

Harnessing AI for Youth Education & Mental Health

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School Social Work
Association of America



4C's of 21st Century Learning



Session Agenda

How Youth are Using AI

AI Use in Education: Opportunities & Challenges

AI Use in Mental Health: Opportunities and Challenges

Resources & Final Thoughts



How Youth are Using AI



Youth Usage of AI

- As of April 2024, 27% of U.S. teens reported using chatbots for online searches daily, while 20% used AI tools for image generation each day
- 72% of American teens (ages 13-17) have used AI companions—and 52% engage with them at least a few times per month
- ChatGPT usage for schoolwork has doubled among U.S. teens aged 13-17—from 13% in 2023 to 26% in early 2025



Common Sense Media AI & Teen Usage Study

1,391 U.S. teens (ages 13-17),
surveyed Sept 18 - Oct 10, 2024



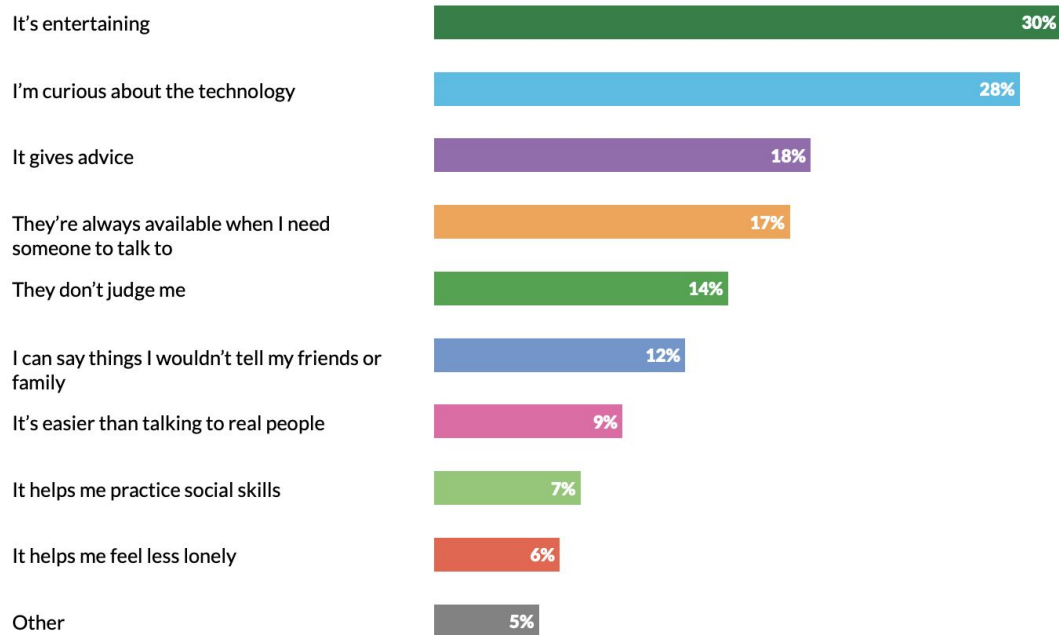
[Link Here to Study](#)



Teen Usage of AI

Figure C: What AI users use AI companions for.

Base: Uses AI companions (n=758) • Select up to 3 responses



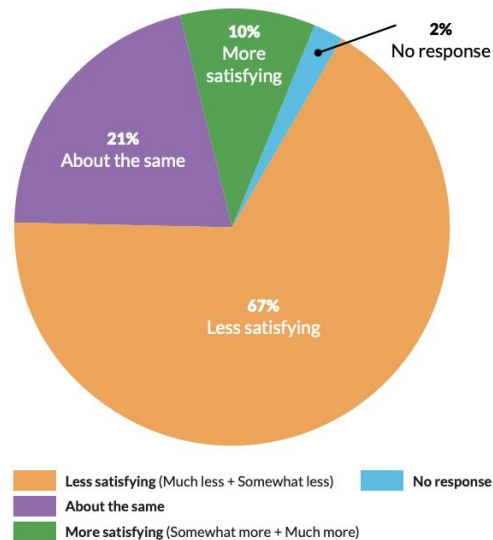
Teen Usage of AI

Nearly one-third of teens find AI conversations as satisfying or more satisfying than human conversations.

