when I am on it more in lockdown, I, I kind of regret going on it sometimes. (Y07)

Well I use social media like a lot more during lockdown than I normally do (Y08)

How things were before

Well, I most likely wouldn't have as much time to just say, OK, let's do a zoom and, erm, I, like it's a bit weird I realised it didn't really make up for not seeing people face to face and it kind of just was used less and less frequently. (Y04)

Just to stay in touch because you know, you couldn't really talk before. (Y05)

...obviously, like it's nicer to talk to people in person than on Zoom or texting, but, you know, when you're not there, you're not there. (Y05)

I think I would prefer to do a face to face meeting (Y05)

Zoom, it's just there during lockdown to keep in touch with my friends (Y05)

They lived in like, they live far away so we couldn't just, yeah I can't see him often and, you know, during lockdown he suggested we do a Zoom or something to catch up and I wouldn't have, he wouldn't have been able to reach me if it wasn't for WhatsApp. (Y05)

Well, kind of have to define good, I mean, I speak more with my friends, I spend a big part of the day with my friends, but talking to my friends instead of revising it's a bit of from what I read so it's pretty neutral. (Y03)

Well, obviously, I think because I because...but I think it's better to be worried and understand what's happening than just, you know, be ignorant and happy. (Y05)

I think I think it's made me less, partly because this isn't kind of directly making me feel less but being kind of, this is about using it to be able to meet up with people which makes me feel less like it's such a crisis... well it is... (Y07)

Um, I don't think it's had a very big impact, but. I don't think it's really affected like my view of coronavirus [...]I mean I'm not worried about it for myself because like I know that I would be fine, and I think, like, my family would be fine (Y08)

Impact

I mean like I said, it doesn't really affect me because I'm, I'm lucky enough to have parents who can easily work from home so it doesn't affect me in that way. I'm also lucky enough to go to school where we can do remote learning. So for me it doesn't affect me, um, in a way that people unless they're like really, really far away. Maybe because our family's <nationality> so they're in <country>, so you can't, don't see them that often. So maybe that will be a reason to FaceTime them. But other than that, if someone's like, if someone's very near you, then probably not, unless maybe it's summer holidays and then they're still in the same place, but you might want to call them or something to see how they're doing, because you haven't seen them in a while if that make sense. (Y02)

Well I think people might use it a little bit less, as in, you know, just really, there's been a kind of a subtle increase of more things on stories, but I think that's just because people have more time on their hands, but nothing too dramatic, I think. So I guess there'll be nothing too dramatic going back the other way as well. (Y04)
using those services outside of when you really need them. (Y05)

New ways of using SM
used to never do any like FaceTimes or anything because I see my friends very often, but now I haven’t seen them in quite a while. I don’t really see them that often. So yeah, I call and FaceTime more often, but still not that often...Like once or twice a week. (Y02)

Started using FaceTime (Y02)

I’d never really done a video call before lockdown. (Y06)

I started using House Party...during lockdown that was mainly to connect with some of my friends from two schools ago. (Y07)

Stabilities in use
So I guess it’s changed in one aspect, it’s like more political. But yeah in other ways no. (P01)

Um, I genuinely don’t think it has much to do with lock down. I think, mm, yeah, you maybe might post more on it or you’re on it more because you have nothing else to do, but I don’t think the content on a...yeah...it’s good in some ways and worse in others (Y06)

Well I like talking to my friends and reconnecting sometimes with them [...] I think it’s similar...apart from the fact that that maybe I’ve just connected with some of my older friends. (Y07)

...it feels like I’m less like distant from everything because I can still see stuff that’s going like around. (Y08)

News source
...which is like really interesting because like, um, it’s like a way to get source of information because people like, take videos of it from the actual protests, like live stream and stuff. (P01)

Cause I think...[...] Yeah, I mean...Yeah, I think everyone’s kind of engaging in it because now we’re getting all this news about all this stuff going on all around the world, you can get it all on your phones and you can talk about it. (Y03)

And I like to look at news, which is fact checked by the BBC, because then I know that it is very, very likely that it is true and reliable. (Y05)

it might affect others so, um, no. (Y06)

Well, if it’s like if it dies down soon or like, um, I think my social media use will just go down to back it was before coronavirus because, because, as I said the main reason I use social media is to sort of contact my friends and you zoom, but I won’t need to do that any more. (Y05)

