

It's Complicated: Youth, Technology, and Mental Health

Erin Walsh



Spark & Stitch Institute





17%


Common Sense Media, 2022





You aren't alone if:

- + You feel profoundly grateful for technology right now.
- + You feel profoundly worried about the impact of technology right now.
- + Both.



Digital technologies are
not inherently **good** or
bad; they are **powerful**.

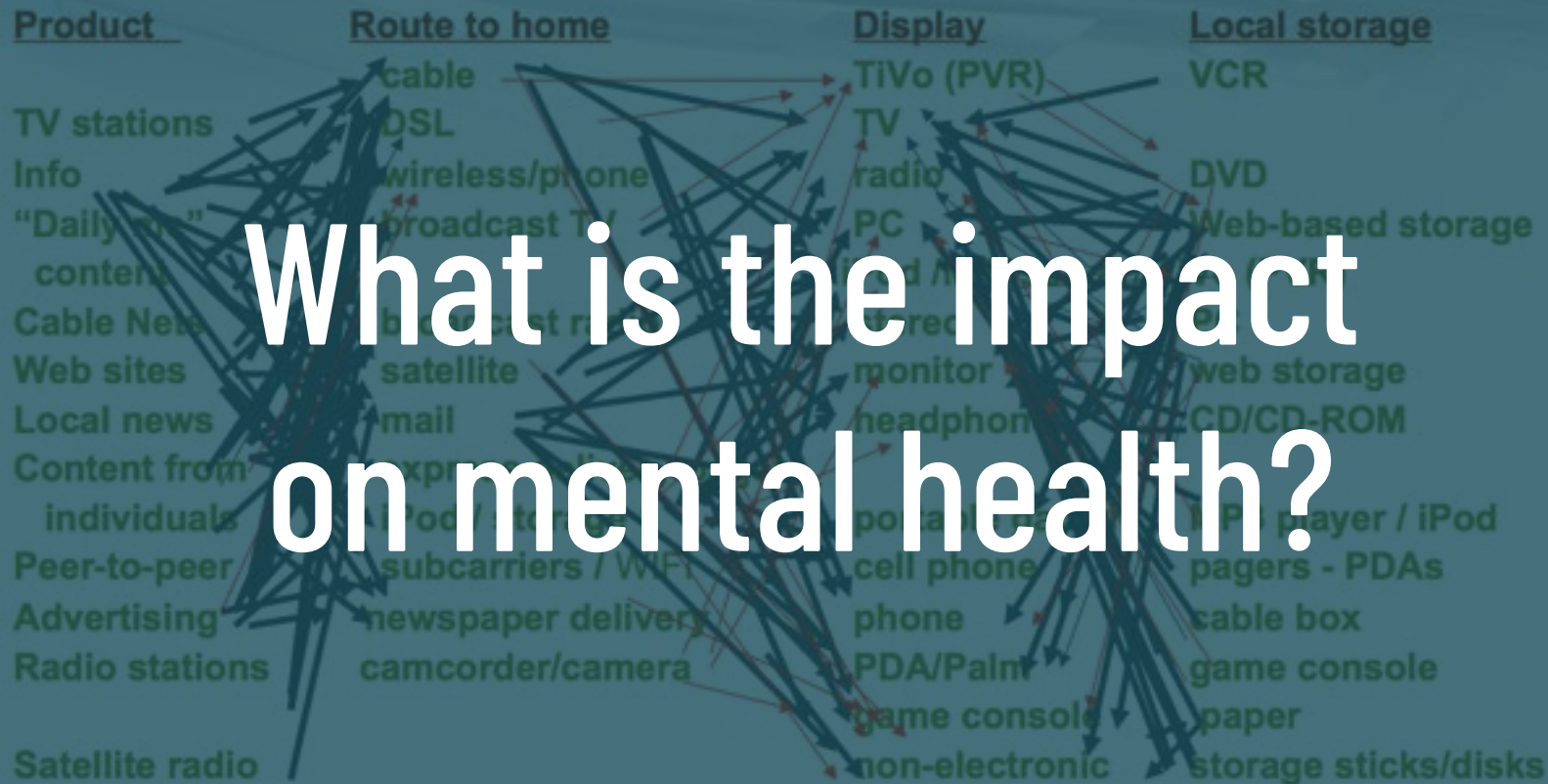


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Ignite Courage and Connection with Kids



What is the impact on mental health?