Thirty-one percent of teens find conversations with AI companions as satisfying or more satisfying than those with real-life friends (21% say about the same quality, and 10% say more satisfying). However, 67% still find AI conversations less satisfying than human conversations (47% say much less satisfying, 20% somewhat less satisfying).

Figure E: How teens rate their conversations with AI companions.

Base: All respondents (n=1,060)



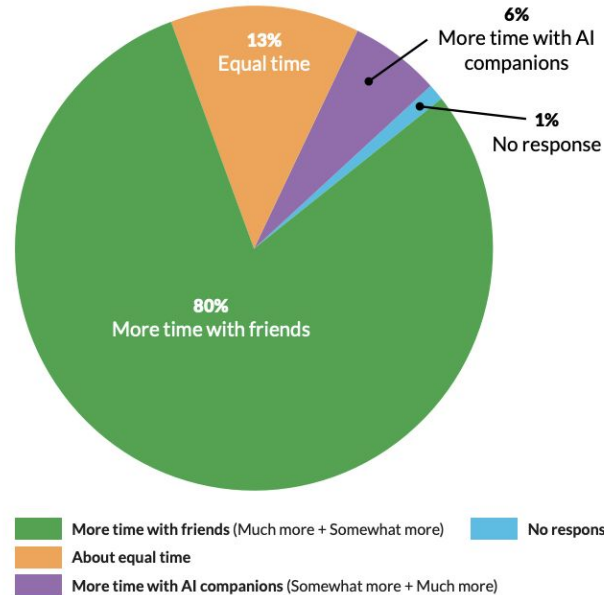
7.

Teens overwhelmingly prioritize human friendships over AI companion interactions.

Eighty percent of AI companion users spend more time with real friends than with AI companions (68% spend much more time, 12% somewhat more time). Only 6% spend more time with AI companions with friends (1% spend much more time, 5% spend somewhat more time).

Figure G: Time teens spend with AI companions compared with online or in-person friends.

Base: Uses AI companions (n=758)



Note: Q: How often do you interact with AI companions compared to spending time with friends (online or in-person)? Do you spend...?



Teen Usage of AI

- Teens are regularly using these apps for both academic and personal needs.
- AI is increasingly seen as a go-to for advice, friendship, emotional support, homework help, and creative collaboration
- AI companions are reshaping relationships and social development in adolescence, being present in more aspects of youth life than ever before



Top AI Chatbots Teens are Using

- [Character AI](#)
- [Replika](#)
- [ChatGPT](#)



Ethical Concerns of AI

- Data Privacy and Confidentiality
- Accountability & Transparency
- Critically analyze and examine the impact of these tools
- Bias & Stereotyping
- Environmental impact



AI in Education



AI In Schools

- Students are using AI for learning
- Students are using AI to support accessibility & learning needs
- Teachers are using AI for student assessments
- School Staff are using AI to support with everyday tasks

