



Thinking about children and adolescents' use of social media

Dr Dawn Watling
Department of Psychology



ROYAL
HOLLOWAY
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON



@Dawn_Watling

8 Feb, 2018

The
Guardian

How can I control my child's social media use?



Julia has a problem with her 14-year-old son's use of Instagram and Gmail and would like to take control of his accounts



Who is online?

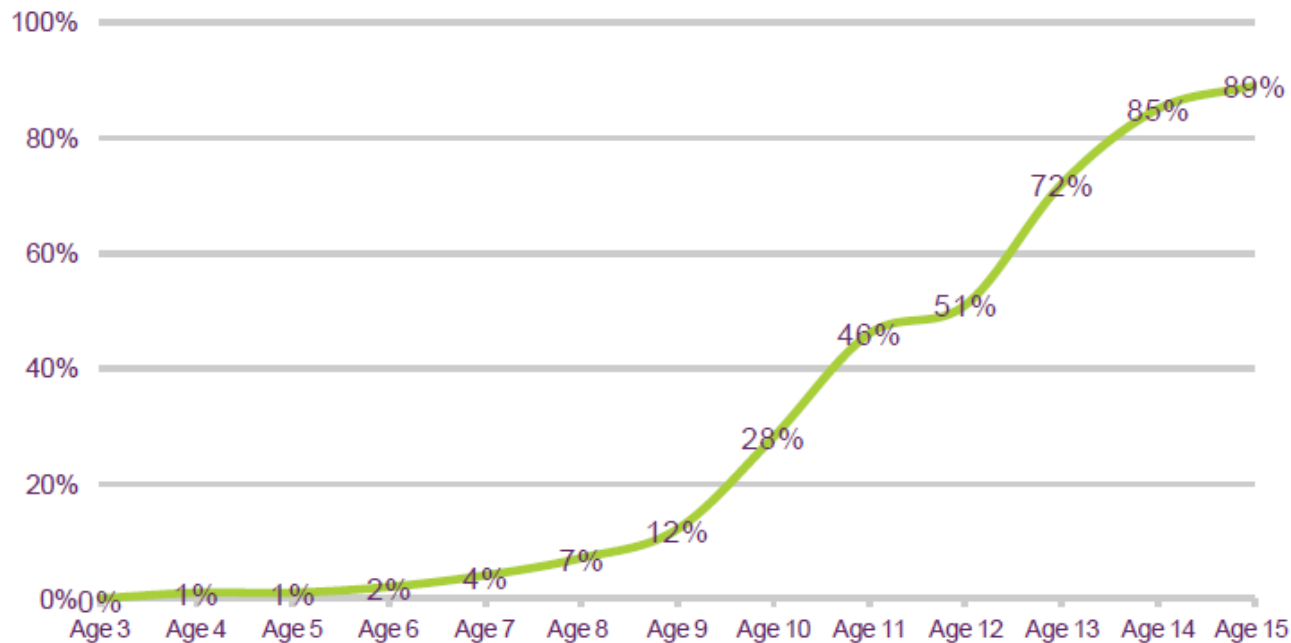
53% 3-4 year olds
79% 5-7 year olds
94% 8-11 year olds
99% 12-15 year olds

(Ofcom, 2017)

▲ 'Why do social media sites such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook etc deem children "adults" in the vast and dangerous world of technology?' Photograph: Caiaimage/Paul Viant/Getty Images/Caiaimage

Who has a social media profile?