It kind of feels like in the whole world, there’s only just this house, my family, because I’m literally seeing nothing else. (Y02)

Coping
...it’s more just helping me talk to people and fill my own time. It’s not. It’s not so much feeling better about coronavirus, it’s just dealing with the impact of it. (Y03)

...I have my parents give me a lot of the information I was asking them when I could next see people and stuff, so I didn’t really kind of go digging for information.(Y04)

Activism & awareness
I think a lot has changed in some ways because it’s more like political (Y01)

So, so, you know how there was a black out? Uhm? Tuesday thing where people would post like black squares on Instagram? So a bunch of white racist people tried to do like a white out so they posted white. So everyone on Tik Tok was like we need to change this so people called K pop ‘stans’ for people who like that
the stuff has changed so much because of lockdown. (P01)

I wouldn’t say that, I don’t think coronavirus personally for me has much, hasn’t really changed that, um, like social media, because it, it is it doesn’t really affect social media in my opinion. I mean it does make you use it more because you have nothing else to do. But in ways of what you actually see and the content you get, I don’t think it’s changed that, it just probably changes your use of it. (P01)

Yeah, I didn’t use House Party as much, it’s become like a lot bigger thing in lockdown, but I had them all and was using them all before [...] It was, it was pretty much straight away because we were already using it kind of in the holidays when we didn’t see each other. So it was already like we we kind of knew that when you stop seeing people, that’s kind of what you go to. But actually as lockdown has gone on people have used it less and less. It was like a big thing at the beginning... (Y04)

No, not in myself and I don’t think in people really either. It’s kind of stayed the same for people I know [...] I don’t think so. I mean, a lot of a

Well, obviously, I think people now, I guess especially children, have more time to be on their phones or even adults just to look at the news and become more aware and then form an opinion on what they hear. (Y05)

Yeah, I think a lot of people use like Instagram as their way to like, people my age use Instagram as a way to get news and like, it does give you news, but it’s like often because it’s like a lot of young people, it’s really like it’s a sort of thing that, like my generation, people my age want to hear, but and it’s like our side of the stories, but I think it’s like good to hear like other sides of the stories and stuff. Like not a biased, like news thing. (Y08)

Supporting each other
I can FaceTime my friends and talk to them without the whole class being there, which is nice, and it makes it feel more realistic because it kind of feels like in the whole world, there’s only just this house, my family, because I’m literally seeing nothing else. So it’s nice to know that and nice to see how my friends are doing and stuff. (Y02)

music, they just spammed it with pictures of artists. So when you went on it, you didn’t see the racist people, you just saw like pictures of artists and stuff. To like, and like the Trump rally that he had in, um, Tulsa, so everyone just booked tickets, but no one went. (Y01)

I guess, I mean at the moment coronavirus isn’t really top of my agenda I guess, I’m probably more concerned about like the protests and how people are safe with that. And like not getting tear gassed by police and stuff. (Y01)

Well, there’s, what people are posting a lot now, the Black Lives Matter movement, especially in America. There’s a lot of that and just human rights stuff. All of that. I dunno, if corona’s kind of in the background. (Y03)

No, there was so much like Black Lives Matter and everyone was posting it. And obviously no one had posted that before because it kind of became like a worldwide movement really suddenly. And yeah. So everyone like me and my friends were posting kind of things like that on our stories. Yeah. Which um, well as in I’d seen it before, but not such
lot of posting is so there’s posting on you’re like main feed, which kind of stays up. And then obviously there are, I don’t know, you probably know this, but... And then there’s also stories which go down after 24 hours. And so I used to kind of post on my stories, my story, like every three days kind of, when I was out with friends or something like that. And obviously that went down because I was out with less people. And yeah. So I guess in that sense, the stuff people posting more of them with their families or more of just like a view and stuff like that, rather than meeting with different people. (Y04)

So every day during class, you know, if there was no Zoom with the class, we would set up a Zoom of our own because normally in class, we would probably talk to other people and help each other with work and stuff. (Y05)

Value of SM
I don't know, it’s just I think it’s very I’m very glad we have social media. (Y03)

Erm.....uh... no, it has been really useful... (Y07)

Passing the time
And like it is also like a passtime because like there’s not a lot to do, but especially in like lockdown lockdown, there wasn’t anything to do (Y08)

like a big kind of movement from everyone who I knew basically. (Y04)