Adapted from Tom Wolzien, Sanford C. Bernstein & Co





You aren't alone if you are confused by these takeaways:

- + “Quitting Facebook for 5 Days Can Lower Your Stress Levels”
- + “Deleting Facebook Could Be Bad For You”
- + “Deleting Facebook May or May Not Be Bad For Your Mental Health”


As reported by Emily Weinstein and Carrie James in *Behind Their Screens*

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

SEARCH Entire Site

MENBERS TOPICS PUBLICATIONS & DATABASES SCIENCE EDUCATION & CAREER NEWS & ADVOCACY

Home / Psychology Topics / Social media and the internet / Health advisory on social media use in...




Health advisory on social media use in adolescence

Social Media and Youth Mental Health

2023

The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory





It's Complicated



It's Complicated

What are their strengths and vulnerabilities?

How and when are they using it?

How do they feel about it?

How are the platforms designed and supported?

VULNERABILITIES

ASSETS

PLATFORM DESIGN

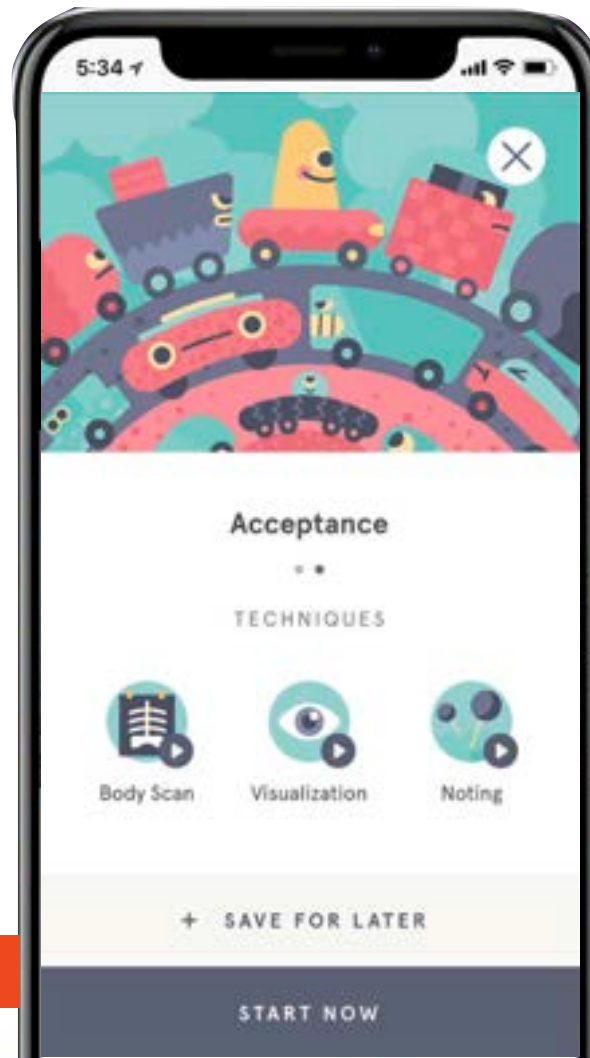
DIGITAL SKILLS

**DIFFERENTIAL ACCESS
TO SUPPORTS**

DIGITAL HABITS



- Ito, Odgers, and Schueller (2020)