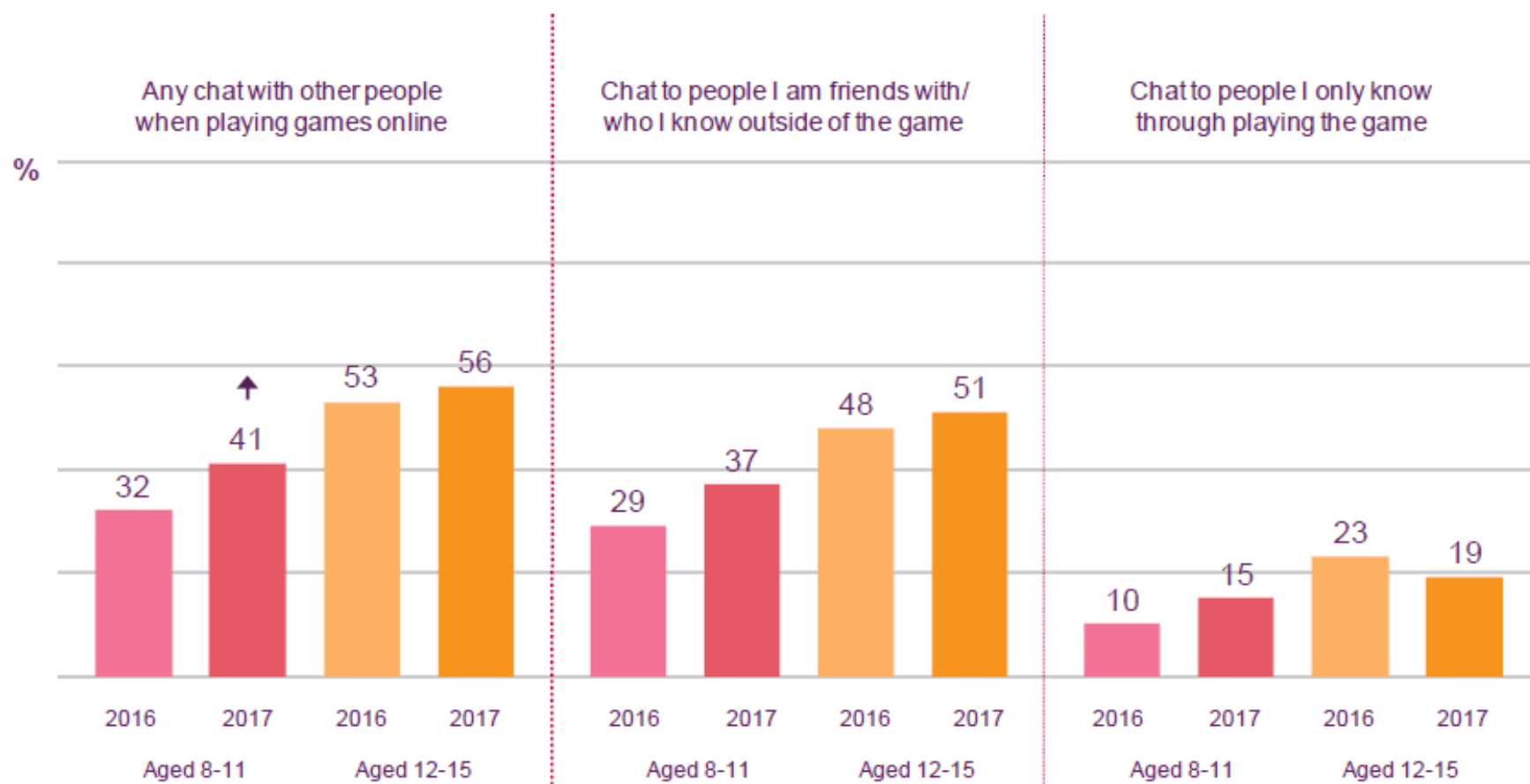
Figure 46: Incidence of having a social media profile, by age of child: 2017



(Ofcom, 2017; Pew Research Centre, 2017)