It’s already I mean, there was a bit of a it’s it’s quite sad. It was like a bit of a trend, basically the kind of Black Lives Matter thing like people posted it because of other people. Although in is in I make that sound like bad but it’s more because people, some people who didn’t really use Instagram at all for activism or anything, anything like that, it’s because they saw other people doing it. They were pressured into, you know, doing it basically, and not because they didn’t support Black Lives Matter more, because they just didn’t really use their Instagram you know for any, any cause they wouldn’t have used it to post but because everyone was, everyone started to do it. And that means now it’s slowing down. A lot of people are stopping to do it as well. (Y04)

Well, because I use my Instagram to post in general anyway, I kind of, it was a natural thing for me to do to kind of repost things about Black Lived Matter and information about what was happening in the process, because I generally used to post before. So I didn’t feel so much
pressure to do it from other people (Y04)

Yeah, so I think I'm very pro Black Lives Matter because of what I'm hearing and, you know, stories of police brutality. (Y05)

Well, I think it's a great change. I mean, I take part in that quite a lot. I mean, of course, the BLM but as well, for example, I'm definitely not a Trump supporter and lots of my stories, are part of that and reasons he shouldn't be racist and sexist comments he makes and that kind of stuff. (Y06)

I mean, although obviously a story on Instagram isn't going to change anything, as in, you know, in an age of information staying quiet, it's the choice. Being ignorant is a choice. And I think if you have the chance to, why not? It can't hurt. (Y06)

Window to the world
I sometimes, I, use it to get, like, um, different views of the world (P01)
Appendix 15 – Summaries of quantitative data
### Supplementary Table 5 - Social media platforms used by parents and young people

