

New study reveals how teens thrive online: Factors that shape digital success revealed

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A new study co-authored by Sophie Janicke-Bowles, associate professor in Chapman University's School of Communication, sheds light on the role that new and traditional media play in promoting and affecting

character development, emotions, prosocial behavior and well-being (aka happiness) in youth.

Her research and teaching focus on [positive psychology](#), media and new communication technologies, and media and spirituality. [The study](#), published April 13 in *Child Development* (SRCD), investigates how adolescents perceive and engage with digital communication, including connectedness, positive social comparison, authentic self-presentation, civil participation and [self-control](#).

"This was such an amazing research study to be part of as we all are craving more nuanced answers on how digital technologies affect our children," said Janicke-Bowles.

Janicke-Bowles' research contributes to the understanding of digital flourishing (positive social media experiences) among adolescents, highlighting the importance of supportive parental mediation and digital skills in promoting positive digital engagement. Moving forward, interventions aimed at enhancing digital flourishing should consider the role of parental guidance and support in shaping adolescents' online experiences.

- Adolescents who flourish in their digital communication over time are more likely to have parents who know their way around technology and who actively support their children to positively communicate online.
- For adolescents who digitally flourish less, their self-control over digital communication decreases.
- To increase digital flourishing, interventions can aim in assisting adolescents in their control over their digital communication and encourage parents to take an active role in their young adults' digital communication.

These findings underscore the significance of parental influence and support in fostering positive [digital communication](#) experiences among adolescents.

In addition to her recent research, Janicke-Bowles has a distinguished history of exploring the intersection of media and psychology. As a member of a research team from Florida State and Penn State universities, she received a \$1.9 million grant from the John Templeton Foundation to investigate the impact of media content on self-transcendent emotions. Her academic journey, spanning from clinical and media psychology in Germany to mass communication in the United States, underscores her commitment to understanding the profound effects of media on human experiences.

More information: Jasmina Rosič et al, Trajectories of digital flourishing in adolescence: The predictive roles of developmental changes and digital divide factors, *Child Development* (2024). [DOI: 10.1111/cdev.14101](#)

Provided by Chapman University

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