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Logging On: Digital Media Use in Youth

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Objectives

- Review current data regarding the online presence of youth
- Explore potential pros & cons of digital media use in youth



Terminology

**Digital
Media**

Youth

Use



Digital Media

By 2 yrs, 40% of children have their own tablet, and by 4 yrs 58%

About 1 in 5 children use devices for comfort, at mealtime, or to fall asleep.



Gaming time jumps 65% in four years

FIGURE H. Concerns of parents of 0- to 8-year-olds about screen media

Percent of parents of 0- to 8-year-olds who were at least somewhat concerned about the following

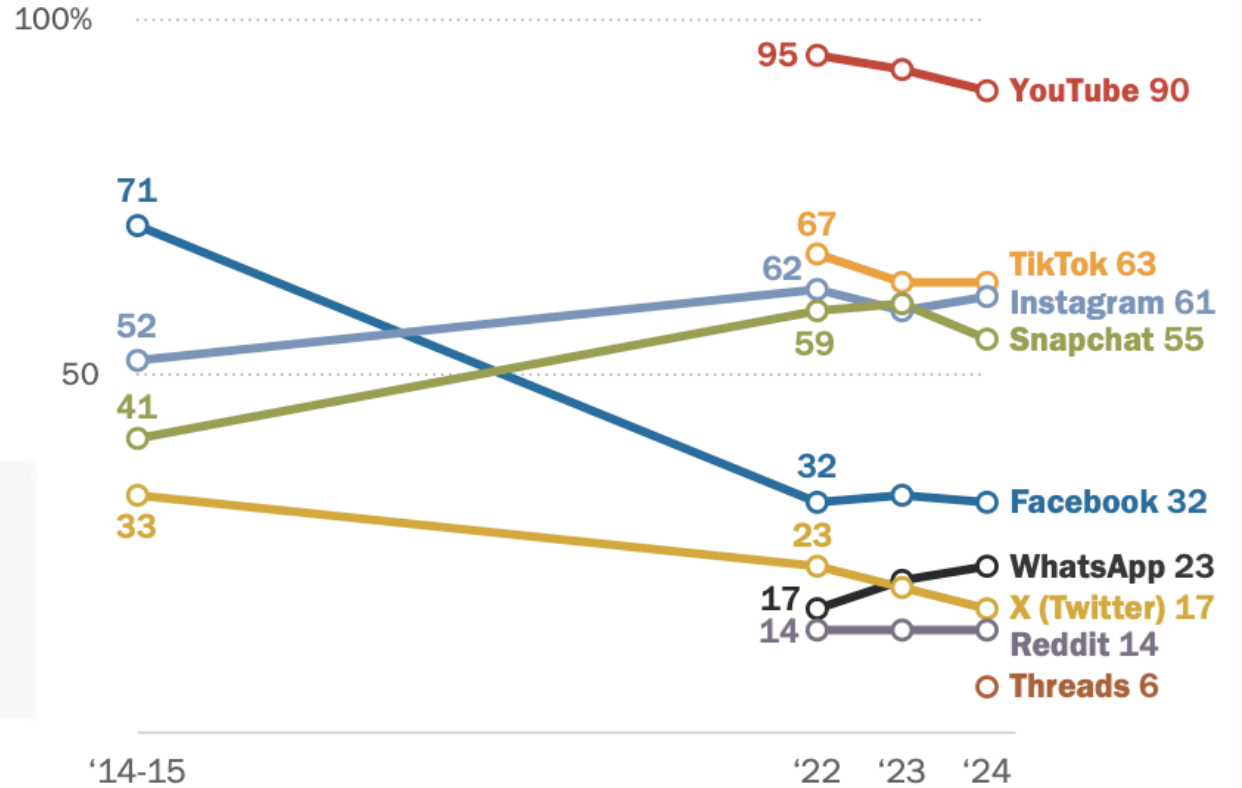


Digital Media



YouTube, TikTok, Instagram and Snapchat top the list for teens

% of U.S. teens ages 13 to 17 who say they ever use the following apps or sites



Note: Those who did not give an answer are not shown.
Source: Survey of U.S. teens conducted Sept. 18-Oct. 10, 2024.
"Teens, Social Media and Technology 2024"