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social media platform</th>
<th>Young people</th>
<th>Parents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connection &amp; interest platforms</strong></td>
<td>(n=8)</td>
<td>(n=9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s App</td>
<td>8 (100%)</td>
<td>6 (67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tik Tok</td>
<td>7 (88%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>6 (75%)</td>
<td>3 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snapchat</td>
<td>4 (50%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>3 (38%)</td>
<td>5 (56%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>2 (25%)</td>
<td>2 (22%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viber</td>
<td>1 (13%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (22%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reddit</td>
<td>1 (13%)</td>
<td>1 (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinterest</td>
<td>1 (13%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social gaming platforms</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brawl Stars</td>
<td>3 (38%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortnight</td>
<td>1 (13%)</td>
<td>1(11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minecraft</td>
<td>1 (13%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squad</td>
<td>1 (13%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Media viewing platforms</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>3 (38%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Video communication platforms</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Party</td>
<td>2 (25%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microsoft Teams</td>
<td>1 (13%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoom</td>
<td>2 (25%)</td>
<td>2 (22%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google Hangouts</td>
<td>1 (13%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FaceTime</td>
<td>3 (38%)</td>
<td>1 (11%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Supplementary Table 6 - Time spent on offline and online activities per day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sleeping (hours)</th>
<th>Studying (hours)</th>
<th>Exercising (hours)</th>
<th>Family time (hours)</th>
<th>Messaging apps</th>
<th>Video chat apps</th>
<th>Gaming</th>
<th>Multi-player gaming</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents (n=6)</td>
<td>Young people (n=6)</td>
<td>Parents (n=5)</td>
<td>Young people (n=6)</td>
<td>Parents (n=6)</td>
<td>Young people (n=6)</td>
<td>Parents (n=7)</td>
<td>Young people (n=6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3 (range = 6-8)</td>
<td>9 (range = 8-10)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>7.5 (range = 5-9.5)</td>
<td>0.8 (range = 0.2-2)</td>
<td>1.4 (range = 0.5-2)</td>
<td>3.8 (range = 1-10)</td>
<td>1.7 (range = 1-3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10-30 mins = 2 (33%)</td>
<td>10-30 mins = 2 (33%)</td>
<td>10-30 mins = 1 (14%)</td>
<td>10-30 mins = 2 (33%)</td>
<td>31-60 mins = 1 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>31-60 mins = 1 (14%)</td>
<td>1-2 hours = 2 (33%)</td>
<td>1-2 hours = 1 (14%)</td>
<td>31-60 mins = 1 (17%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1-2 hours = 1 (14%)</td>
<td>3-5 hours = 1 (14%)</td>
<td>3-5 hours = 1 (14%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;5 hours = 1 (14%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Supplementary Table 7 - Frequencies data from the motivations for social media use questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motives for social media use</th>
<th>Young people (n=6)</th>
<th>Parents (n=7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To hook up (i.e. to start a relationship with a boyfriend or girlfriend).</td>
<td>2 (33%)</td>
<td>2 (28.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To look for a date.</td>
<td>1 (17%)</td>
<td>1 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To seek a romantic partner (i.e. to find a boyfriend or girlfriend).</td>
<td>2 (33%)</td>
<td>2 (28.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To make new friends.</td>
<td>1 (17%)</td>
<td>1 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To extend my circle of friends.</td>
<td>2 (33%)</td>
<td>2 (28.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To meet new people.</td>
<td>1 (17%)</td>
<td>1 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To ask for information about what to study for exams.</td>
<td>3 (50%)</td>
<td>1 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Responses</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To ask or share class notes.</td>
<td>5 (83%)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To check or share group assignments.</td>
<td>4 (80%)</td>
<td>1 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To not feel disengaged from the world.</td>
<td>3 (60%)</td>
<td>6 (86%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To feel connected with people.</td>
<td>4 (67%)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To feel socially integrated.</td>
<td>2 (50%)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To keep up-to-date with what my contacts are doing in their day-to-day life.</td>
<td>3 (50%)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To know the details of my friends' lives.</td>
<td>2 (33%)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To snoop on people that I am interested in (i.e. to check out what others are doing)</td>
<td>1 (17%)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To fill my free time.</td>
<td>4 (67%)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for posting on social media</td>
<td>Yes (Percentage)</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To kill time when I am bored.</td>
<td>4 (67%)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To entertain myself.</td>
<td>5 (83%)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To stand out from others.</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For other people to comment on my posts.</td>
<td>2 (33%)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To check that others like my posts.</td>
<td>2 (33%)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To express my feelings and thoughts.</td>
<td>3 (60%)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To give my opinion on a topic.</td>
<td>3 (60%)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To discuss some subject (with other people).</td>
<td>4 (80%)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To keep up about what happens in the world.</td>
<td>4 (67%)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be informed about the news.</td>
<td>3 (50%)</td>
<td>3 (43%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To find information about topics that I like and am interested in.</td>
<td>3 (50%)</td>
<td>5 (71%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch videos or pictures posted on social media sites.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-6x per week</td>
<td>1 (20%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All the time</td>
<td>4 (80%)</td>
<td>3 (43%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing = 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read online discussions on social media sites.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>3 (60%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-6x per week</td>
<td>1 (20%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several x per day</td>
<td>1 (20%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing = 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read user comments/ratings/reviews on social media sites.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>3 (60%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once per week</td>
<td>2 (40%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing = 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment on others' posts on social media sites.</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>4 (67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Once a day</td>
<td>1 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Several x per day</td>
<td>1 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Missing = 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Like” posts on others’ social media sites (clicking the like button)</td>
<td>&lt; 1 per week</td>
<td>1 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Once per week</td>
<td>1 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Several x per day</td>
<td>3 (60%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Missing = 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Missing = 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share comments on social media sites with my connections.</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>4 (67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Once per day</td>
<td>1 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Several x per day</td>
<td>1 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Missing = 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Missing = 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>2 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post contents on my own social media page.</td>
<td>&lt; Once per week</td>
<td>2 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Once per week</td>
<td>1 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-6 x per week</td>
<td>1 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Missing = 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To stay informed about COVID-19 (the coronavirus).</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>1 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; Once per week</td>
<td>4 (67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Once per week</td>
<td>1 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Missing = 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 16- Analytic memo excerpts
12/02/21
Immersion in the data is underway. I have decided to do the analysis by hand and on hard copies of the transcripts as I rather like this ‘old school’ method; it gives me a break from the screen, feels more ‘real’ and I can pick up the transcripts and put them down anytime which seems more appealing than coming back to a screen, which due to the pandemic seems like the majority of my time at the moment. I bought record cards and post-its and plan to map things out in a colourful way because there is some satisfaction in this for me. I had a mini brainstorm of ideas and concepts that are fresh in my mind from transcription and also from the start of reading and re-reading the printed transcripts. I found it really satisfying to get some initial test themes and codes together and arrange them out in front of me. I’ve arranged these impressions into provisional groups / clusters.

