Digital Media Use Differs Between Transgender and Cisgender Youth

Allen, Brittany[1]; Zhao, Qianqian[2]; Moreno, Megan A.[1]

[1]University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, Department of Pediatrics

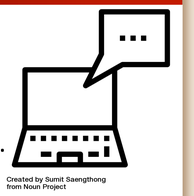
[2]Biostatistics, University of Wisconsin at Madison

UW Health American Family Children's Hospital

Department of Pediatrics
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

BACKGROUND

- Transgender, nonbinary, and gender diverse (TNG) youth often describe exploring identities/communities online.
- Increased digital technology use is connected with loneliness and decreased body image in cisgender youth.
- Little is known about digital technology use for TNG compared to cisgender youth.



Created by Sumit Saengthong from Noun Project

Objective: To compare features of digital technology use of cisgender and TNG youth.

METHODS

- **Survey** of adolescents (ages 13-18) and their parents about digital technology use (Qualtrics Panels)
- **Youth assessments**
  - the short Problematic and Risky Internet Use Screening Scale (**PRIUSS-3**)
  - the Adolescent Digital Technology Interactions and Importance (**ADTI**) scale, with subscales to assess the purpose of use
  - standardized scales for body image, parental support, loneliness, well-being, fear of missing out (**FOMO**)
- **We evaluated**
  - **ADTI scores** compared between gender groups (analysis of covariance)
  - proportions of **subjects at risk for problematic internet use** (PRIUSS-3 >3) (generalized estimating equation analysis)
  - the **correlations** between parent support, body image, loneliness, well-being, and FOMO vs. ADTI and PRIUSS-3 scores (Pearson's correlation analyses)
- All comparisons were **adjusted** for age and parent social media use

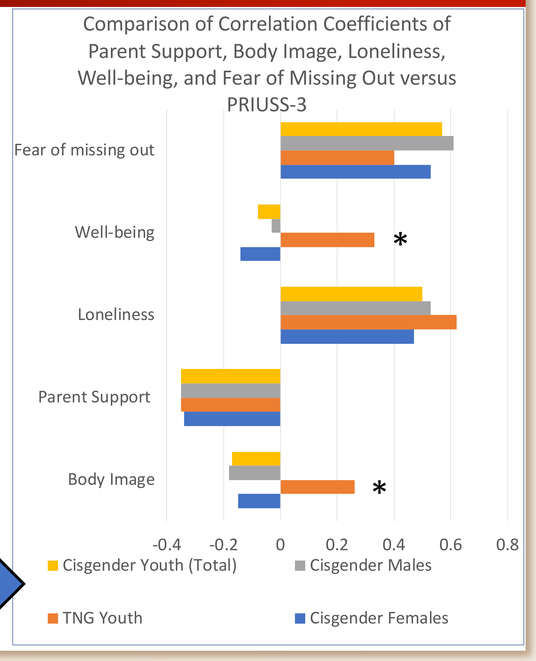
Created by Tomi Triyana from Noun Project

Though ***TNG youth score as having increased risk for problematic internet use***, they also show ***correlation of positive body image and well-being with digital medial use***.

This suggests that ***TNG youth may uniquely benefit from digital experiences***, which may ***challenge current definitions of problematic internet use*** in this population.

RESULTS

- **4575 adolescent-parent pairs**
  - **53 (1.16%) TNG youth**
- Compared to cisgender peers, TNG youth showed
  - **higher probabilities of problematic internet use** (0.91 vs. 0.69, p=0.004)
  - significantly **higher scores for use of technology to explore identity/go outside one's offline environment** (ADTI 2) (mean 18.45 vs. 15.76, p = 0.0085)
- Parental support correlated **positively** with ADTI 2 scores for TNG youth (0.05), though correlated negatively with ADTI 2 scores for cisgender youth (-0.22, p=0.043)
- Problematic internet use scores for TNG youth correlated **positively** with body image and well-being (* p < 0.01) in a **pattern different from cisgender peers**



CONCLUSIONS

- TNG youth are at **increased risk for problematic internet** use compared to cisgender peers, though motivations for digital technology use may differ.
- TNG youth are **more likely to use digital technology to explore identity** and go outside one's offline environment.
- Positive attributes also correlate with certain digital use measures amongst TNG youth, suggesting that **this population may uniquely benefit from digital experiences**.

ADDITIONAL KEY INFORMATION

DEFINITIONS

Transgender (adj.)**:** An umbrella term to describe when a person's gender identity differs from the sex assigned at birth.

Nonbinary (adj.)**:** describes a person whose gender identity is something other than strictly man or woman.

Gender Diverse (adj.)**:** An umbrella term to describe an ever-evolving array of labels people may apply when their gender identity or expression does not conform to the norms and stereotypes others expect.

Cisgender (adj.)**:** describes a person whose gender identity aligns with their sex as signed at birth.

Author Contact Information: Brittany J Allen, MD. 2870 University Avenue, Suite 200, Madison, WI 53705. Phone: 608-265-4358. Email: bjallen@pediatrics.wisc.edu.

Acknowledgements: Thanks to Brad Kerr for his support in reviewing this abstract and poster.