Figure 52: Use of chat features when playing games online: 2016 and 2017



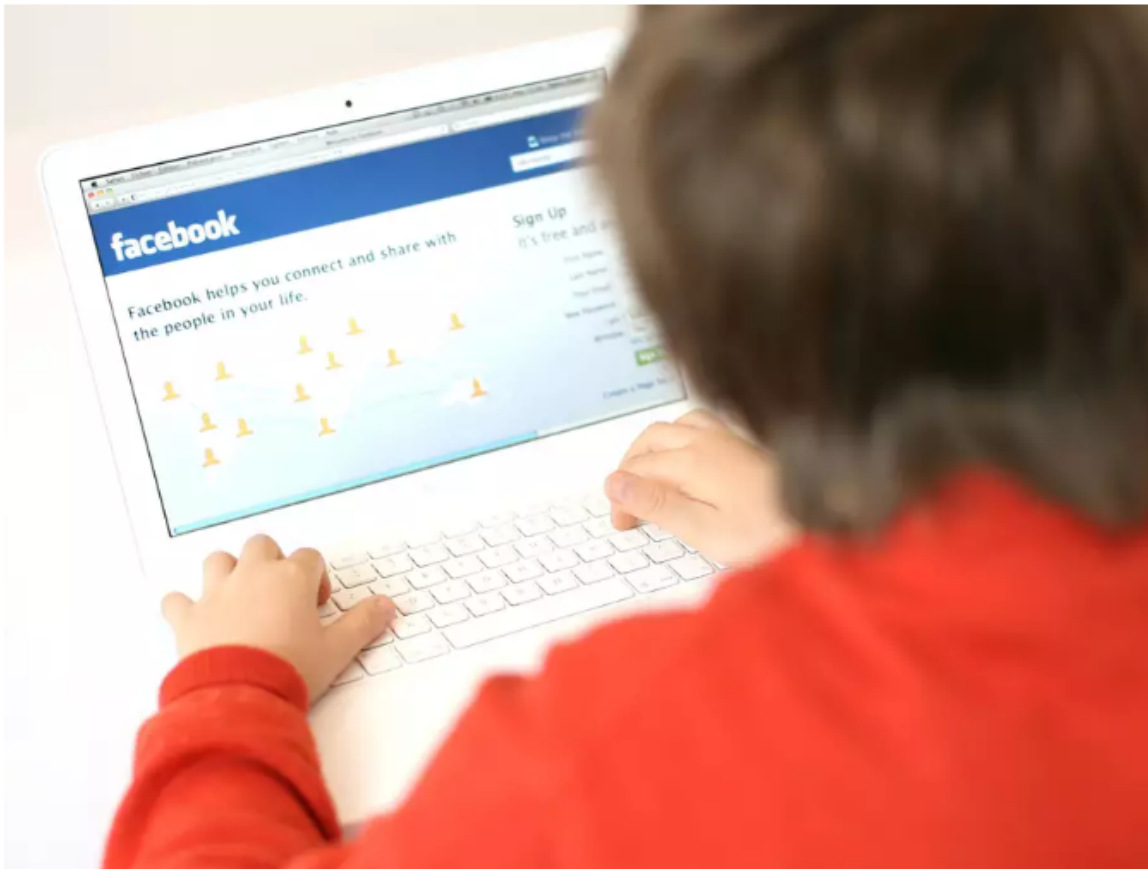
Children facing 'significant emotional risk' on social media, report warns

Failure to act risks leaving generation of youngsters growing up chasing 'likes' and increasingly anxious due to constant demands of social media, warns Children's Commissioner

May Bulman Social Affairs Correspondent | @maybulman | Thursday 4 January 2018 01:14 | 4 comments



Like Click to follow
The Independent Online



13% of 12-15 year olds "agree that getting likes or followers is more important to them than keeping their posts, comments or photos private ... [and that] there is pressure to look popular on social media 'all the time'."

(Ofcom, 2017)

The Children's Commissioner has issued a stark warning in a report showing that pupils aged 10-12 years old are increasingly concerned about their online image (Rex)

Are there benefits of social media use?



ROYAL
HOLLOWAY
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON

Create (& manage) impressions

- Identity exploration

Wider social network

- Access to friend groups
- Greater perceived support

Wider support network

- Greater access to support and support lines



(Best et al., 2014)



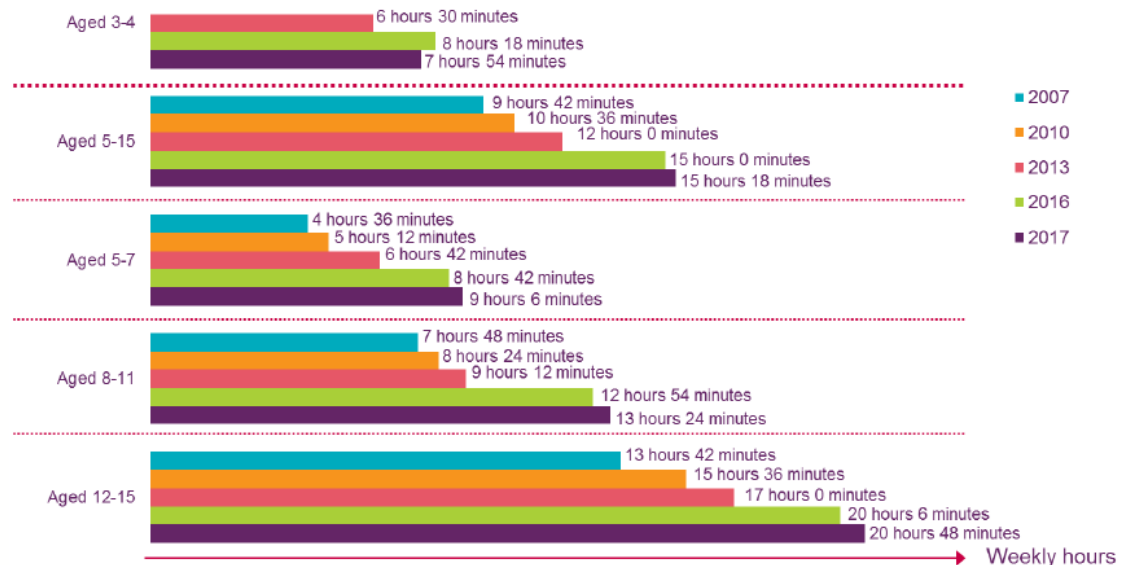
(Best et al., 2014; Davis, 2012; Hundley & Shyles, 2010)

What enhances of likelihood of experiencing the risks?