19/02/21
Attended qualitative workshop this morning. Key takeaway is that initial coding should very closely reflect what the data / participant is saying and then there should be some progression to more abstract or conceptual codes. I have used simple codes to some extent, but also felt that if I used brief words or phrases directly from the data that this was in some way a very surface / unanalytic approach to the data. This may explain why the process so far has felt quite overwhelming and time consuming as I have been trying to squeeze out every bit of meaning from the data, keeping thinking and generating ideas until I get to broader, more abstract concepts. Saturation in analysis? Perhaps a way of managing this is to notice when my mind is doing a ‘this makes me think of…’ or ‘this fits in with x theory’ process. My impressions feel very founded in the literature I have become familiar with in the process of my lit review and also the ideas, concepts and models outlined in the project planning phase and which shaped the topic guide. Notably, displacement theory, upwards and downwards comparisons, Ajzen’s TPB model, O’Reilly’s point about awareness/knowledge of impact of SM but speaking about this in abstract terms or as happening to others.

Popped into mind when thinking about self-presentation and also in the context of pressure to post about political issues and be part of movements even if this is not a natural or typical use of social media: SM IS A PERFORMANCE ART. Relatedly, I also keep coming back to the phrase ‘RULES OF ENGAGEMENT’ when thinking about the ways that young people use and present themselves on social media and what is expected of them. There seem to be a common set of unspoken rules about online conduct, perpetuated by young people themselves despite the realisation these
rules and practices may not be supporting their wellbeing (e.g. only showing the good stuff) that they feel compelled to conform and enact.

It feels like the duality exists in the minds of young people between what is ‘real and not real’ and this takes place online, rather than real things being considered ‘offline’, and online being considered full of things that aren’t real as expressed by myself and many parents/guardians. This work has made me exceptionally aware of generational differences and being looked to as part of an ‘older generation’ perhaps in a denigrating sort of way, assumed to be out of touch, not knowing, and nightmarishly an uncool try hard millennial grown up. On the one hand this has made me feel threatened, a bit affronted, and well, just a bit cringe as I recognise moments, turns of phrase (adulting!), stylistic choices that now seem to betray me. The moment of realisation you are most likely seen this way in the eyes of swathes of younger people (who are literally posting generational in jokes about people like you right now) is bound to be a rather profound existential moment. Shit, not only do I ‘get’ my parents now, I relate to them. I AM BECOMING THEM. It’s happening.

@emilyctamkin @iamthirtyaf

“I love this trend of “ahaha, millennials, teens don’t think you’re cool.” Teens didn’t think I was cool when I was a teen, why would they start now.”

07 03 2021

Observed pattern for rules and boundaries code – talked about in terms of school imposed, parent imposed, and imposed by the young people themselves (e.g. self-monitoring).

08/03/2021

Recoding consistent, double coding.

09/03/21
Noticing there are some questions that were consistently unclear (what would get in the way) and perhaps more consultation should have been done on the topic guide. Difficult with covid, but perhaps could have done this by email?

Question definition of cyberbullying – maybe current definitions do not capture behaviour that is essentially bullying in nature.

08/04/21
Things feel like they are coming together with the themes. I had been feeling very overwhelmed by the data, coding and recoding, and struggling not to consider EVERYTHING useful and important data. Knowledge of the theory / lit has been a little unhelpful in this sense. Good to have the independent coding to reference to get more of a perspective. Looking forward to condensing down and beginning the next phase of write up! Think I should add to my critical reflection the experience of being ‘othered’ which comes flooding back when I look at the data.

09/04/21
Read coding book again this morning and chipping away at refining the codes and organising into themes. Some have collapsed entirely. Some are feeling very difficult to place together as they are so interrelated. Trying to ‘tell the story’ of the codes and relate them to help make these decisions. Drawn to cancel culture as a theme. Feels like picking and unpicking threads. Might include all themes in appendix. Feels such a shame to condense everything right down!

10/04/21
Getting there, chipping away. May have to lose the section on cancel culture and put it in the appendix.

12/04/21
Further themes have collapsed into others, but still too many on aggregate. Writing up and telling the story to determine how thick / thin themes are has helped. In terms of selecting quotes, it has felt a bit like some of the codes in isolation could lose their meaning to a specific context so I have been continually referring back to the transcripts and moving codes around.