<https://bit.ly/common-sense-app-recommendations>

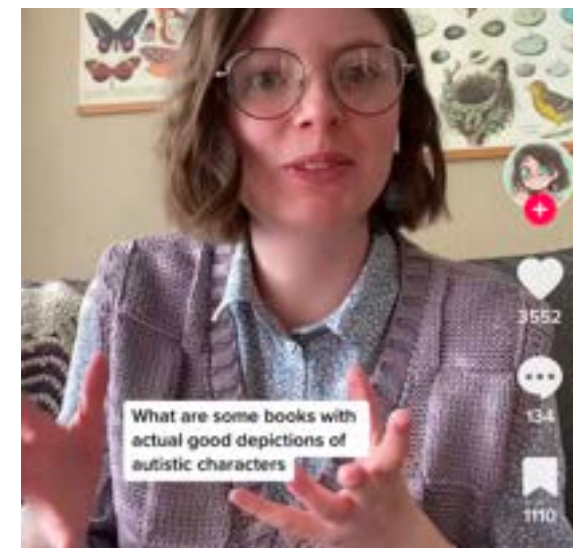
- Common Sense Media, 2021
- Pretorius et al., 2019



@youmediachicago



@hianxiety



#ownvoicesbooks

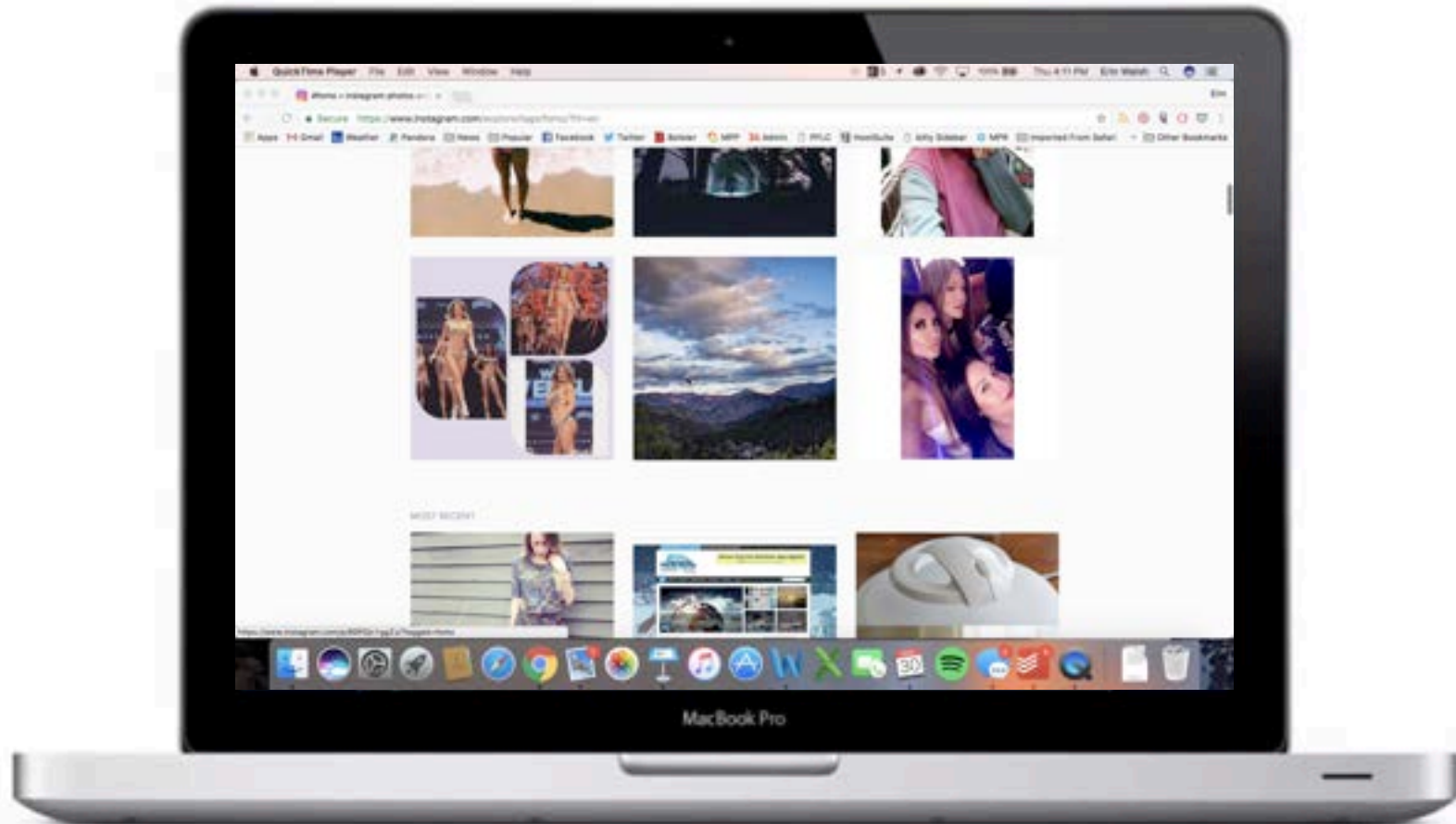
- Ito, Odgers, and Schueller (2020)



