Youth voices: A participatory approach to promoting mental health literacy through digital means

Wright, M., Reitegger, F., Gasteiger-Klicpera, B., Vidmar, M., Veldin, M., & Borzucka-Sitkiewicz, K.

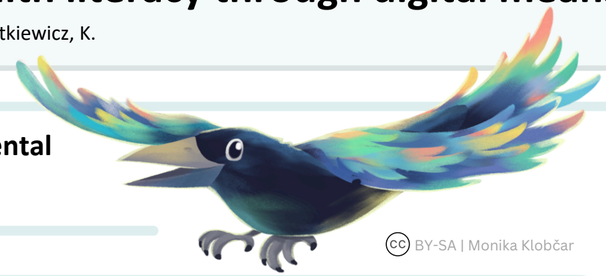
me_HeLi-D
MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY & DIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY OF SILESIA IN KATOWICE

FZ|B Forschungszentrum für Inklusive Bildung

UNI GRAZ

How can evidence-based and target group-specific content be developed to promote mental health literacy in young people using digital means?



CC BY-SA | Monika Klobčar

METHOD

Systematic Literature Reviews

Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis (Wright et al., 2023)

Focus | Digital prevention programs for the promotion of MH, MHL, well-being, resilience, mindfulness, help-seeking behavior for youth (11-18)

Systematic Umbrella Review (Reitegger et al., 2024)

Focus | Digital prevention programs for anxiety and depression for youth (11-18)

Participatory Workshops (PWs)

Participatory Workshops 1: Design
(June 2023)

- **Sample** | Students [ISCED Level 2] Austria, Poland and Slovenia
  - N_{1a}= 81; N_{1b}= 83
- **Focus** | Relevant topics (Stressors and Resources for relief), **Design Studio** & Gallery Walk, Feedback Forms on preferences and needs

Participatory Workshops 2: Content
(December 2023)

- **Sample** | Students [ISCED Level 2] Austria, Poland and Slovenia
  - N_{2a}= 96; N_{2b}= 95
- **Focus** | Creation Labs (Writing, Audio recording, Activities), Diversity; Feedback Forms on comprehensibility, relatability and appeal

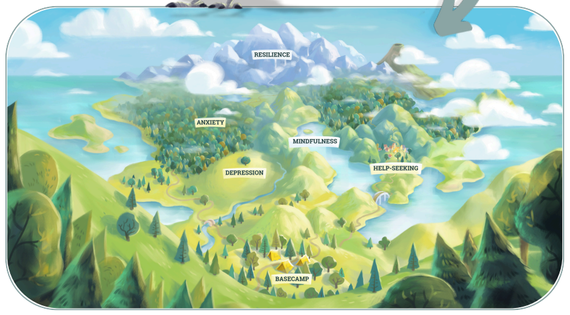
FINDINGS

Key elements and moderators

- Setting moderates efficacy [school, leisure, mixed]
- Some level of [professinal] support and level of guidance positively influence efficacy
- Programs struggle with consistent adherence and attrition
- Multimodal delivery of content is recommended
- User engagement should be enhanced by including:
  - Youth voices
  - Automated/immediate feedback
  - Gamification features

Design preferences

- Preferred formats:
  - (1) text + pictures,
  - (2) audios
  - (3) videos
- Integration of game-like elements (Avatar) and interactive features
- Progress tracking [percentage on top of the page]
- Badges for achievements



Content preferences

- Short & concise information, no long text
  "No one would read it"[Austrian student]
- No preferences in presenter of information (experts, adults, peers, or others)
- No lengthy instructions
- Diversity dimensions that should be represented by content (in order of relevance):
  - body/appearance, personality, age, ethnicity, and gender identification

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Challenges and benefits of using an evidence-based and participatory approach in the case of the me_HeLi-D project

CHALLENGES

- **Topic sensitivity** | Obtaining consent of the parents; risk of triggering
- **Contradictory results** | Divers students' suggestions; compared to literature findings
- Meeting **students' expectations** | Low budget vs. high expectations of students
- **Flexibility** | Willingness to adjust project timeline (extensive analysis/adaption process)
- **Commitment & motivation** | Students, school/principal and teacher

BENEFITS

- **Empowerment** | Mobilize and encourage students to express and share their opinions, preferences and needs
- **Increased feasibility** of implementation | Valuable insights from prior reseachers as well as teachers and schools
- **Increased relevance**, **comprehensibility** and **relatability** | Design and content
- **Inclusive approach** | "With the students for the students"
- **Validation** of student voices

and also....

Evaluation forms
What did you like best about the workshop?

PW1

That we were allowed to actively participate and you did not just talk.
Austrian student

That we could express our opinion without being afraid. I liked everything.
Slovenian student

Talking about our emotions.
Polish student

That we all got to speak.
Slovenian student

What I liked most was that we were able to participate in it.
Polish student

That our opinion was heard and taken into account.
Austrian student

PW2

What I liked most was that students could express their opinions.
Polish student

That we were able to talk to each other. We were allowed to express and discuss our opinions out loud.
Austrian student

That we had the right to express our feelings and thoughts.
Polish student

That we were allowed to be honest.
Austrian student

To be able to express our opinions.
Slovenian student

That we were allowed to get our mobile phone and were honest the whole time. That everything was anonymous.
Austrian student

project.meheli-d.uni-graz.at

mshk

Szkoła Podstawowa nr 11 z Oddziałami Integracyjnymi im. Tadeusza Kościuszki w Katowicach

Co-funded by the European Union