13/04/21
Need to edit and cut themes further. Perhaps only consider themes if related in some way to pandemic or just aspects where pandemic is referenced? E.g. rules and boundaries, talk about the relaxation during lockdown only with some contrast to beforehand?
Appendix 17 – Research diary excerpts
Supplementary Figure 3 Excerpts 1 & 2 from research diary describing pre-interview experience

Excerpt 1:

Supplementary Figure 3 Excerpts 1 & 2 from research diary describing pre-interview experience

Excerpt 2:

My research is peer, but I wonder if this is symptomatic of the strength of my said skill position as a default.

Returning to recruitment, the morning Emma’s email was sent, I was focused on other things and quite taken aback by the flood of emails from parents and students expressing a wish to participate without hesitation. I was delighted that it seemed recruitment could be set and done within one fell swoop, but avoided the idea of turning them after away. Such inactivity would, I thought, interrupt the idea that I may have had about maintaining the capacity to last interview everyone. Thankfully, Marc was more confident and detailed in his proposal, and proposed sending a response email along the lines of “thanks but sorry,” again, if I found myself at the risk of being duped by oversimplifying disappointment and feeling like the turning point, I was fearful of affecting other kindness and would prefer to do me a favour. As it turned out, more complained and those who responded seemed happy enough to know they had been written.
Research day reflections

The interviews are complete - subject to any additional recruitment deemed necessary, e.g. in an effort to enhance the diversity of the sample or just obtain more data. Today is the first day I feel like I have a proper chance to reflect on what the issues from participants, draw on themes and gain a firmer sense of what insights, avenues are available that might inspire my literature review or support to cultivate and maintain sense of the claims I have generated.

I expected results to be pictures but was surprised to find the methods community published and clearly very active in producing work in actual real time (and getting it published). In a way, I also expect any project in rapid response to unfolding events, but the idea of considering, analyzing and planning so rapidly on others have had not crossed my mind, but have wondered whether the seeming lack of (sustained) prominence of comments amongst the interviews might reflect an issue of being too late and missing a small window of the intensity of the impact of the virus. But an of this stage, maybe more convinced that the lack of prominence may be related to the few demographic characteristics of the sample and attention to the experience of contact screening in 2013/14, on social inequalities in 2011 (it being on social inequalities in 2011, the lacking clamps, parentheses or or all the names, pandemics, etc), and whether this might take all this and whether this might take all this and whether this might take all this, and whether this might take all this, and whether this might take all this, and whether this might take all this, and whether this might take all this. The real concerns of which might be a poor quality piece of work.

10+ pages on and I’ve assessed on substantial collection of, potentially new articles. A comment in one of the last articles I read for the day. Stuck in during this generation along with millions have never felt a sense of fear or reported large scale off work. This moment is a tipping point for a society envious of self tailoring, sentience by almost everything at the click of a button.


I was a little taken aback by the large lack of diversity in a scientific journal and objective style of writing. It’s quite present throughout. I can’t see a way to improve the text at this stage and not sure if it’s the fault of the fact that could be...
Appendix 18- Bracketing interview transcript excerpts
**Excerpt 1: On selection of the project**

**Interviewer:** OK is that... Is there any particular reason... you talked about, sort of the hopes of the impact, but is there any particular reason why you chose this topic? Why you felt it was important to focus on this topic?

**Researcher:** I think part of it was when they were doing the research presentations, my supervisor Marc did a presentation and talked about quantitative projects on social media and that captured my attention. I thought that was quite interesting. I think part of my interest in the in the project was about getting some experience of working with young people because at that point I hadn't done any placements with young people, so it was almost like jumping head first into her into working with a client group that I was a bit anxious about working with and hoping that would prepare me in some way for when I did get placed with with young people. So this part of... Knowing that, it would be quite daunting and feeling that it would be important for me to push myself. And, and the other thing is, yeah, social media. It's it... At the time it felt and actually has continued to feel like quite a big presence in my personal life, not for me personally, but just so.. for instance, you know, with my partner's job, he's got to be on social media quite a lot and so I feel like it's been very present in our lives and I've seen some of the very negative things that can come up out of using social media. And because of what goes on online, particularly on Twitter. So that sort of made me think, well, okay, we're adults dealing with that, but what is it like as a young person to have to deal with those kinds of things on a day to day basis and even more so than than say, us? Because you know, we're not using it as, as prolifically as I imagine, young people do. So yeah, I just I was just thinking about it in terms of yeah, it's boggled my mind how young people handled themselves in these situations and I was very curious about that. So I think that attracted me to the topic as well. And the other, I guess the other thing was my background is an intervention development. So I was listening to Marc talking about projects and thinking okay, so you gather all this data on social media use among young people and how it impacts wellbeing, but then what do we do with it? My my mind went straight to okay, can we design something helpful? Can we provide an intervention? Can we provide some kind of support package and would that sit in a school context? And how would we go about that? See, I had my intervention development hat on. And I thought, well, if. If there was going to be quantitative project with a large amount of data being collected, that's all well and good that be really important. But when I've developed interventions in the past, another aspect
of that has been having a qualitative component where you actually get some insight into people's experiences in it in a richer way than, say, having them complete questionnaire. So for me it was like drawing the two together. And hopefully coming out with some really strong qualitative and quantitative data that would be helpful for future intervention development.

