

Fighting Media with Media: Addressing the Youth Mental Health Crisis in Gillette, Wyoming by Meeting Them Where They're At



Thomas Robitaille | RUOP III | 2023 | UW School of Medicine

Hypothesis

- Posting education and mental health resources on social media sites may improve mental health and increase the use of mental health resources among young people in Gillette, Wyoming



Downtown Gillette, Wyoming

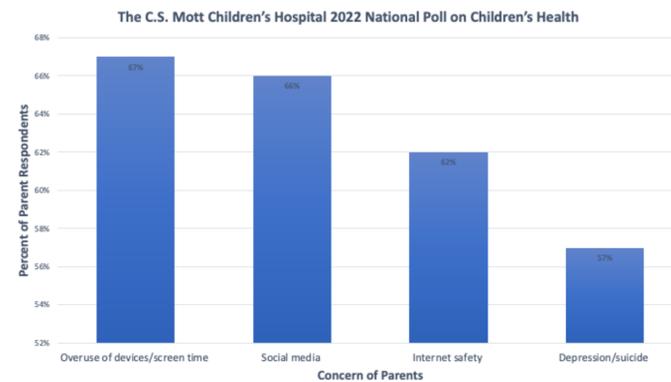


Background

- Population: 32,000 (Gillette), 46,000 (Campbell County)
 - 26.9% of population under the age of 18 (22.9% avg. in WY)
- 23 deaths by suicide per 100,000 people from 2016-2020, as compared to 14 nationally (40% ↑)
- "Energy Capital of the Nation"

Literature Review

- What is affecting youth mental health?**



- U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Murthy concluded social media is negatively impacting youth mental health and called for urgent intervention in his May 2023 public address *Social Media and Youth Mental Health*

- But how do we reach young people with this information? Where is their attention? Can social media be the problem as well as the solution?**

- Interestingly, studies show social media-based interventions aimed to address mental health are well received by young people, with high usability, engagement, and perceived support

- What if these social media-based interventions were informative about the effect of social media itself on mental health?**

Deliverables to Community

- Community Partner: Campbell County Memorial Hospital
- They post public health education blogs on their websites and social media sites, making it an ideal space to post content about mental health and social media
- The delivered blog post includes tips on how to navigate social media to best optimize mental health, as informed by the AAP and U.S. Surgeon General, as well as other tips and tricks to limit screen time
- Also provides links to helpful resources

Your Guide to Social Media and Mental Health: bringing you the most current, research-based tips from the experts

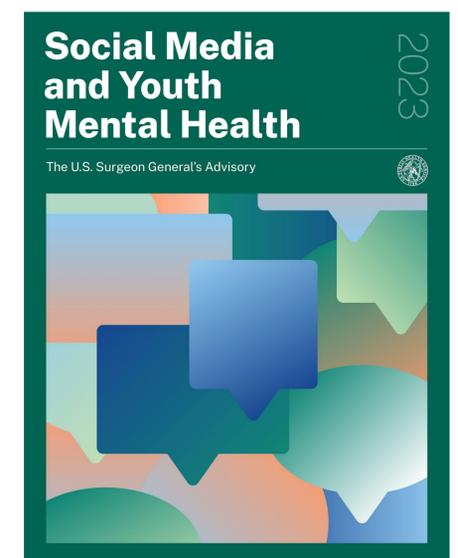
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Blog posted on the CCMH website and social media sites.

Next Steps

- Distributed on the CCMH website and their social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)
- Target audience: young people who use social media
- Ideal behavioral outcome: Improved mental health among young people in Gillette, Wyoming
- More rigorous, high-quality research is needed to establish the overall effectiveness of social media-based interventions on improving mental health outcomes



Dr. Vivek Murthy's ay 2023 address "Social Media and Youth Mental Health"