

Youth-Nex 9th Conference

Thriving Youth in a Digital World:

Understanding the Role of Digital Technology in Positive Youth Development

*co-sponsored by UVA's
Thriving Youth in a Digital Environment (TYDE)*

#YouthDigitalFutures24



UNIVERSITY
of VIRGINIA

SCHOOL of EDUCATION
and HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
YOUTH-NEX



UNIVERSITY
of VIRGINIA

TYDE
Thriving Youth in a
Digital Environment



Youth-Nex 9th Conference

Co-Sponsored by TYDE

October 8 & 9, 2024
#YouthDigitalFutures24

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Event Hashtag:

#YouthDigitalFutures24

Youth-Nex research is supported by a grant from Philip Morris USA, an Altria Company. We gratefully acknowledge this important support. The work of Youth-Nex is solely determined by itself and Youth-Nex does not represent the official views of the sponsor.

This event will be audio/video recorded for posting on the Youth-Nex and TYDE websites, and covered by news media. Video and photos will be posted on the Youth-Nex and TYDE websites, social media channels and publications during and after the event. Participation assumes acknowledgement of this.



THRIVING YOUTH IN A DIGITAL WORLD

When you picture a teenager in 2024, the chances are good that you see them holding a cell phone or some other digital device. From TikTok to text threads, we hear a lot about young people's uses of digital technology. At the same time, we know that young people have been experiencing increasing rates of depression, anxiety, and other mental health struggles. Often these two trends are assumed to be joined at the hip. Yet the research is more complicated than often presented in popular discourse. It is important for adults to understand how youth are engaging social media, cell phones, and other emerging technologies in terms of not only their impact but also their potential, both positive and negative. We need to learn more about where and when different technologies cause harm, where and when they can support positive outcomes, and where and when they are simply another context of youth development.

This conference is a collaboration between Youth-Nex and UVA's Thriving Youth in a Digital Environment (TYDE) Grand Challenge. TYDE seeks to advance understanding of the role of digital technologies in healthy youth development by fostering a collaborative, interdisciplinary community conducting cutting edge research about both the impact of digital technology on healthy and unhealthy youth development, and its potential to advance intervention and prevention solutions. TYDE's aim is to move the field from fear of digital technologies to facts about how youth (aged 11-25) use digital technologies and their impact on youth mental and behavioral health, to fix via evidence-based interventions to support youth healthy development.

We are also excited to introduce you to our first ever youth co-chair of a Youth-Nex conference! Zaharra C. is a high school student who also serves on the Youth-Nex *Youth Advisory Board*. Along with our other faculty co-chairs, Drs. Channing Mathews, Mike Lyons, and Stef Sequiera, she helped organize the agenda you see before you.

Over the next day and a half, we will hear from youth, practitioners, researchers, and policy makers about how youth are using technology in their day-to-day lives, digital technologies' potential role in youth mental health equity, and how policy makers are thinking about digital technology in relation to supporting healthy youth development. We will also hear from researchers who have different interpretations of the current data, and from youth and adults who have different experiences and opinions about how we should think about, regulate, and engage with technology as it relates to youth.

We hope that you will come away from this conference with new ideas for how you will continue to engage in the important work of supporting positive youth development, with or without technology!

On behalf of all our Conference Co-Chairs,

Nancy Deutsch, Ph.D.
UVA Professor; Youth-Nex Director; TYDE Co-Director





DAY ONE

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8TH, 2024

Alumni Hall, University of Virginia

AUDIENCE DISCUSSION MAY FOLLOW EACH PANEL. TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CONVERSATION, PLEASE RAISE YOUR HAND AND A MICROPHONE WILL BE BROUGHT TO YOU.

9:00 am - 9:45 am: REGISTRATION & BREAKFAST

9:45 am - 10:15 am: WELCOME

10:15 am - 11:00 am: PANEL 1 - *Youth Voices on Mental Health, Digital Technology & Positive Youth Development*

In this panel, the presenters are youth who will be sharing more about their experiences, perspectives, and ideas around the larger conference topic. They will set a foundation for the conference, including future panels and discussions, so that we are grounded in youth voices and their own agency.

Moderator: Zaharra C. (Conference Co-Chair)

Reanna V. (Youth Presenter)

Aarya K. (Youth Presenter)

Susitna V. (Youth Presenter)

Gael Aitor (Astro Studios)

11:00 am - 11:15 am: BREAK

11:15 am - 12:00 pm: PANEL 2 - *Digital Spaces and Youth Identity Development: What is the Role of Digital Technology in the Lives of Teenage Youth?*

Engaging youth experts in academic and practice spaces, this panel will unpack how digital technology can facilitate and impede adolescents' understandings of who they are and their role in today's society. Specifically, panelists will discuss how social media, storytelling, and opportunities to explore the complexities of race and activism can positively serve youth of color. Panelists will also discuss how digital spaces can serve as tools for belonging and connection, and provide recommendations to youth, parents, and practitioners for leveraging digital spaces as tools to improve adolescent well-being.