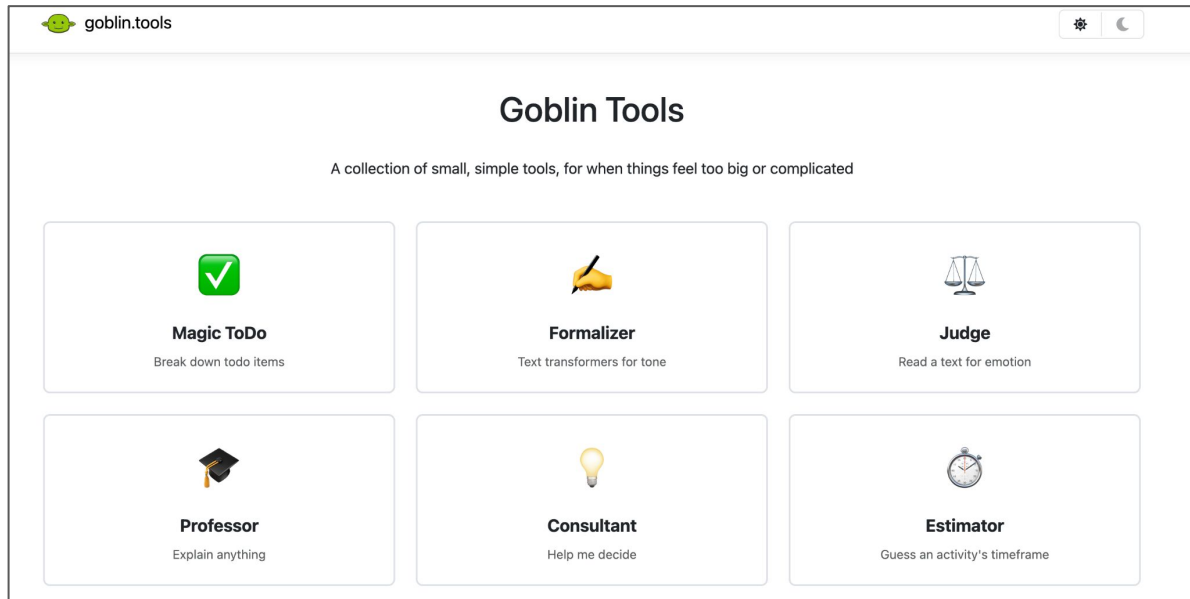


AI Opportunities in Schools: Increasing Access & Equity

- AI tools can provide text-to-speech, speech recognition, visual recognition, or other assistive technologies that adapt content to meet different learners' needs.
- This helps students who have reading difficulties, vision or hearing impairments, or other learning disabilities to access curricula on a more equal footing.
- human + AI tutoring to support with teaching and learning



Prompt Examples: Magic School AI for Students



[Goblin Tools](#)



AI Opportunities in Schools: Increasing Access & Equity

- AI translation, multilingual chatbots or interfaces, or tools that support English language learners make content more accessible. For example, if a student's first language isn't English, AI tools can help bridge that gap.
- In many under-resourced schools, teachers may not have the time or materials to deeply personalize instruction. AI can help generate differentiated learning materials, assessments, feedback, and monitor student progress, giving teachers more time or insight to focus where students need most help.
- Rural or remote districts are using AI-powered tools or pilots to help with their unique access issues: fewer specialists, hard to attract staff, less opportunity for enrichment. AI can bring scalable content, virtual assistance, remote tutoring, etc.



Prompt Examples: Magic School AI for Teachers



- Magic Tools
- Raina (Chatbot)
- Output History
- Launch to Students
- Love
- Training
- Share the Magic
- MagicStudent Intro
- Upgrade

[← Back](#)

[↻ Clear Inputs](#) [🗨 Exemplar](#)

IEP Generator

Generate a draft of an individualized education program (IEP) customized to a students' needs.

Grade level:

5th grade

Disability Category:

Autism Spectrum Disorder, Specific Learning Disability, Visual Impairment, etc.

Description of student behaviors, needs, and strengths:

List the student's relevant behaviors, needs, and strengths.

School Magic AI



Concerns of AI in Schools

- **Access to technology:** Tools are only useful if students have hardware, connectivity, stable internet, etc. Students in under-resourced settings or with limited home internet may be disadvantaged. Also, device access and digital literacy can vary
- **Teacher training & support:** Even the best tool won't help if teachers don't feel confident in using it, or if they lack professional development
- **Over-reliance on AI:** concern that using AI for writing assignments, problem sets, or projects could keep them from actually learning the material. Are students really learning?
- **Cheating vs. support:** People are unsure where the line is, using AI as a study aid vs. letting it do the work for them. They also worry about unfair advantages if some classmates use AI more than others.

