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# PROBLEM GAMING & SOCIAL MEDIA USE: SCHOOL-BASED PREVENTION FOR ADOLESCENTS

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# Variables that influence online behaviours

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## Personal characteristics – predisposing risk factors

- psychosocial correlates
- Motivational factors
- Comorbidities
- Personality factors

## External factors

- variety and accessibility
- convenience
- credit payment
- Free subscriptions
- Speed

## Activity specific context

- anonymity and interactivity
- community and interdependence
- Infinite character / possibilities
- certainty of gratification
- highly attractive visuals/virtual worlds

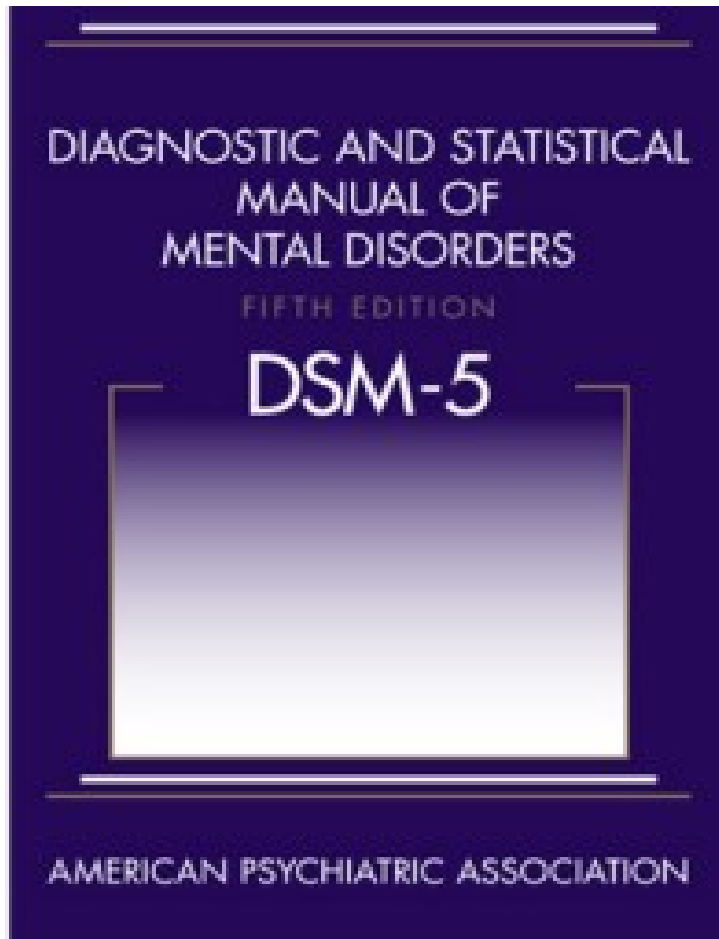
## Problematic Internet Use – Internet Addiction

There is a significant increase in adolescent media use, and in problematic Internet use (Kuss et al., 2014), leading potentially a minority of individuals to Internet Addiction (IA)

<b>Components Model (Griffiths, 2005)</b>	<b>IA is a maladaptive behavioural pattern, characterized by core symptoms</b>
<b>Salience</b>	<b>Overthinking, anticipation, dominant activity</b>
<b>Mood modification</b>	<b>Escape or relief from negative state</b>
<b>Tolerance</b>	<b>Need for increasing amounts of time</b>
<b>Withdrawal</b>	<b>Irritability, anxiety, sadness in the absence</b>
<b>Conflict</b>	<b>Loss of interest, deception, jeopardizing career, relationship, continued use despite adversity</b>
<b>Relapse</b>	<b>Unsuccessful attempts to control</b>

## GAMING ADDICTION / PROBLEMATIC SOCIAL MEDIA USE

- Mass appeal of gaming – 2 BIO GAMERS
- excessive engagement with both online and offline games can potentially lead to addiction in a *small minority* of players (Kuss & Griffiths, 2012)
- Use of gaming as a strategy for emotion regulation leading to a dysfunctional coping strategy
- The perceived need to be online may result in compulsive use of SNSs, which in extreme cases may result in symptoms and consequences traditionally associated with substance-related addictions



## Internet Gaming Disorder DSM-5 (APA, 2013)

## Internet addiction

**1% - 18.7% in nationally representative samples (Pontes, Kuss & Griffiths, 2015)**

**0.8% Italy to 26.7% in Hong Kong (Kuss, Griffiths, Karila & Billieux, 2014)**

**13.9 % of European adolescents at risk, 3.6% addicted (EuNet ADB, 2013)**

**5.2% in a sample of 1,097 British adolescents (Lopez-Fernandez et al., 2016)**

**3.7% of Dutch adolescents are addicted to the internet, online gaming and social media apps (Kuss et al., 2013)**



## GAMING

**1.4 % addicted gamers, 7.3 % problem gamers, 3.9 % engaged gamers - nationally representative sample in Norway (Thoresen Wittek et al., 2016)**