VS.



Bessiere K, et al. (2010) , Kross, E (2013)



Highly visual and quantifiable platforms

CONTENT



INTERACTIONS



TIMING





AGE & STAGE

How do we respond?



Adapted from Tom Wolzien, Sanford C. Bernstein & Co



A young girl with dark curly hair, wearing glasses and a white school shirt with a pink backpack, is shown from the chest up. She is holding a smartphone in both hands and has a wide, open-mouthed expression, appearing to shout or yell. The background is a solid yellow color. A dark green horizontal band is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing white text.

LEAVE TO THEIR OWN DEVICES

(under-respond)

A long chain-link fence runs across the frame, supported by vertical metal posts. A horizontal red band is superimposed over the middle of the fence. The text "CONTROL DEVICES" is written in large, bold, white capital letters across the red band. Below it, in smaller white capital letters, is "(over-respond)".

CONTROL DEVICES

(over-respond)

**“The best use of media
is youth-directed and
community supported.”**

- Dr. Katie Davis, Digital Youth Lab



**Co-create boundaries.
Stay connected.
Build bridges.**



Purposeful boundaries.

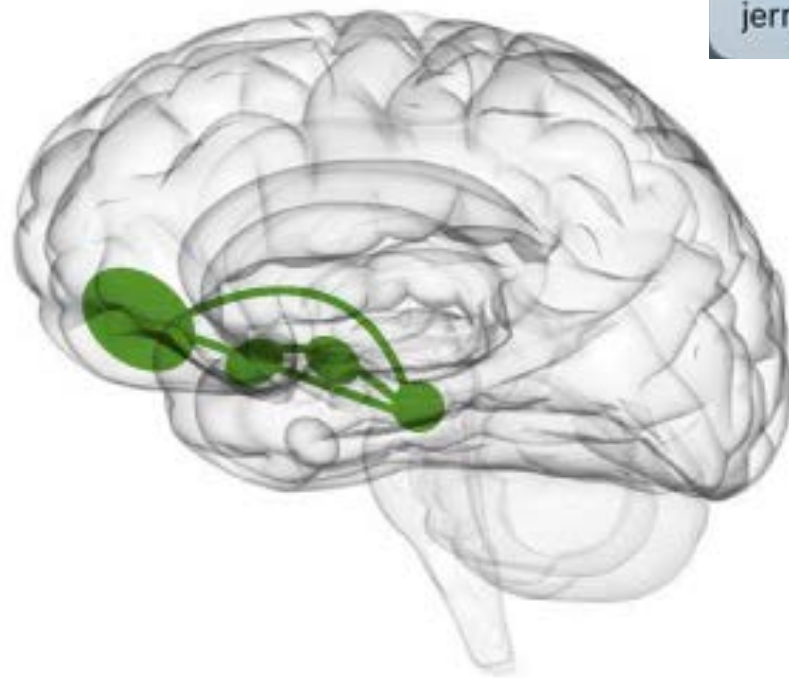




"It keeps me from looking at my phone every two seconds."



The Seeking Brain



Superpower (feat. Frank Ocean)
Beyoncé — BEYONCÉ



INSTAGRAM

now

jerryoftheday just shared a post.





Co-create norms and agreements.







Recharge:
Sleep/Play/Nature



Purpose:
Helping/Community



Connection:
Friends/Family



Learning:
Work Growth



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"I'd Rather" Inventory

David Walsh, Ph.D.