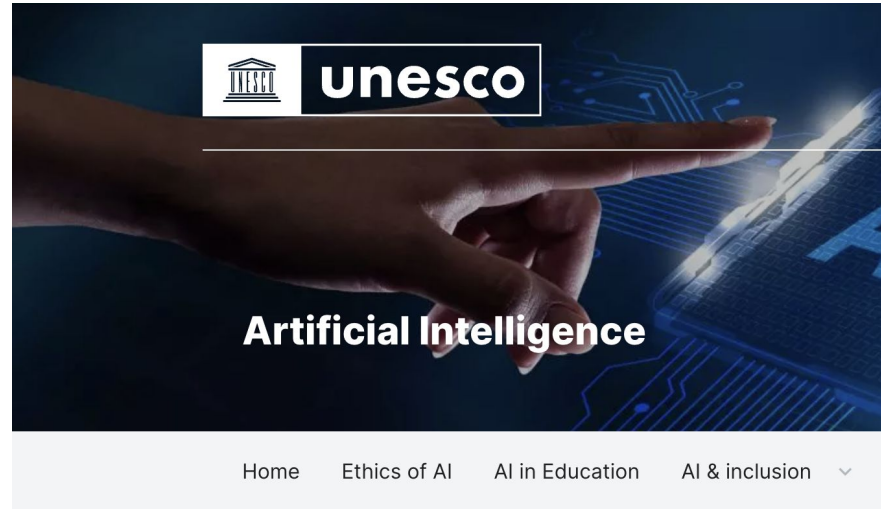


Concerns of AI in Schools

- **Skill erosion:** Students mention fears of losing critical thinking, writing, or problem-solving abilities if AI becomes the default helper.
- **Algorithmic bias:** Students are increasingly aware that AI can reflect stereotypes, inaccuracies, or biases (racial, gendered, cultural). They worry about how this affects grading tools, tutoring systems, or career guidance.
- **Data tracking:** Students express concern that their writing, voice, or personal information could be stored or misused by AI platforms.
- **Surveillance:** With AI being used in proctoring software, behavior monitoring, or attendance systems, students often feel watched or judged unfairly.
- **Job displacement fears:** Students in particular wonder if AI will take over careers they're preparing for, or whether schools are teaching them the right skills to adapt.



AI & Education Framework



UNESCO



AI Policy Guidance in Education: NEA



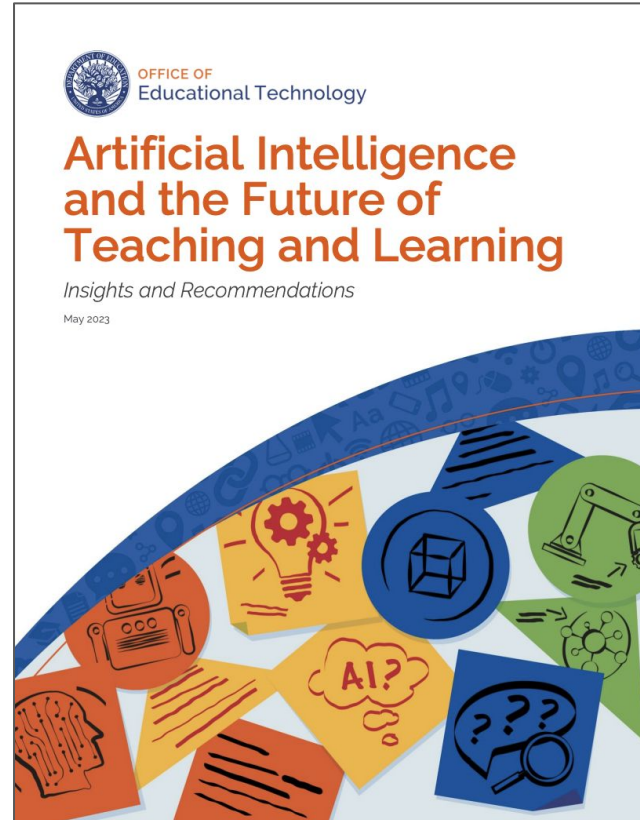
[NEA AI Task
Force Guidance](#)