**3% of male adolescents and 0.3% of female adolescents -15,000 adolescents (Rehbein, Kleimann & MöBle, 2010)**

**1.7% and 25.5%, with a 2.7% addiction rate when distinguishing core from peripheral criteria (Seok & Da Costa, 2012)**

## SNSs

**92% online daily (Pew Research 2016)  
71% more than one social network site  
4.5% (from a nationally representative Hungarian sample) adolescents at-risk group - low self-esteem, high level of depression symptoms, elevated social media use (Banyai et al., 2017)**

# Internet Addiction

social isolation, depression and anxiety symptoms  
loneliness  
poor academic performance  
engagement in aggressive behaviours  
risky activities

**Psychosocial  
impacts**

poor nutritional quality  
sleep deprivation  
poor intrapersonal (attention) and interpersonal relationships (with friends, teachers)  
suicide ideation

substance abuse, attention-deficit, but not hyperactivity disorder, depression, hostility, social anxiety disorder

**psychopathological  
conditions  
and comorbidities**

1. a reward deficiency related to the decreased dopaminergic activity
2. Neuroadaptation and structural brain changes
3. Cognitive capacity

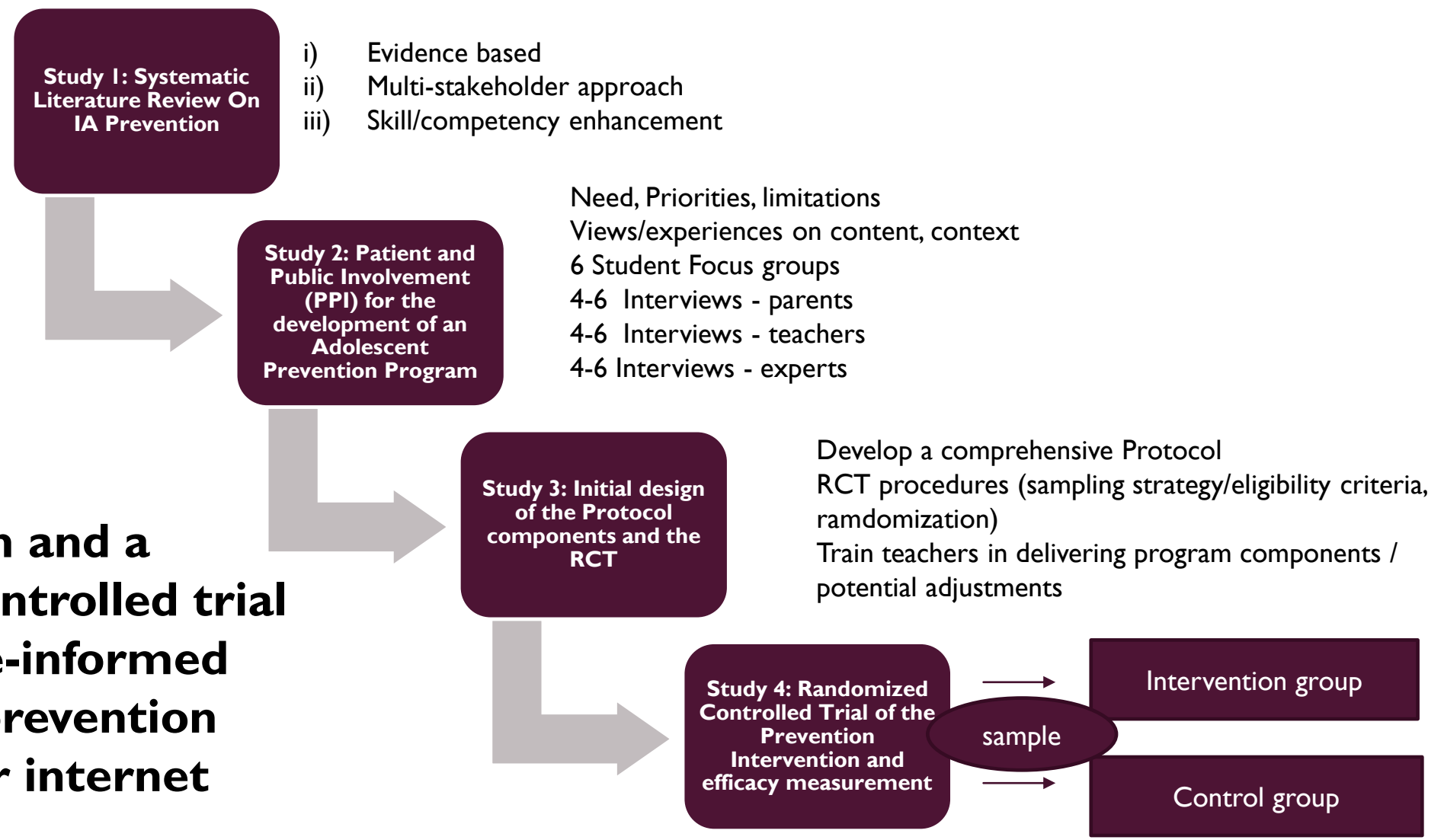
**Biological  
implications**



## PREVENTION IN IA – RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- should we address prevention in schools?
- Which *age group*?
- what *objectives*?
- what *strategies and content*?
- how will we evaluate *effectiveness*?

# Protocol design and a randomized controlled trial for an evidence-informed school-based, prevention programme for internet addiction



# IA PREVENTION

## **STUDY I: Findings of Systematic Literature Review on IA Prevention & school based programs**

## WHY ADOLESCENCE?

- Adolescence - susceptibility to problem/risk behaviours (Leather, 2009), and for the development of addictions (Chambers, Taylor & Potenza, 2003; Kuss & Griffiths, 2011)
- researchers argue for the need (Kaess et al., 2016) and value of designing and implementing prevention programs in school aged children and adolescents (Tsitsika, Janikian, Greydanus, Omar, & Merrick, 2013)

# PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR IA

- ✓ intrapersonal protective factors
- ✓ systemic factors
- ✓ positive psychology variables & approaches (Khazaei, Khazaei, & Ghanbari, 2017);
- ✓ enhancement of skills (i.e. self-control, emotion regulation, social interaction, resilience)
- ✓ socio-emotional adjustment and positive developmental transitions (Jackson et al., 2012)
- ✓ active observation and awareness (facets of mindfulness) (Calvete, Gámez-Guadix, & Cortazar, 2017).

## LIT. REVIEW: EVIDENCE FOR IA PREVENTION

- worldwide prevention strategies for IA
- The South Korean model of IA prevention vs Western countries
- Formal recognition still a problem and definitional issues for prevention
- school based prevention programs with successful reduction in IA scores but mixed outcomes for activity levels
- psychosocial interventions (Yeun & Han, 2016)
- motivational/positive psychology (Shek & Ma, 2013)
- Skill/competency enhancement approaches appear to be efficacious and to hold overall promise (Shek & Ma, 2014; Walther, Hanewinkel, & Morgenstern, 2014)

# LIT. REVIEW: RECOMMENDATIONS ON SCHOOL-BASED PREVENTION

- define the clinical status of Internet Addiction more precisely
- use more current **psychometrically robust assessment tools**
- reconsider focus on Internet time reduction/duration of use build methodologically sound evidence-based prevention programmes
- focus on **skill enhancement** and **the use of protective and harm-reducing** factors
- include IA as one of the risk behaviours in multi-risk behaviour interventions

# PREVENTION FOR INTERNET ADDICTION

research  
evidence

stakeholder  
needs



## FOCUS GROUPS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

- Semi- structured
- 5-8 participants x 6 Focus Groups
- Duration: 60-100 minutes
- Recorded, supplemented by scenarios + photographic material

# STAKEHOLDERS

- STUDENTS
  - PEERS
  - PARENTS
  - TEACHERS
- 
- WHAT ARE EXPERTS' VIEWS?

# APPLICATION TO INTERVENTION DEVELOPMENT

- Focus groups / interviews

- Thematic Analysis

- Inform quantitative research aims/Provide qualitative foundation for the design of prevention initiative

