

## GUEST EDITORS' NOTE

More quickly than in the past, the digital world of today is bringing with it new challenges for children, adolescents, and youth, as well as for their parents and guardians, virtually every day. Children, adolescents, and youth use digital technology, i.e. devices, applications, and media, on a daily basis for a variety of reasons and activities, and the use is having positive and negative effects on their development and well-being. With the development of new research methodologies and theoretical frameworks, we are beginning to understand more and more how digital technology use affects development and well-being. Thus, the purpose of this special issue was to bring together current knowledge about how digital technology use shapes the lives of children, adolescents, and youth, and offer perspectives on the future direction of much-needed work. We hope that we have succeeded in this and that this special issue offers readers an interesting insight into this area. This special issue is a collection of 11 scientific papers, one of which is a review paper, describing studies done in Croatia, Sweden, Slovenia, and Norway. The issue features papers that used different methodological approaches and samples of participants from different countries. The papers in the issue are organized chronologically, with the last two papers describing studies done with parents as one of the closest physical ecological environments for preschool children.

The first part of the issue is dedicated to the five studies done with adolescents. Kotrla Topić et al. paper describes a two-wave longitudinal study done with early adolescents in Croatia with the aim of exploring how engagement in different activities using digital technology predicts changes in adolescents' subjective well-being. Jokić et al. examined the relationships between time spent using digital technology, loneliness, and well-being among three nationally representative cohorts of adolescents in Croatia. Knežević and Erceg examined the relationship among Instagram use, general self-esteem, envy, and the need for relatedness in a sample of Croatian middle adolescents. Pahljina-Reinić et al.'s paper depicts the prevalence and stability of achievement goal profiles among adolescents in Croatia in relation to their experience with digital technologies in educational settings using a longitudinal, person-oriented approach. Olander et al. explored Swedish children and adolescents' experiences of physical activity and apps, with a focus on the effects of behavior change techniques using qualitative methodology.

The middle part of the issue is dedicated to the three studies done with youth, namely university students. Žulec Ivanković et al. explored the effects of media pressure on appearance satisfaction in a sample of Croatian young women. Martinac Dorčić et al. described a study done with youth in Croatia on the relationship between social media use, digital stress, anxiety, and depression symptoms. Fabijanić et al. explored how support in the offline world and some aspects of the use of social networks predict loneliness among university students in Croatia.

The last part of the issue features a review study and two studies done with parents. Dodaj et al. wrote a theoretical review on sexting, namely definition, types, motivation, prevalence, theoretical explanations, determinants, and consequences of sexting behavior. Seršen et al. explored parents' views on quality programs for children, mediation practice, and common reasons to allow preschool children media exposure. Ables et al. examined the question of how parents with young children living in Norway perceive their phone usage based on the data collected by interviews with parents.

All in all, the findings of the papers in this issue indicate that the use of digital technologies among adolescents can have both positive and negative effects on well-being, which is important for interpreting the effects considering different activities and purposes of use.

The findings suggest that overuse of digital technology has mainly negative effects on well-being. Furthermore, the findings imply the existence of individual differences related to digital technology use. The findings can also inform the creation and implementation of physical activity apps. Furthermore, when youth are the focus, the findings suggest that exposure to media may have negative, although small, effects on self-image and mental health, but also that the effects are non-existent or, better stated, not captured with the current methodology. The findings advise future research on sexting, which is becoming prevalent among adolescents and youth. To finish, results point to different parent-oriented motives for allowing preschool children to enter a digital environment.

To conclude, virtual ecosystems and their characteristics are changing every day, and more research is needed on the long-term effects of living in a virtual microsystem using advanced, more person-oriented methodologies within theoretical frameworks that need to be developed soon.

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