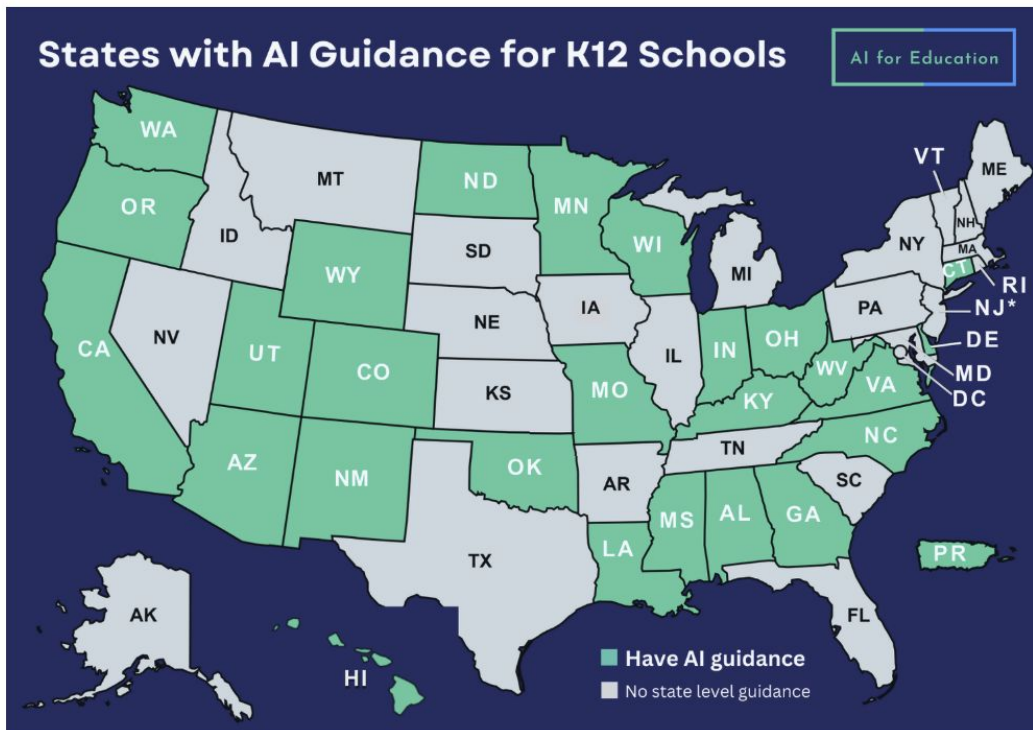
AI Policy Guidance in Education: USDOE



[US DOE AI Guidance](#)



US - States AI Policy

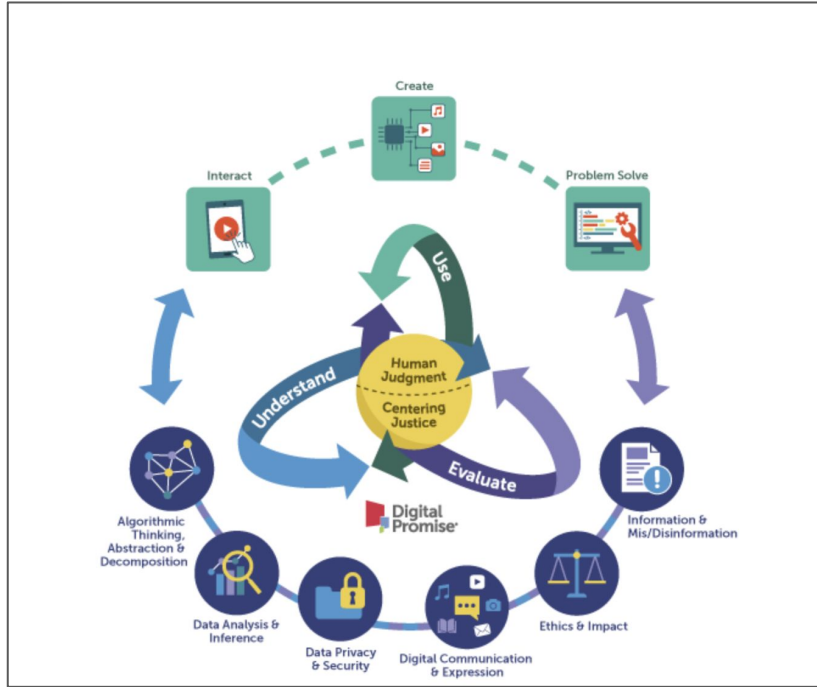


(Updated 7/01/2025)