Check each statement you agree with. Feel free to replace video games with phone, internet, or social media in the statements below.

- I'd rather play video games than be with my friends.
- I'd rather play video games than play sports or go to school clubs.
- I'd rather play video games than spend time with my family.
- I'd rather play video games than eat.
- I'd rather play video games than sleep.
- I'd rather play video games than talk on the phone or text.
- I'd rather play video games than go to school or work.
- I'd rather play video games than go to a movie.
- I'd rather play video games than watch TV.
- I'd rather play video games than use the internet.
- I'd rather play video games than listen to music.
- I'd rather play video games than move my body.

List the things you'd rather do than play video games:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Stay connected.



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- + What do you use this app for?
- + Do you get support here you wouldn't otherwise receive?
- + How does it make you feel while you are on? After?
- + Who do you connect with here? When?
- + How would you feel if this space went away?
- + Does it get in the way of things that matter to you?





- Dr. Sherry Turkle

**Permission to pay
attention to the
young person in
front of you.**



Words

Behaviors

Feelings

Somatic symptoms

What is working? What isn't?

- + Concealing use or sneaking use.
- + Overwhelming capacity to handle screen time transitions.
- + "Over-investment" in online feedback.
- + Exposure to hate content or health risk behaviors.
- + Difficulty moving through post-screen blues.
- + Getting in the way of "buckets" for wellbeing.

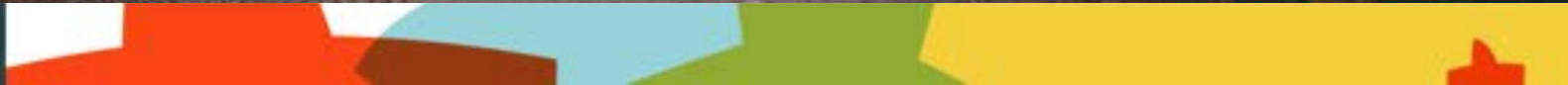
Build bridges.





Bridging the Use Gap: Adults Matter

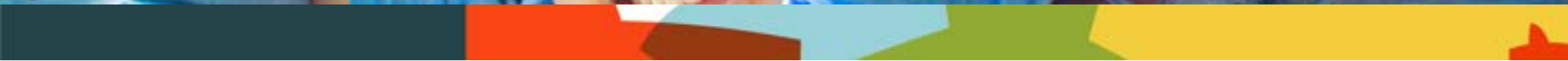






+ Space and support to practice skills for navigating “digital dilemmas” of online life.

+ Common Sense Media - resources and curriculum





Bridging to offline resources and supports.

- Whilehill, J.M., 2013



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- + “I saw your post and wanted to check in with you. Is everything okay?”
- + “Hamza mentioned that you posted some pretty intense stuff on Instagram. I wanted to check in with you about it.”
- + “I want to make sure you have reliable resources when you need them.”

<https://wideopenschool.org/families-and-teachers/family-services/>



VRTALITY 1 2 3
 OVERVIEW UP SKILLS/WORK PLAN SESSIONS FACILITY SESSIONS RESOURCES [LEARN MORE](#)

TEENS + LIBRARIES = POWERFUL COMMUNITIES

Create, find joy, improve mental health, and develop relationships
 by building virtual reality experiences together.

[LEARN MORE](#)

LISTEN AMERICA LIBRARY About Programs Contact Us 

The Clubhouse

WHERE TECHNOLOGY MEETS IMAGINATION




Our award winning Clubhouse program is just **free/reduced cost** high-tech after school program for teens living in underserved communities or in need of financial assistance. Anyone wishing to join The Clubhouse program must show financial need through this