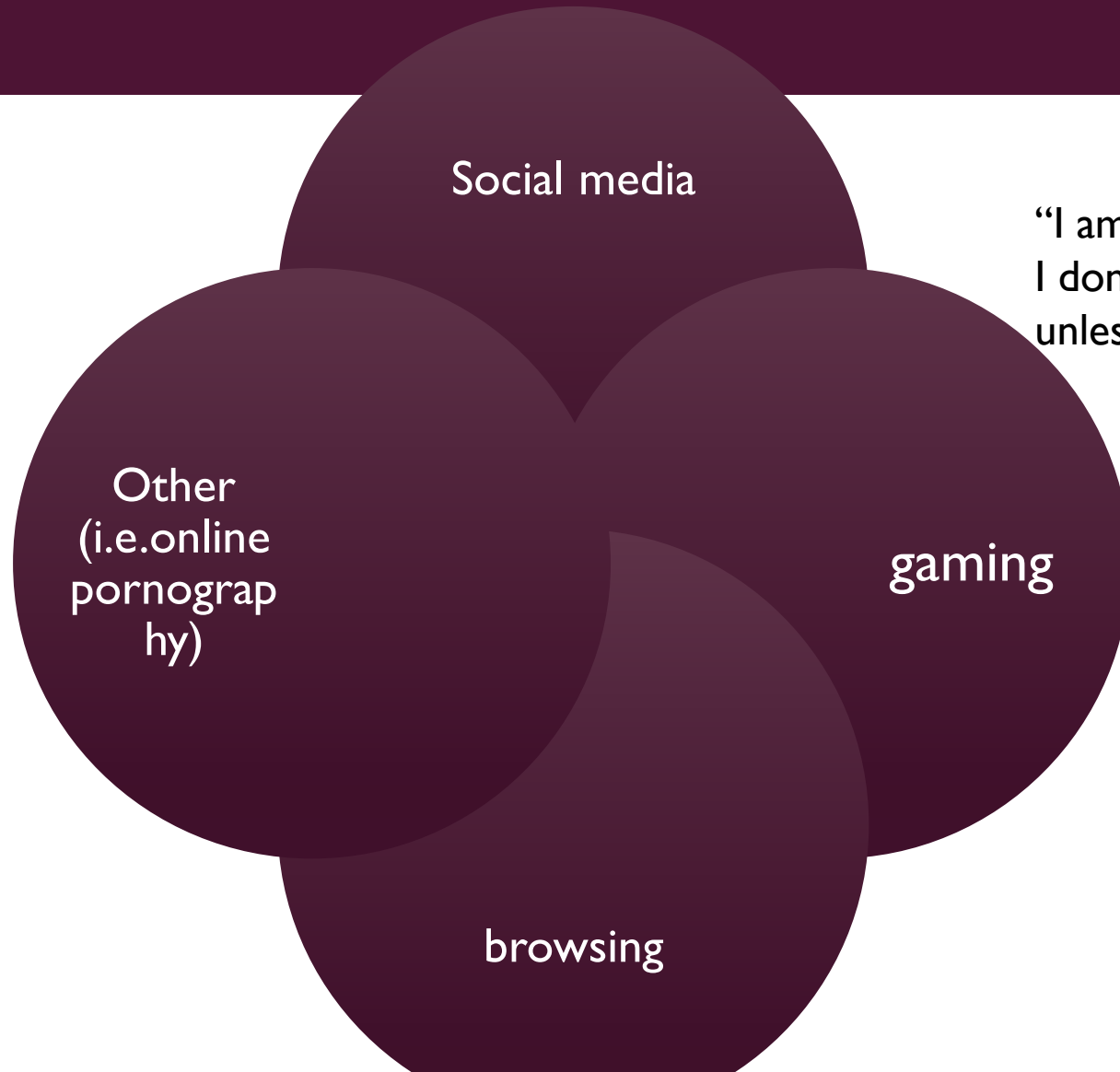
- Explore unexpected areas of concern across/for stakeholders

- Triangulation for needs/aims-objectives

## RESULTS

- 20 Interviews-Focus Groups conducted
- 30 hours of recorded material
- 130 pages of transcription
- Traditionally transcribed
- Use of Nvivo software for coding purposes