[AI State Guidance](#)



Future Trends of AI & Schools: AI Digital Literacy



- Understand: Acquiring basic knowledge of what AI can do and how it works in order to make informed decisions about evaluating and using AI systems and tools.
- Evaluate: Centering human judgment and justice to critically consider the benefits and/or costs of AI to individuals, society, and the environment.
- Use: Interacting, creating, and problem-solving with AI as a progression of use for distinct contexts and purposes.

[Digital Promise](#)



Digital Literacy

- Digital Citizenship: Responsible, ethical, and safe use of technology.
- Online Safety of privacy, cyberbullying, digital footprints, consent.
- Age-appropriate approaches for digital education
- Teach youth and raise awareness of the harms of AI
- Teach youth to critically evaluate and understand AI



Digital Literacy for Youth Resources

- [Wisconsin SEL & Digital Citizenship Standards](#)
- [Common Sense Educator](#)
- [Digital Media and Your Brain](#)
- [Positive Tech Habits](#)



AI Education Resources

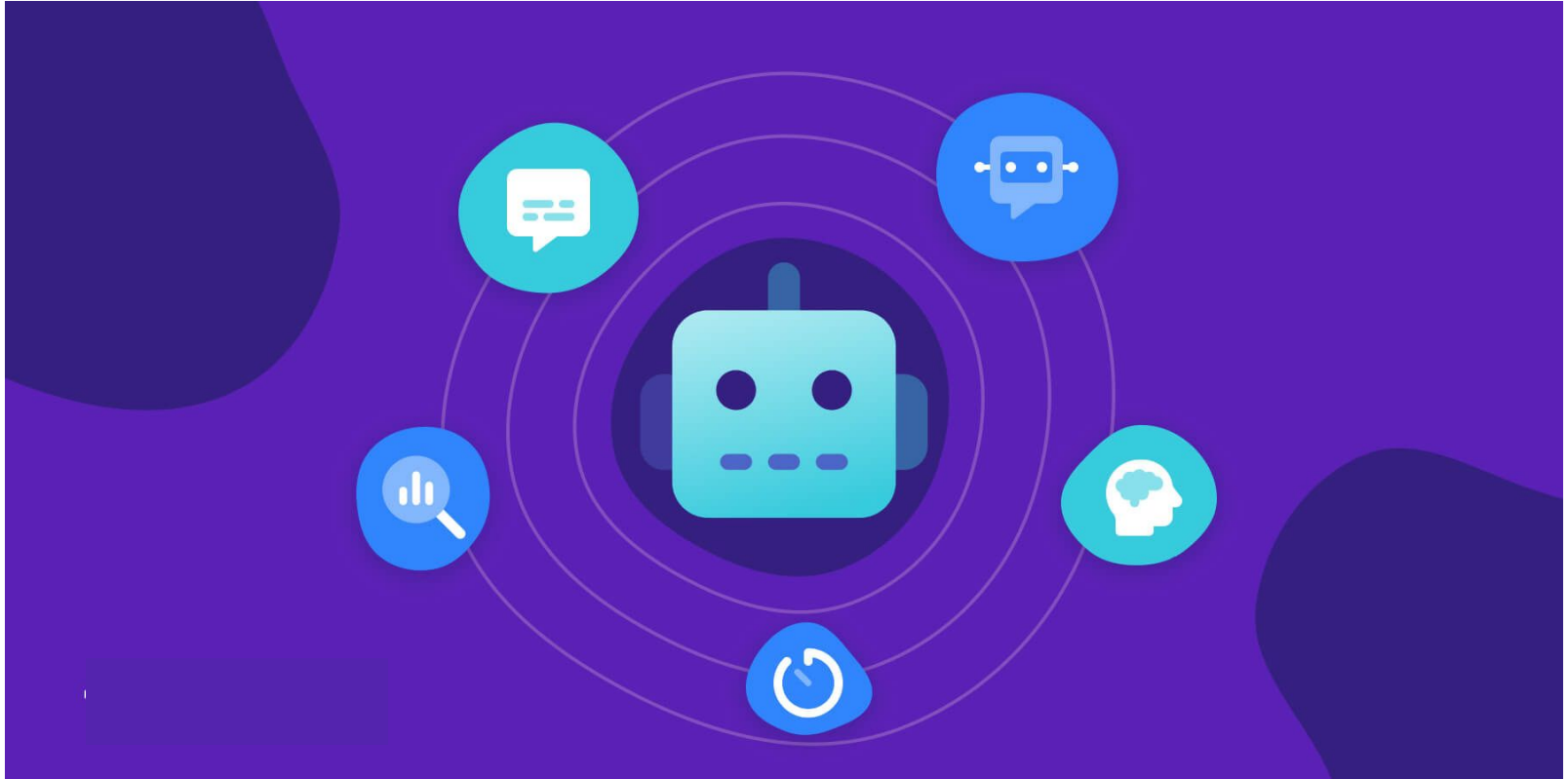
- [AI for Education](#)
- [Teach AI](#)
- [UNESCO AI Resources for Education](#)