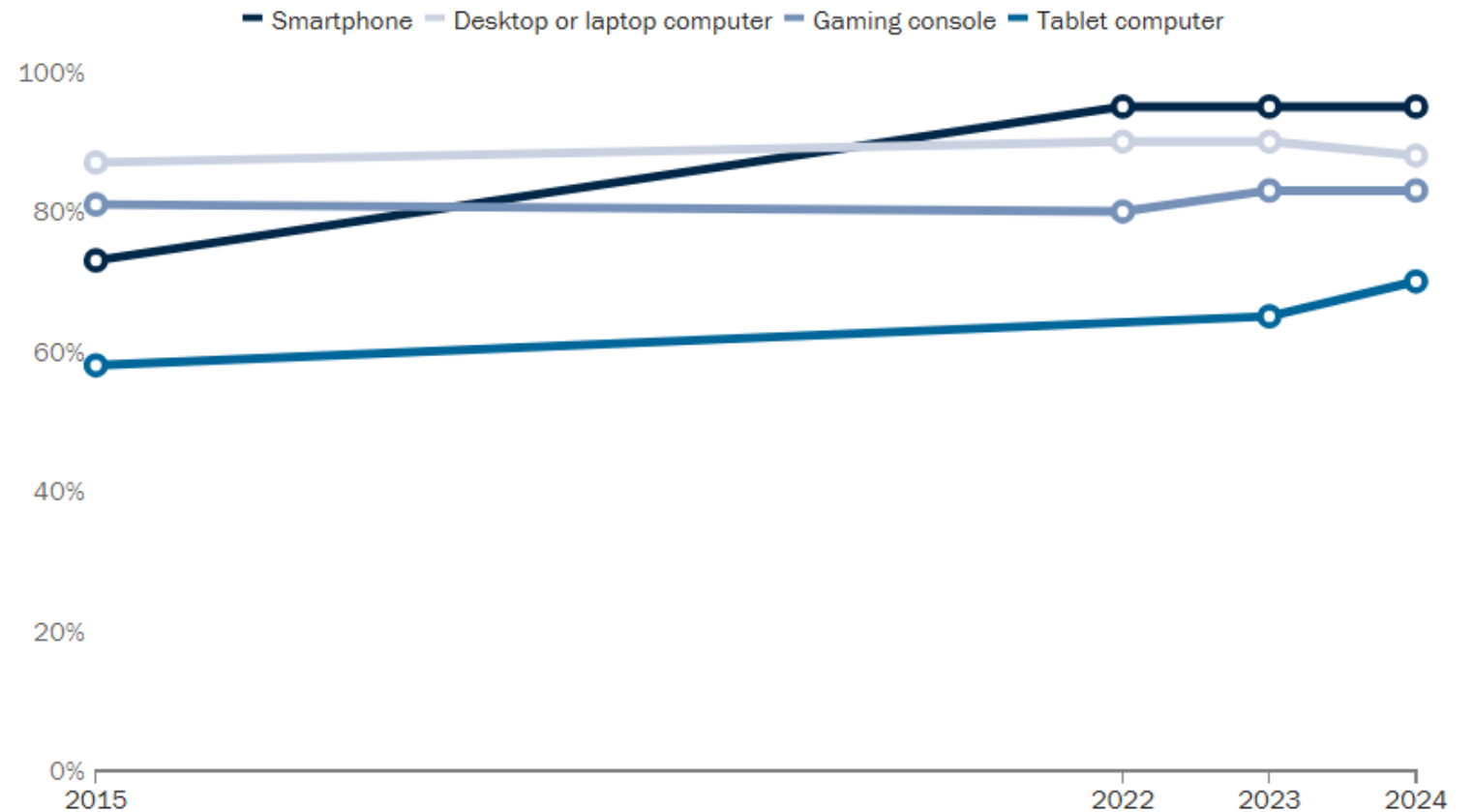
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Use

July, 2025 Fact Sheet

Nearly all teens (95%) report having access to a smartphone, up from 73% in 2014-15. Tablet accessibility has also experienced a 12 percentage point uptick during the same time frame. Access to desktop or laptop computers and gaming consoles has remained stable.

% of U.S. teens ages 13 to 17 who say they have access to the following devices at home