**Excerpt 2: On the personal impact of social media**

**Interviewer:** Do... is there anything that you see that, uh, influences you in any way? So thoughts and feelings you know? You know, does it? What's your thought process when you... when you're seeing some of these things that are posted on your social media that you see? Does it affect your mood? Does it you know, change your feelings of things or...?

**Researcher:** I think currently what I've got... I'll focus on Instagram, so I think that's that's probably the thing I use most. But currently what comes up on my Instagram feed is quite benign. There's a lot of wedding stuff 'cause I've been planning the wedding. There's a lot of CrossFit stuff. Uhm, there's a lot of food stuff as well. So I think that combination of things that I follow is...uhm. I don't feel like when I'm looking at it as anything there that makes me reflect back on my own life and think that I'm lacking in some way or things could be better. I'm. I think that a few years ago I was more into... I followed a lot of fitspo accounts and I would spend a lot of time looking at things like that. A lot of accounts around kind of diet and things like that and that would be more consuming. And that would definitely have an impact on the way that I viewed myself and my body. And I guess fuelled some a lot of dissatisfaction there. But I think that. Generally speaking, it wasn't the only influence on how I felt about myself, and because my views have changed and I feel like I've got a more kind of balanced and healthy view of my body image and exercise and food. I feel more kind of resilient. [...] I think in the past social media is fed into some of my insecurities and there has been that sense of comparing and maybe getting a bit of a distorted idea of what's actually achievable in terms of aesthetics and fitness and diet and things like that, but certainly now I think there's something also about, you know I'm in my 30s now, so I feel my...

**Interviewer:** Sorry to interrupt. [...] It seems like to me you may have this notion that some of that stuff [...] it put pressure on you, it affected your self-esteem but do you
think now that maybe in a way that some of that was a positive because you used to follow these accounts and obviously you got into a place where you have done some fitness and you have, you know, started just possibly eating better now, you know, maybe that affected your self-esteem. Do you think that was, you know, do you think your drive towards where you are now started with your social media viewing, or do you think it was despite your social media viewing?

**Researcher:** I think it was. That's a good question, because actually I found out about my hobby now, CrossFit, and I found out about that because someone posted something about it on Facebook and that got me curious about what it was. But that's a different thing too. That's almost like a word of mouth recommendation, which I think was really positive, but the other stuff I'm talking about where you're looking at images of women with abs and perfect bodies and motivational quotes like you know. […] I spent a lot of time just passively looking at it and just feeling bad about myself. So I think, yeah, I think it was… It was the kind of getting off social media getting… not getting wrapped up in what other people were doing with their fitness and food and just getting on with my stuff and the outside world in the real world which made the difference to me and less bothered about what I was seeing.

**Excerpt 3: On my views of the impact of social media on young people**

**Interviewer:** How do you view social media? How do you think it is affecting currently young people's lives and do you see this positively or do you see negatives? Or do you think it's like largely one way or the other?