Youth Mental Health & AI



Potential Harms of Using AI Chatbots



Potential Harms of Teen use of AI Chatbots

Gender based violence with [Deep Fakes](#)



Potential Harms of Teen use of AI Chatbots

Chatbots and risk of youth [Suicide](#) with vulnerable youth



Potential Harms of Teen use of AI Chatbots

“AI psychosis” (or “chatbot psychosis”) refers to cases where users develop delusional beliefs about AI—for example, thinking a bot is real or spiritual, leading to reality distortion.

Confusing reality with AI: A person might start believing that an AI is talking directly to them in secret messages, or that the AI is reading their thoughts.

Dependence and obsession: They may spend so much time with chatbots or AI tools that their grip on reality weakens, leading to isolation or paranoia.

Delusional thinking: Someone might believe that AI has gained consciousness, is spying on them, or is controlling parts of their life.



Potential Harms of Teen use of AI Chatbots

AI Algorithms and exposure to [harmful/misinformation](#) information



Potential Harms of Teen use of AI Chatbots

Data and lack of privacy/security of information Teens providing
Chatbots



Potential Harms of Teen use of AI Chatbots

AI Companions & Replacement of human connection and creating
“Synthetic Relationships”



Addressing Youth Mental Health : Therapeutic Chatbots



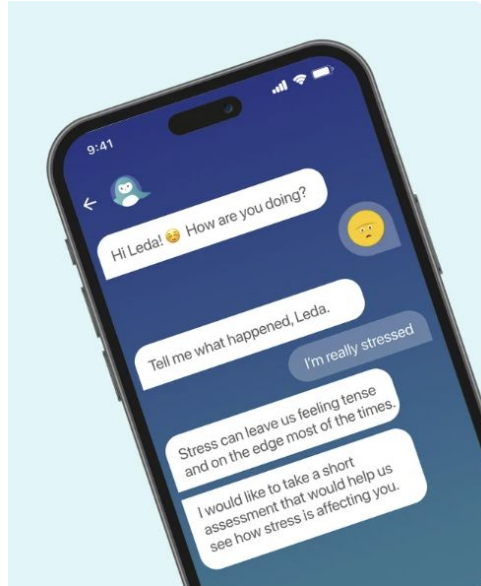
Therapeutic Chatbot Clinical Interventions