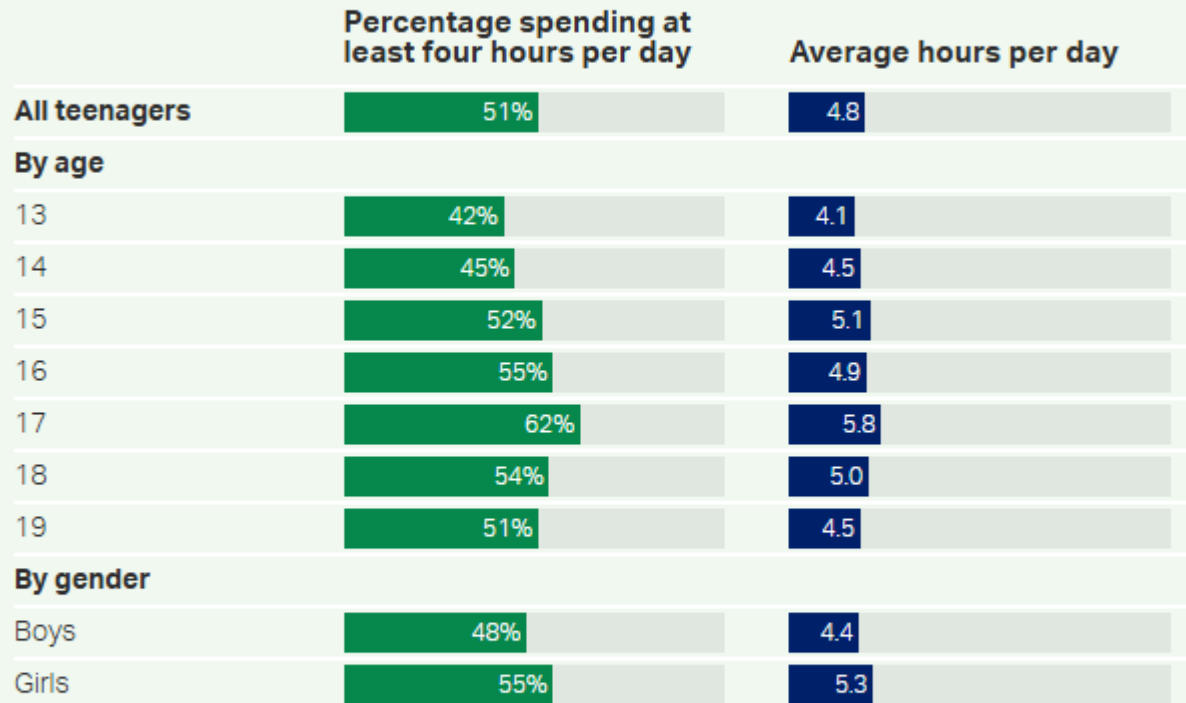


Note: Figures from 2015 depicted above were collected from 2014 to 2015. Those who did not give an answer are not shown. Source: Surveys of U.S. teens conducted 2014-2024.

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U.S. Average Adolescent Screen Time, by Subgroup



June 26-July 17, 2023

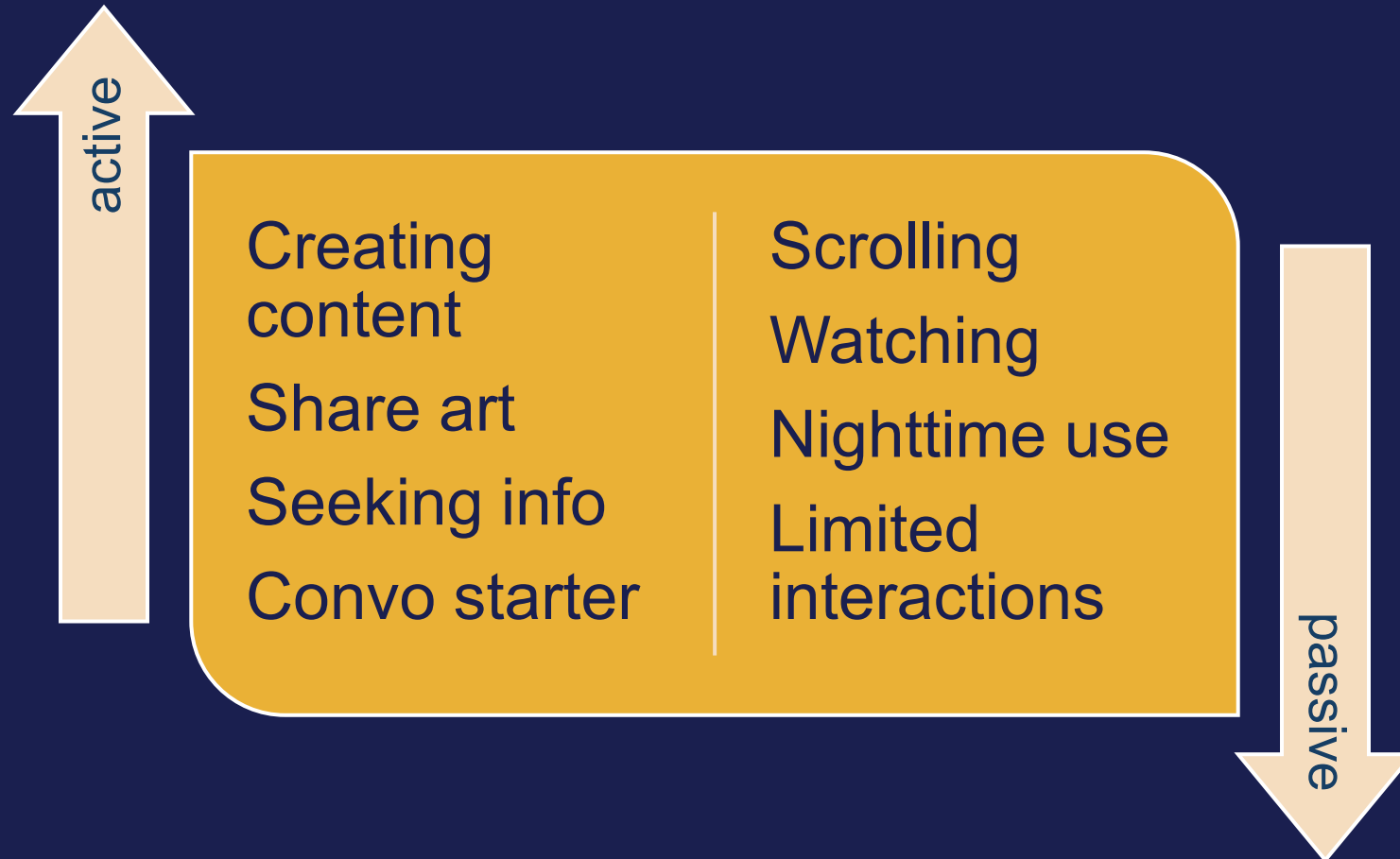
Based on responses from 1,567 U.S. adolescents