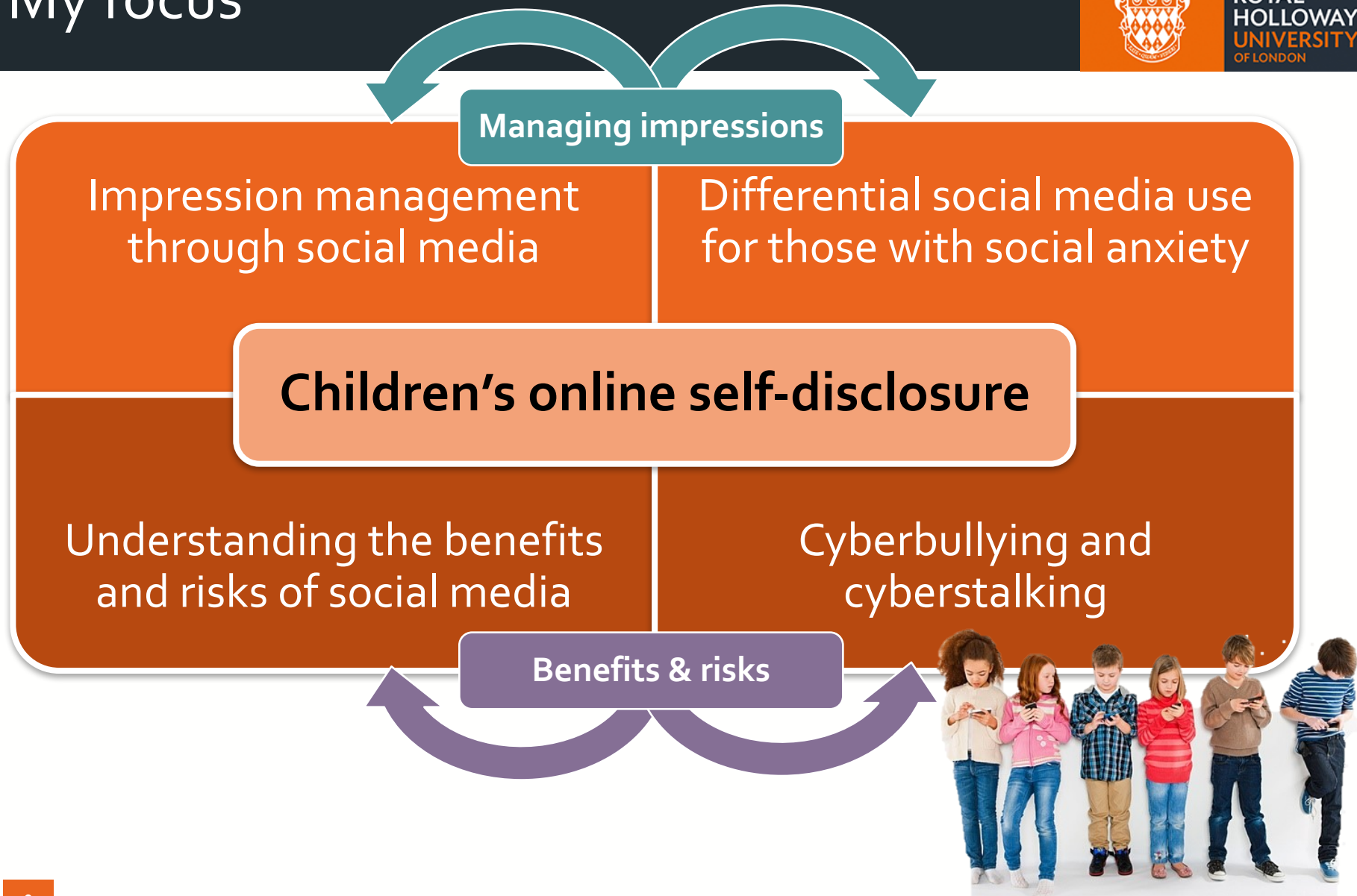


- Time spent online
- Passive, rather than active, use of SNS sites

Figure 3: Estimated weekly hours of internet consumption by age, at home (2007, 2010, 2013) or elsewhere (2016, 2017)



(Best et al., 2014; Burke et al., 2010; Ofcom, 2017)