Moderator: Ashleigh Greene Wade, Ph.D (University of Virginia)

Vanessa V. Volpe, Ph.D (North Carolina State University)

Henry Willis, Ph.D (University of Maryland, College Park)

Alisha J. Hines, Ph.D (Center for Scholars & Storytellers @ UCLA)

Susitna V. (Youth Presenter)

12:00 pm - 12:45 pm: PANEL 2 DISCUSSION



DAY ONE

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8TH, 2024

12:45 pm - 1:45 pm: LUNCH

1:45 pm - 2:30 pm: RESEARCH POSTER SESSION & REFLECTIONS

View research posters and use colored sticky notes to build a conference **KWL** chart by reflecting on:
a) What do I **K**now? What do I **W**ant to Know? What have I **L**earned?

2:30 pm - 2:45 pm: BREAK & SNACK

2:45 pm - 3:45 pm: FACILITATED DISCUSSION

There is widespread concern about the high rates of mental health difficulties affecting adolescents and emerging adults, but considerable debate in the field about the causes of the alarming rates of anxiety, depression, loneliness, and suicidality. Dr. Jonathan Haidt and Dr. Candice Odgers are leading figures in this field but have differing views on what the research really says about the role of social media in supporting or harming youth mental health. To move the field forward and determine how we can best help youth, we need to move beyond sensational news headlines and have real conversations among people who disagree on what the evidence says but share a deep commitment to supporting youth. In this facilitated discussion, Drs. Haidt and Odgers will be interviewed to understand why they draw different conclusions from the research, learn where they agree and disagree, and consider what research is needed to truly move the field forward and get to the solutions we all seek.

Moderator: Bethany Teachman, Ph.D (University of Virginia)

Candice Odgers, Ph.D (University of California, Irvine)

Jonathan Haidt, Ph.D (The Anxious Generation)

3:45 pm - 4:15 pm: QUESTIONS FROM YOUTH

Dr. Nancy Deutsch will facilitate a Q&A with submitted or live questions from youth for Drs. Jonathan Haidt and Candice Odgers.

4:15 pm - 4:30 pm: DAY 1 WRAP-UP & INTRODUCTION OF DOCUMENTARY

4:30 pm - 5:00 pm: DOCUMENTARY & RECEPTION (Optional)

In this youth-made film, teens share their candid feelings about the freedoms and frustrations of social media. This documentary sheds light on teens' everyday digital experience and includes thoughtful advice to parents.





DAY TWO

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9TH, 2024

Alumni Hall, University of Virginia

AUDIENCE DISCUSSION MAY FOLLOW EACH PANEL. TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CONVERSATION, PLEASE RAISE YOUR HAND AND A MICROPHONE WILL BE BROUGHT TO YOU.

8:15 am - 9:00 am: BREAKFAST & WELCOME

9:00 am - 10:15 am: PANEL 3 & DISCUSSION - *Leveraging Digital Technology to Advance Youth Mental Health Equity*

Panelists will discuss how digital technology can improve inclusivity and equity in youth mental health care. Panelists include top researchers working to develop new, culturally affirming interventions, including digital interventions, to improve psychological functioning in youth and families, as well as leading digital creators and activists working to improve youths' relationships with digital technology and mental health. Panelists will discuss how youth are using digital tools to improve their mental health, and what we as researchers, practitioners, caregivers, and policymakers need to consider for digital tools to be effective in addressing the youth mental health crisis. Attendees will learn how digital technology can be used to support mental health and positive youth development in youth with diverse identities and experiences.

Moderator: Stef Sequeira, Ph.D (University of Virginia)

Riana Elyse Anderson, Ph.D, LCP (Columbia University)

Jessica Schleider, Ph.D (Northwestern University)

Gael Aitor (Astro Studios)

10:15 am - 10:30 am: BREAK

10:30 am - 11:15 am: PANEL 4 - *Leveraging Public Policy to Promote Youth Mental Health in a Digital Environment: Challenges & Opportunities*

Panelists will discuss how public policies can address challenges like cyberbullying, screen time, and data privacy that can impact youth mental health. The conversation will focus on how youth, youth-focused organizations, researchers, and policymakers can collaborate to promote healthy youth development in a digital environment. Attendees will gain insights on top concerns facing policymakers and learn strategies for effectively developing policies to influence the digital environment and promote youth mental health.

Moderator: Brooke Lehman, MSW, JD (Capitolworks, LLC)

Vaile Wright, Ph.D (American Psychological Association)

Lakeisha Steele (CASEL)

Rachel Deane, JD (Voices for Virginia's Children)

Reanna V. (Youth Presenter)

11:15 am - 12:00 pm: PANEL 4 DISCUSSION

Discussant: Delegate Laura Jane Cohen (Virginia General Assembly)

12:00 pm - 12:15 pm: CLOSING & CALL TO ACTION

YOUR NOTES

Presenter bios are available online:
<https://tinyurl.com/ConfBios>



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