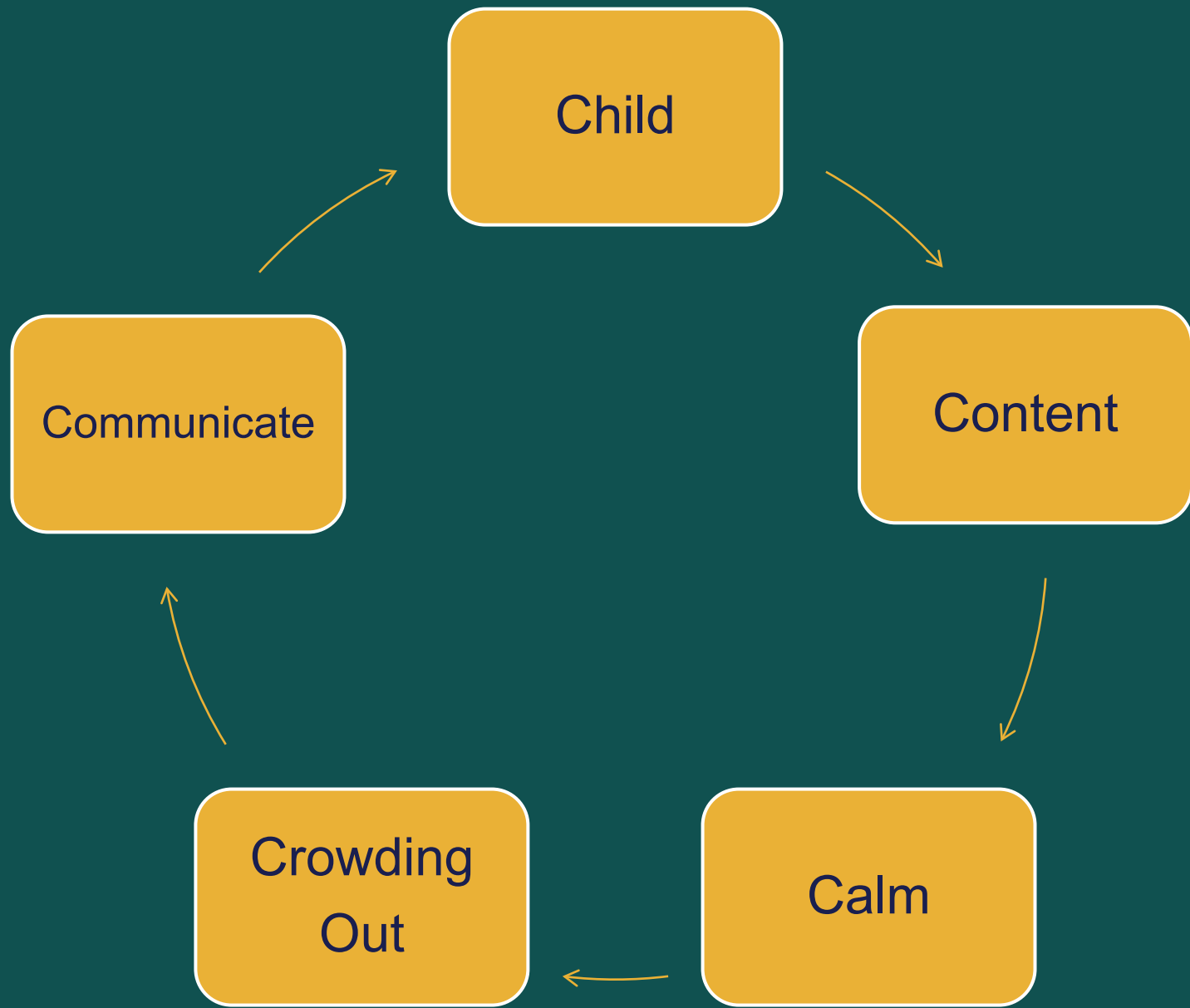
GALLUP FAMILIAL AND ADOLESCENT HEALTH SURVEY • [Get the data](#) • [Download image](#)