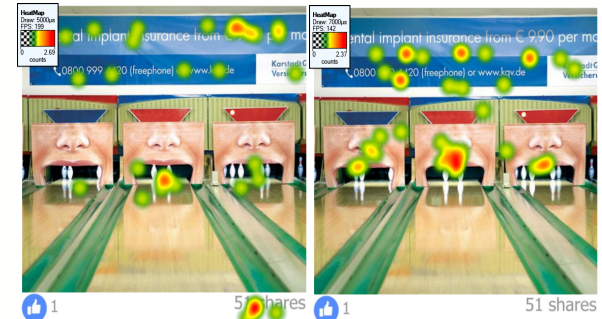


My focus: Managing impressions



ROYAL
HOLLOWAY
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON

- Identity exploration and impression management... Present real, ideal, or fake self (Michikyan et al., 2014)
- Sharing information online: Adults (M = 23 years) higher in fear of negative evaluation use social cues for deciding about presenting information (Poon & Watling, 2017)
- Upcoming projects:
 - Instagram filters



Participants high in FNE (left) looking more at shares than participants low in FNE (right) in **High Share condition**



My focus: Social media Benefits & Risks



ROYAL
HOLLOWAY
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON

- Children's understanding of the benefits and risks
 - Adolescents don't see risky behaviour as 'risky'
 - Parents aren't always aware of children's activities online
- Cyberbullying & cyberstalking from an interdisciplinary perspective
 - 45% of 12-15 year olds report they have seen hateful content directed at groups of individuals; 60% say they ignored it (Ofcom, 2017)
 - Younger children are more likely to report than older children



Cyberbullying and cyberstalking



ROYAL
HOLLOWAY
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON

Project Launch

Hub for research into Intergenerational Vulnerability to Exploitation

Protecting adolescents from cyberbullying and cyberstalking

11th June 12-4pm, Senate House, London



@HiveRhul



Summary and implications



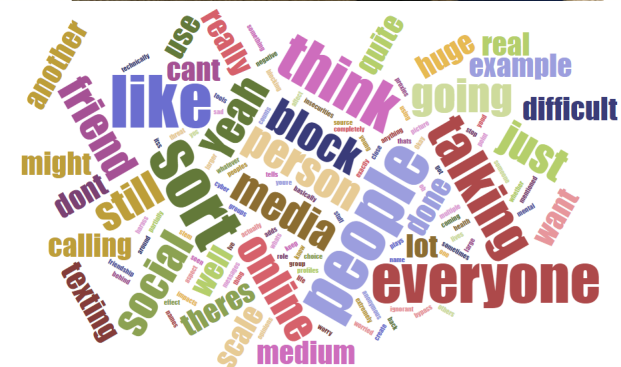
ROYAL
HOLLOWAY
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON

Children under 13 are aware of and using social media

There are benefits to social media use (e.g., allows people to 'experiment' with possible selves)

There are risks to social media use (many are related to time spend online)

Need to work together to establish effective programmes to support online safety (including changing social norms)





Workshop this afternoon...

Online safety: Promoting children and adolescents' safe social media use



ROYAL
HOLLOWAY
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON



*Thank you for
listening.*

Please contact me with any questions or if you would like
to get involved in any of our work!

Dawn.Watling@rhul.ac.uk

Find out more about our research:

Social Development Lab: www.pc.rhul.ac.uk/sites/social_development/

HIVE: www.pc.rhul.ac.uk/sites/hive/



ROYAL
HOLLOWAY
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON



@Dawn_Watling
@SocDevLabRHUL
@HiveRhul

References



Best, P., Manktelow, R., & Taylor, B (2014). Online communication, social media and adolescent wellbeing: A systematic narrative review. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 41, 27–36.

Burke, M., Marlow, C., & Lento, T. (2010). Social network activity and social well-being. *Postgraduate Medical Journal*, 85, 455-459

Davis, K. (2012). Friendship 2.0: Adolescents' experiences of belonging and self-disclosure online. *Journal of Adolescence*, 35, 1527-1536.

Hundley, H. L., & Shyles, L. (2010). *US Teenagers' Perceptions and Awareness of Digital Technology: A Focus Group Approach*. New Media & Society.

Michikyan, M., Dennis, J., & Subrahmanyam, K. (2015). Can you guess who I am? Real, ideal, and false self-presentation on Facebook among emerging adults. *Emerging Adulthood*, 3, 55-64.

Ofcom (29 November, 2017). Children and parents: Media use and attitudes report. Retrieved on 29/01/2018 from https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/108182/children-parents-media-useattitudes-2017.pdf