**Researcher:** I think what I've tried to do this project is is to balance and not be extreme in my views, either way. Well, I think that's a conscious effort because I think my natural inclination is more on the side of thinking about the risks and think about those potentially damaging things. And comes from a perspective of I, I am a person who was grown up in a time where social media wasn't there and then it was there and when it was there I was a bit older. I was a late teenager I guess. So what makes me curious and what also makes me worried is if you've got kids that that they're growing up now and all they know is social media. I feel like an important way that I've been able to anchor myself is that I have this memory of the way things were before. I've learned to do all these social things I've learned to develop my self identity before that came along and for kids now it's all integrated and I think
because of my experience, I tend to see things as “this is online”, “this is offline” and it's very distinct, and with that comes a bit of a… I feel like it's protective because I think… online isn't everything, it's not necessarily the real world. It's not necessarily real, it's just online. So if you don't… I guess the implication of that don't like what's going on online or if things are not working out for you online or something is damaging you can be offline 'cause most of the stuff in your life is offline. I also understand that when you, when you've not grown up in a world where there wasn't social media, when it's always been there and actually people kids are being put on social media by parents from when they're born, you know, they get phones say age 11…That's like hard. It's hard to be a teenager. It's hard to be a young teenager and developing and sort of learning about yourself in the world and other people and relationships. And then you've got… that that's hard enough outside when you're face to face with people when when things are kind of like, say, in the real world. And then you've got this other entire different online world to negotiate as well, which I believe in a lot of ways, mirrors offline world and offline interactions. It's like an extension it’s… sometimes an amplification of what's going on, sort of developmentally and socially offline, but it's a whole other world with loads of other kinds of... I guess potential for risk.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Researcher: 'cause you're so connected beyond beyond the ways that you are just connected offline, I suppose in your community, in your family, in your school, in your friendship group, it, just gets… It's just exponentially bigger. So it makes sense then that the risks would be exponentially bigger. And that worries me and how kids have to deal with that...

Excerpt 4: On positioning in the interviews

Interviewer: Sorry, so with with these views though, were they were they before the project? Or have they been bourne from your experience? [...] How did you come to this viewpoint, was it through the project?

Yeah, I think that.. the ideas that I had… are things that I came to the project with because of those prior experiences. And. I think now obviously I'm at a stage in my life here, right, and I don't have children, but it's, it's on my mind. The future’s on my mind and I'm getting to the age where I'm sort of a parent age I guess. Uhm… so I
think I'm...I've noticed my view is probably more orientated towards a kind of parental kind of adult view of this situation that that has started to feel really different to to...what I imagine young people feeling and experiencing. I feel outside of that at my age now, and I think maybe years ago, maybe in my 20s, even, I probably would have felt more in it, like more aligned with young people like not noticing the difference as much, but I feel like now before the project and during the project. I've definitely noticed I am positioned as an adult. I'm positioning myself as an adult. But I'm also... I was also being positioned by the young people I was speaking to as an adult. And, and that was quite interesting experience for me 'cause I, before training, I worked with older adults, so I was always positioned as a younger person, and, yeah, I, I guess I kind of took that for granted because I think that's the way that I position myself as well. And then in this project when I started speaking to young people, I thought I wonder if they're gonna kind of position me as someone who's like a slightly older young person or I'm like their parent or I'm like their teacher or I'm like someone like that and I think for the most part I was definitely positioned as an adult and I was... there were a few moments that struck me where I was really kind of clearly othered by the young, by young people, like they sort of assumed that I just didn't know what they were talking about, that I wouldn't understand...

Interviewer: Yeah.

Researcher: ...and they're right. They were absolutely right. Because you know, they're talking about things like a specific example, Tik Tok, which is a really new type of social media, and of course I've heard of it, but I've never used it. I don't want to use it, it's just... I'm not interested, so I don't have the experience of being on it, I don't know how it works. It's not for me. But I would say if you, if you said "oh what's Tik Tok?", I could give you vague explanation of what it is. It's so funny, young people like "oh you have no idea what Tik Tok is like. I don't even know whether you'll even be able to grasp the idea of what Tik Tok is because, you know, you're an adult or you're an older person, or you're not a young person". Essentially, I think that was quite stark for me to be in that position and to resist saying, "yeah I know what Tik Tok is" and just be like, “no, actually I don't - you tell me how what you experience when you go on Tik Tok, you tell me what that's like for you, because that's not a world I can get into". I'm not permitted access to that world because I'm now an adult, so that was quite an interesting thing to confront actually. To be seen as someone who's older, who just doesn't have a clue, who maybe isn't in touch with what's going on with young people...
**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Researcher:** …and in my heart I know and in my head I know that that's correct. I know that that's right, but it was hard and it was hard to be positioned that way I think.