GALLUP



Use



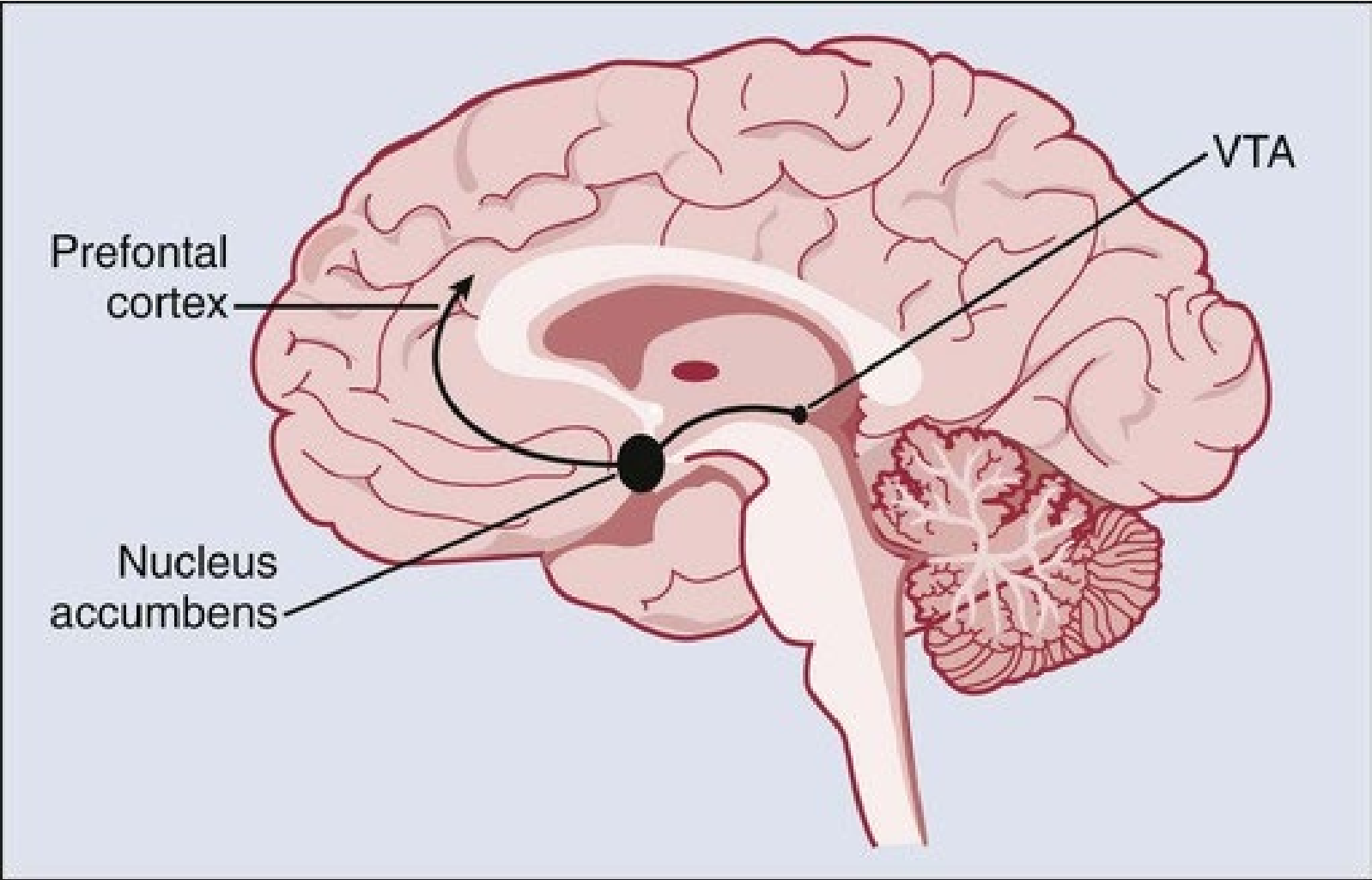


5 C's of Media Use

American Academy of Pediatrics

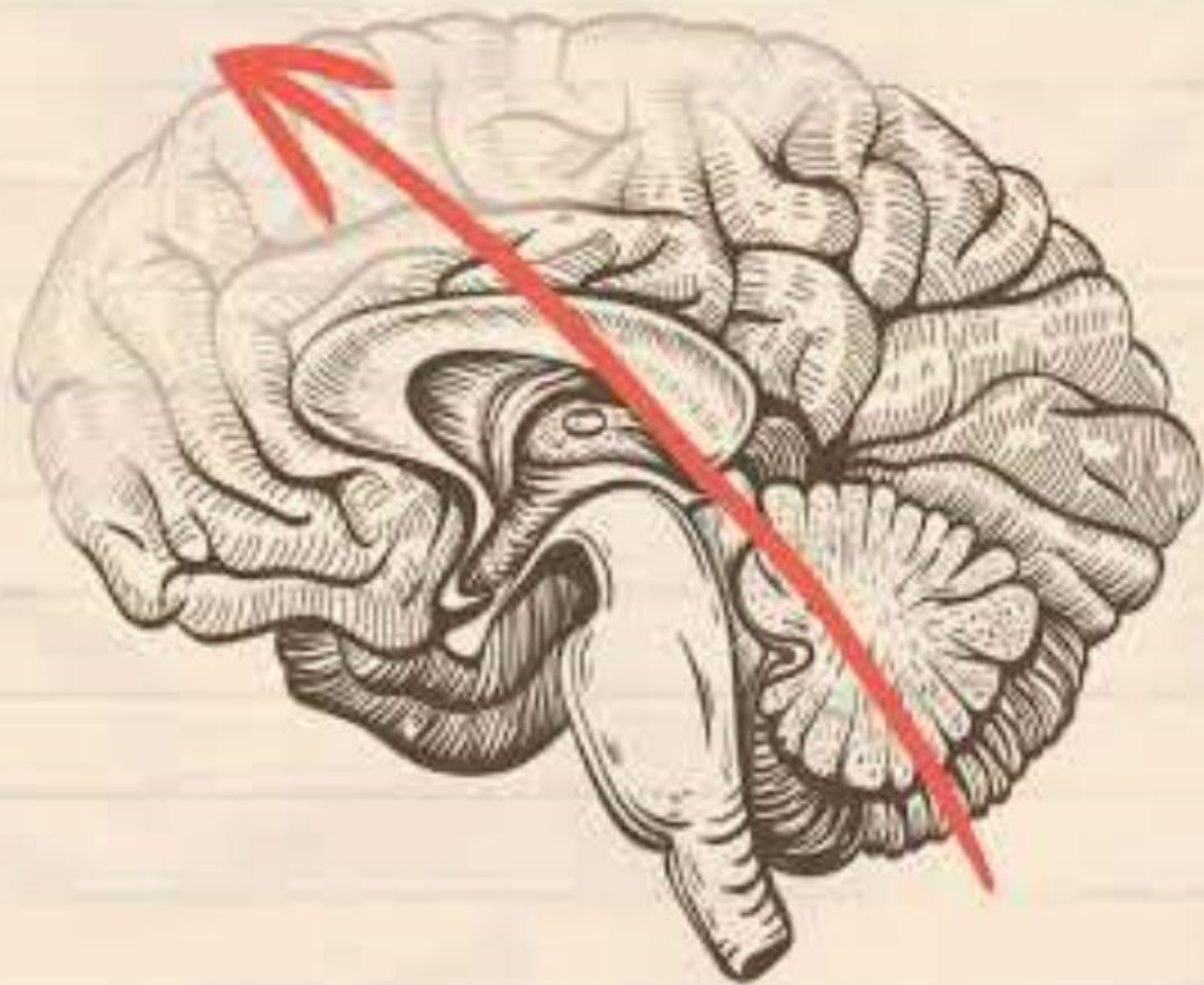


Reward System



Sherman, L. E., Hernandez, L. M., Greenfield, P. M., & Dapretto, M. (2018). What the brain 'Likes': neural correlates of providing feedback on social media. *Social cognitive and affective neuroscience*, 13(7), 699-707.