Stories by Youth Authors. **Published.**

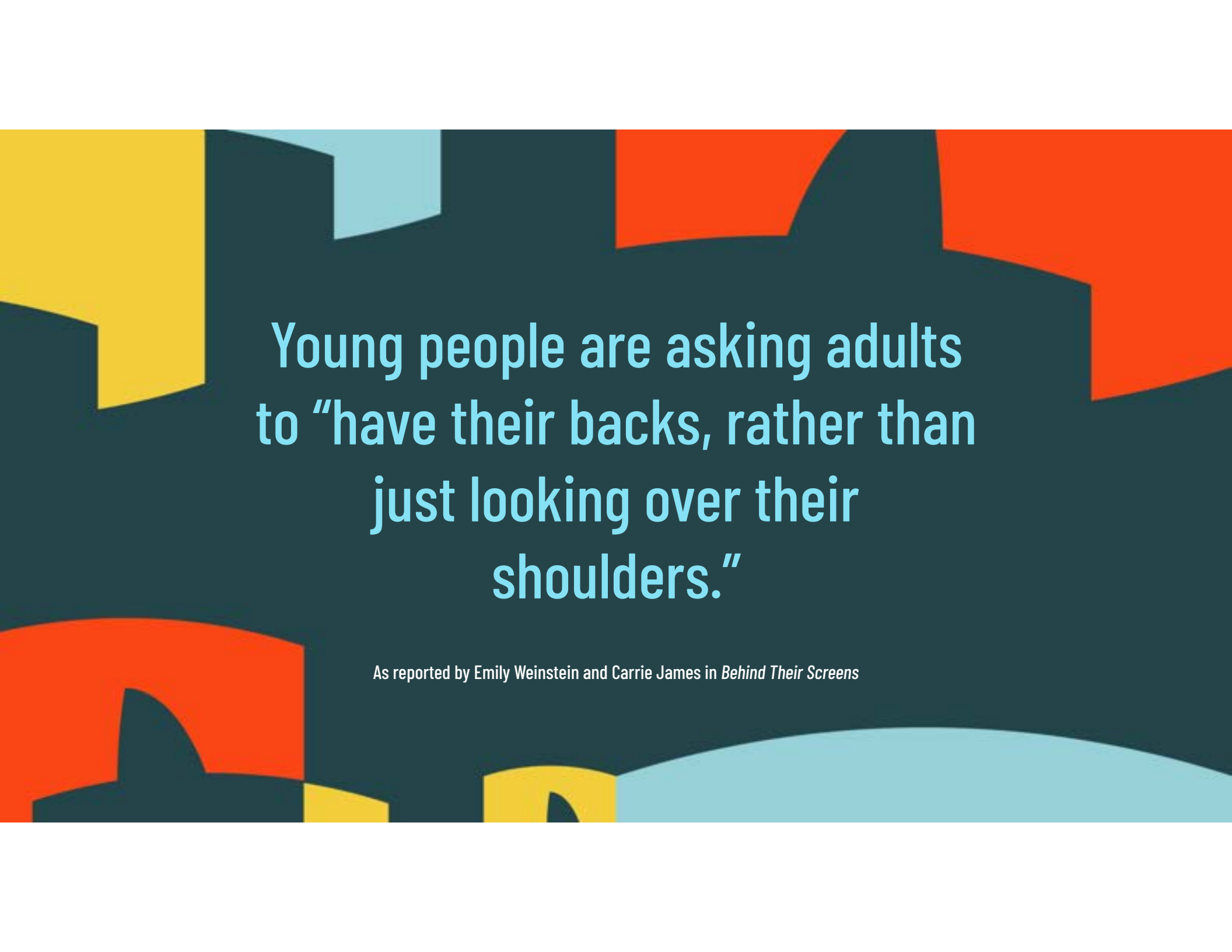
Novely is on a mission to get e-books by underrepresented youth published and taught in the classroom, so that every student can feel seen and inspired by what they read in school.

[Read the Library](#)




experienceCRAFT

Register for ExperienceCraft, a world in Minecraft built with and for grieving kids!



Young people are asking adults
to “have their backs, rather than
just looking over their
shoulders.”

As reported by Emily Weinstein and Carrie James in *Behind Their Screens*



**TEXT
SPARK
to
66866**



• CONNECTED •

How to Show Up for Your Kids
in the Digital Age



By Erin Walsh



sparkandstitchinstitute.com/connected-enroll-now