

Digital citizenship under lockdown: promoting healthy use of technology for adolescents growing-up in Perú during COVID-19



Introduction

- **Transitions** is a researcher-practitioner collaboration between UC Berkeley's Adolescent Research Collaborative, Innova Schools, and Common Sense Education.
- We have been working together since 2018 to promote digital citizenship in children and adolescents growing up in Latin America (Perú and México) through a school curriculum that is culturally appropriate and that builds on principles from developmental science.
- The current COVID-19 crisis forced us to pivot quickly and redesign our curricula to promote Wellbeing during a crisis, highlighting the role technology plays while under lockdown.

2 Design Wellbeing During Lockdown curriculum

Population

- Innova Schools, Perú
- n = 20,000
- Low- and middle-income urban youth, 4th to 11th grade

Perú

- Hard hit by COVID-19
- Very stringent lockdown enforced by the army
- Deteriorating economy.
- Students in remote instruction for the full school year



Curricula

Topics:

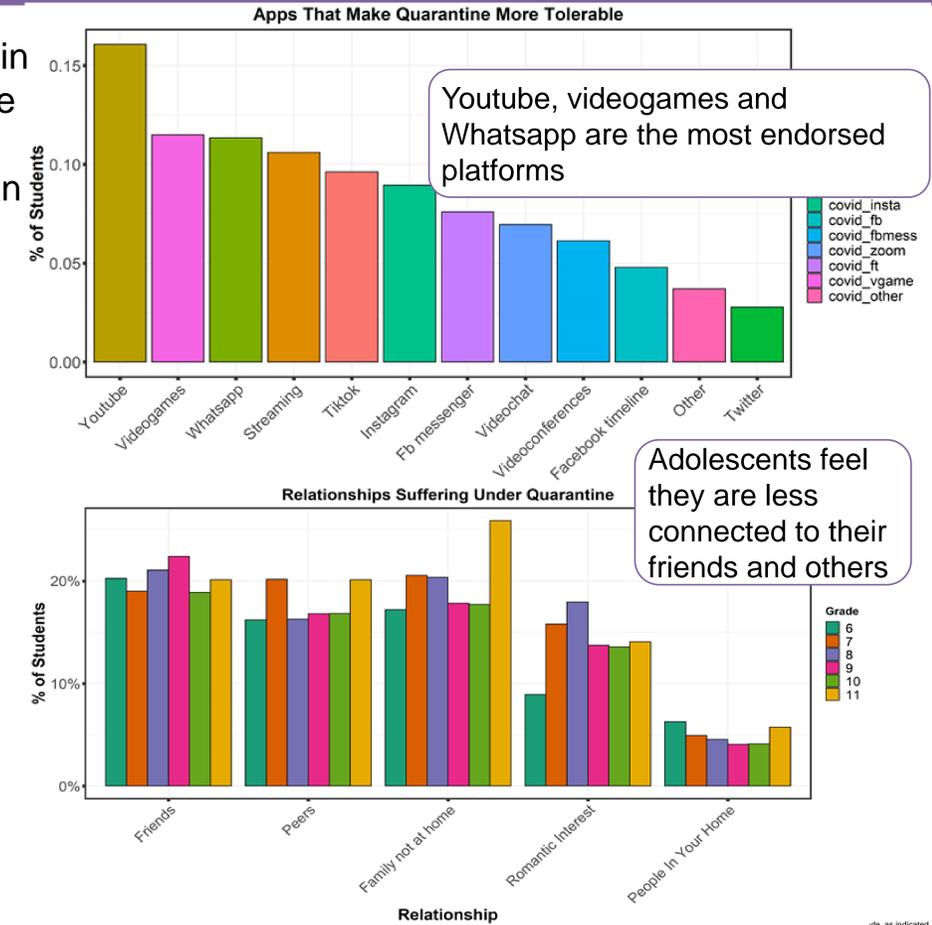
1. Managing uncertainty
2. Emotions
3. Relationships
4. Healthy habits
5. Sleep
6. Healthy technology use

Materials:

- Worksheets, questionnaires, videos, activities, group debriefing sessions
- 3 ongoing activities: diary (intrapersonal), chain of help (interpersonal), and quarantine chronicles (whole classroom)

1 Describe Technology has become a lifeline for remote instruction and connection during the pandemic

- We surveyed **10,000 students** between ages 11 and 17 in low- and middle-income urban settings across Perú in the early stages of the pandemic (**April – May, 2020**)
- Our sample is more connected than the average Peruvian household
- **Lockdown** meant more time online for social connection and entertainment
- **Laptops** were used for schoolwork, and **smartphones** were used for leisure
- Adolescents communicate through **multiple platforms**:
 - Older students use more social media
 - Younger students (especially boys) are connecting through videogames
- **Increased screen time** meant more **positive and negative** online experiences, particularly for older students
 - Positive online experiences alleviate loneliness
- Students with higher rates of depression and anxiety are more likely to exhibit **problematic media use**



3 Implement Delivering the curriculum

Curriculum Development

The research teams in the US and Peru worked with school staff to translate and adapt materials tailored to the developmental period of adolescence and students' sociocultural contexts.

Teacher Training

We trained teachers, who then implemented materials during the remote Advisory period using online communication tools including videocalls and asynchronous work.

Family Engagement

We helped parents reframe the prevailing (negative) beliefs about technology use during adolescence, highlighting the importance of online social connection and balanced use.

4 Summarize Findings

- Students most distressed at the beginning of the pandemic
 - Disruption of school routines and increased school work
 - Disconnection from friends → Adolescents miss school and their friends **a lot**.
- Adolescents perceive more time with families as a positive outcome of lockdown.
- Adolescents are using multiple platforms to cope with lockdown.
- Age related differences in social media and platform use align with important social-cognitive development in this period.
- Shifting parental perceptions of social media risk and opportunities – openness to consider the benefits of social media