Digital Media + Youth + Mental Health Relationship

- Mental health of youth is substantially influenced by social media use (Weigle & Shafi, 2024)
- Impact of media use is dependent on personal characteristics, usage type and platform design
(Sala et al, 2024)
- The relationship is complex, multifactorial
 - Who
 - What
 - When
 - Where
 - Why
- Research findings are inconsistent (Agyapong-Opoku et al, 2025)
 - + and - effects

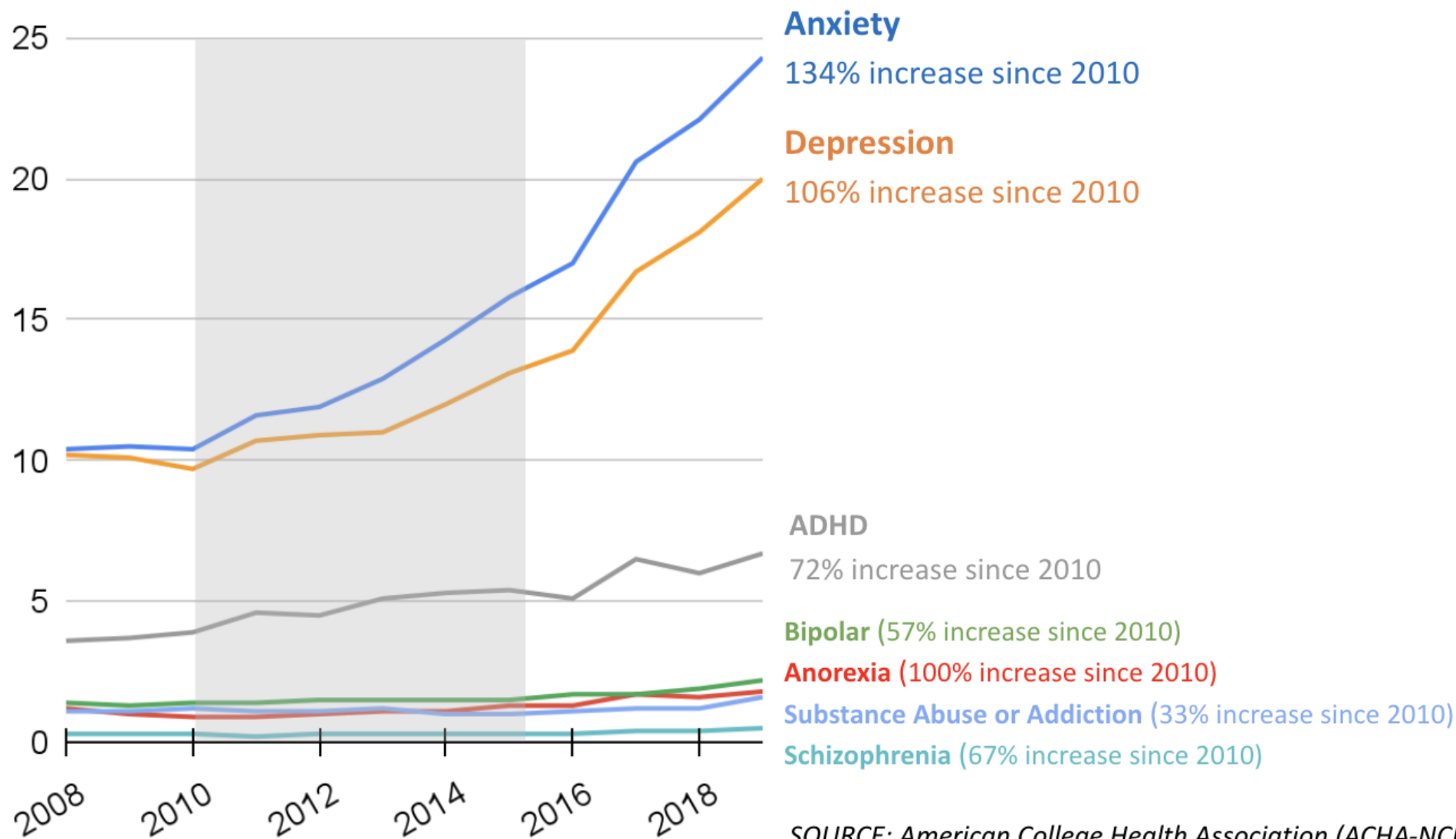


Mental Health

- Critical component of overall well-being that enables us to cope with the stresses of life, realize our abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to our community (WHO)
 - Influenced by anything and impacts everything
 - Personal, family, community, societal levels
 - Protective factors= access to health care, housing, education, social connection
 - Risk factors= adverse childhood experiences, isolation, substance use



Percent of U.S. Undergraduates Diagnosed with a Mental Illness



SOURCE: American College Health Association (ACHA-NCHA II)



Potential Pros



Potential Pros

- Media use is associated with feelings of support and social connectedness
 - Chronic use can result in social disengagement

Biernesser et al. (2020). Social media use and deliberate self-harm among youth: A systematic narrative review. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 116, 105054.