- AI chatbots act as supports, supplementing therapeutic engagement between formal sessions
- They facilitate journaling, mood tracking, or reflective exercises, encouraging clients to continue their therapeutic work outside of sessions
- Chatbots can provide 24/7 support, offering immediate assistance when human therapists are unavailable

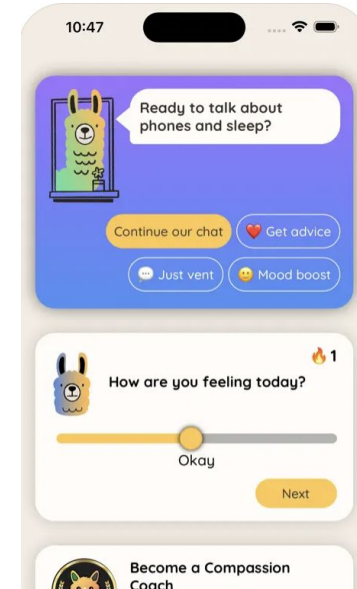


Types of Therapeutic Chatbots

- Wysa



- Alongside



Family Support & Youth Use of AI

- Advocate Robust safety guidelines and oversight are urgently needed when teens interact with AI systems.
- Engage with parents and provide resources for families on AI use
- Raise awareness of the harms of AI with our young people



Parent Resources

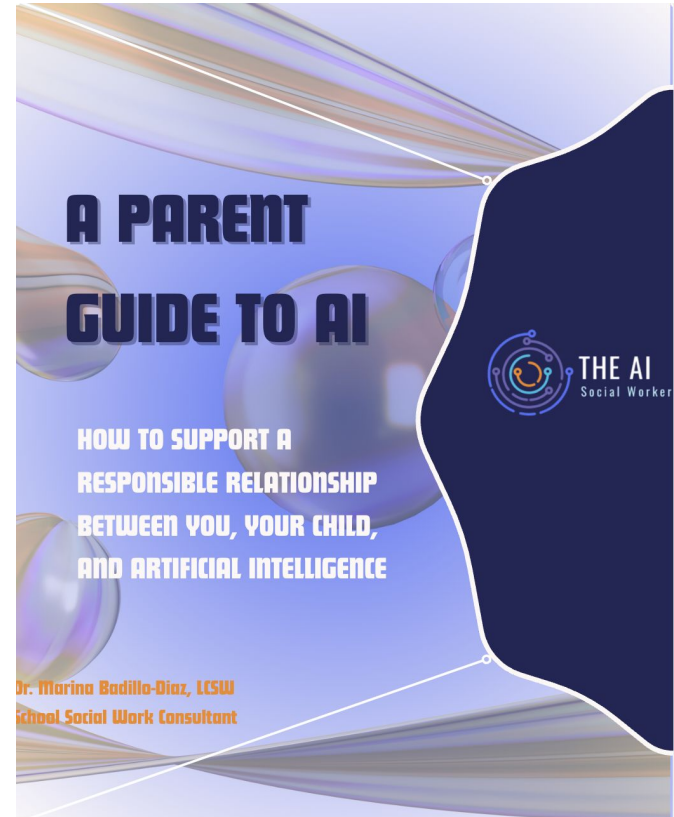
- [AI for Education Parent Resource](#)
- [Deep Fakes & AI safety Parent Resource](#)
- [Character AI resources for Parents](#)
- [Keeping teens safe on Social Media](#)
- [Media literacy for Parents](#)
- [Guide for Talking to your Kid about Social Media](#)
- [Social media and your Family: Nami Resource](#)
- [Discussion Guide for Teens](#)



Free Parent AI Guide



[Link Here](#)



6 - Resources & Q&A



Resources to Learn More About AI & Social Work/Mental Health Practice



- [AI Prompt Library for Social Workers](#)
- [The AI Social Worker Blog](#)
- [AI Tools for Social Work Practice](#)
- [Free AI Prompting for Social Work Practice](#)



Asynchronous Activities: Chatbots

[Link Here For Google Doc
Directions](#)



Q & A



Let's Stay Connected



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