Rafiq & Linden. (2024). Social media and self-concept amount postsecondary student: A scoping review. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior and Social Networking*, 27(3), 194-201.

- Provide a sense of community

Popat & Tarrant. (2023). Exploring adolescents' perspectives on social media and mental health and well-being- A qualitative literature review. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 28(1), 322-337.

- Researchers have used data collected from social media to work to determine if patients are at risk for certain behaviors



Potential Pros

- Ability to acquire diverse relationships
- Easily access support
- Moderate use associated with improved emotional wellbeing
 - Increased time spent correlated with depression
 - Investment rather than time was linked to poorer adjustment, lower self-esteem and depression

Vidal, et al. (2020). Social media use and depression in adolescents: A scoping review. *International Review of Psychiatry*, 32(3), 235-253.

- Approximately 2HR or less/d was associated with greater well-being, improved social relationships and participation in social & political life



Sala et al. (2024). Social media use and adolescents' mental health and well-belling: An umbrella review. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 14, 100404.

Potential Pros

- Not all digital media use had negative outcomes
 - in the context of mutual online friendship, 1:1 communication, and positive and funny online experiences, reduced feelings of loneliness and stress ([Marciano et al., 2022](#))
- Relationship between social media use and wellbeing was negative but not significant in the context of COVID
 - Negative correlation with use and wellbeing for those who use social media as a coping mechanism

Wong, et al. (2022). A four-level-meta-analytic review of the relationship between social media and well-being: A fresh perspective in the context of COVID-19. *Current Psychology*, 43, 14972-14986.



Potential Cons



Potential Cons

- 13% increase in depression for each hour increase in use
- Time spent on media was linearly related to depression
- Observed association was stronger in females

Liu, et al. (2022) Time Spent on social media and risk of depression in adolescents: A dose-response meta-analysis. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19 (9), 5164.

Sala et al. (2024). Social media use and adolescents' mental health and well-being: An umbrella review. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 14, 100404.

- Depression & anxiety was associated with social media use
- A dose-response relationship between time used increased symptoms

Damodar, S, et all. (2022). Trending: A systematic review of social media use's influence on adolescent anxiety and depression. *Adolescent Psychiatry*, 12(1), 11-22.



Potential Cons

- More use and greater number of accounts= more risk for disordered eating behaviors
- Image-based content poses a greater risk to body image
 - Instagram, TikTok

Masseo, et al. Mitigating harms of social media for adolescent body image and eating disorders: A review. *Psychology research and behavior management*, 17 (101514563), 2587-2601.

- Strong relationship between highly visual media & profit-driven media, eating disorders and disordered eating
 - Photo-editing, posting non-real images
 - Time spent on highly visual media was associated with body dissatisfaction and poor mental health in females & males



Potential Cons

- Both longitudinal and cross-sectional studies tend to support the association between SMU and sleep disturbances
 - both subjectively and objectively measured sleep parameters
 - Delayed sleep onset
 - Shorter sleep duration
 - Decreased sleep quality
 - Increased daytime sleepiness
 - Poor sleep was significantly associated with poor mental health outcomes



“We over-protected children in the real world and under-protected them online.” – J. Haidt








Teenagers with higher non-schoolwork daily screen time are more likely to experience a series of adverse health outcomes.

-CDC's Preventing Chronic Disease page

Associations Between Screen Time Use and Health Outcomes Among US Teenagers Volume 22 — July 10, 2025

OHIO AT A GLANCE

 Ohio mandates bell-to-bell phone-free schools.	 Ohio's attorney general is actively holding tech companies accountable.	 Ohio has a law that requires platforms to verify ages and obtain parental consent for users under 16, but a federal court has blocked it from taking effect.	 Ohio does not yet have a reasonable childhood independence law.	 Ohio has not yet passed major laws that regulate harmful tech or hold companies liable.
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Be a thermostat, not a thermometer





Youth and Family Center at Lindner Center of Hope

513-536-HOPE

Adolescent PHP/IOP at Lindner Center of Hope

513-536-0KID



Thank you for
coming!

We'd appreciate
your feedback.



Feedback Survey