## MAIN USES



Social media

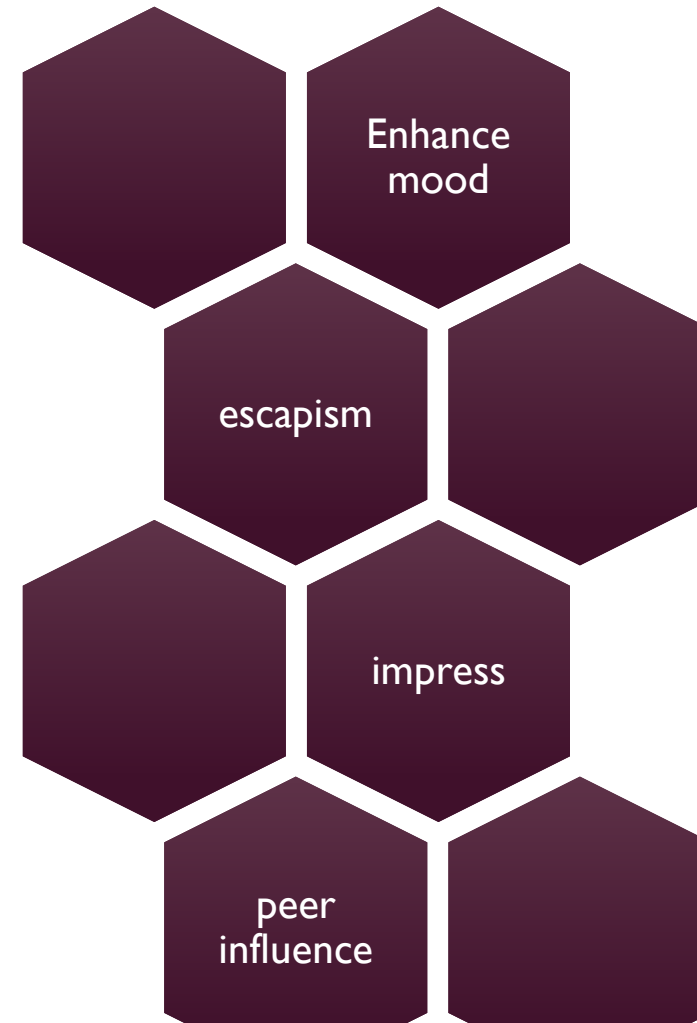
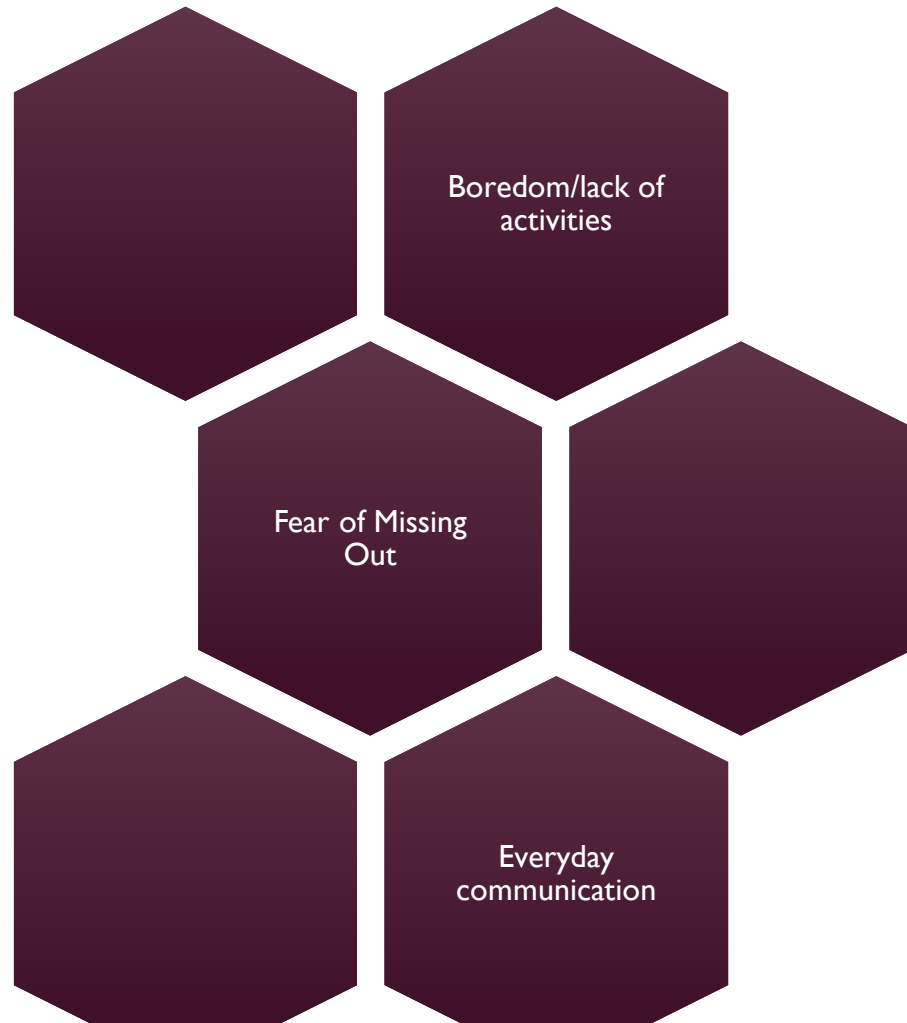
“I am always on social media,  
I don’t take it out of my hand  
unless I have to” (FC2F1)

Other  
(i.e. online  
pornograp  
hy)

gaming

browsing

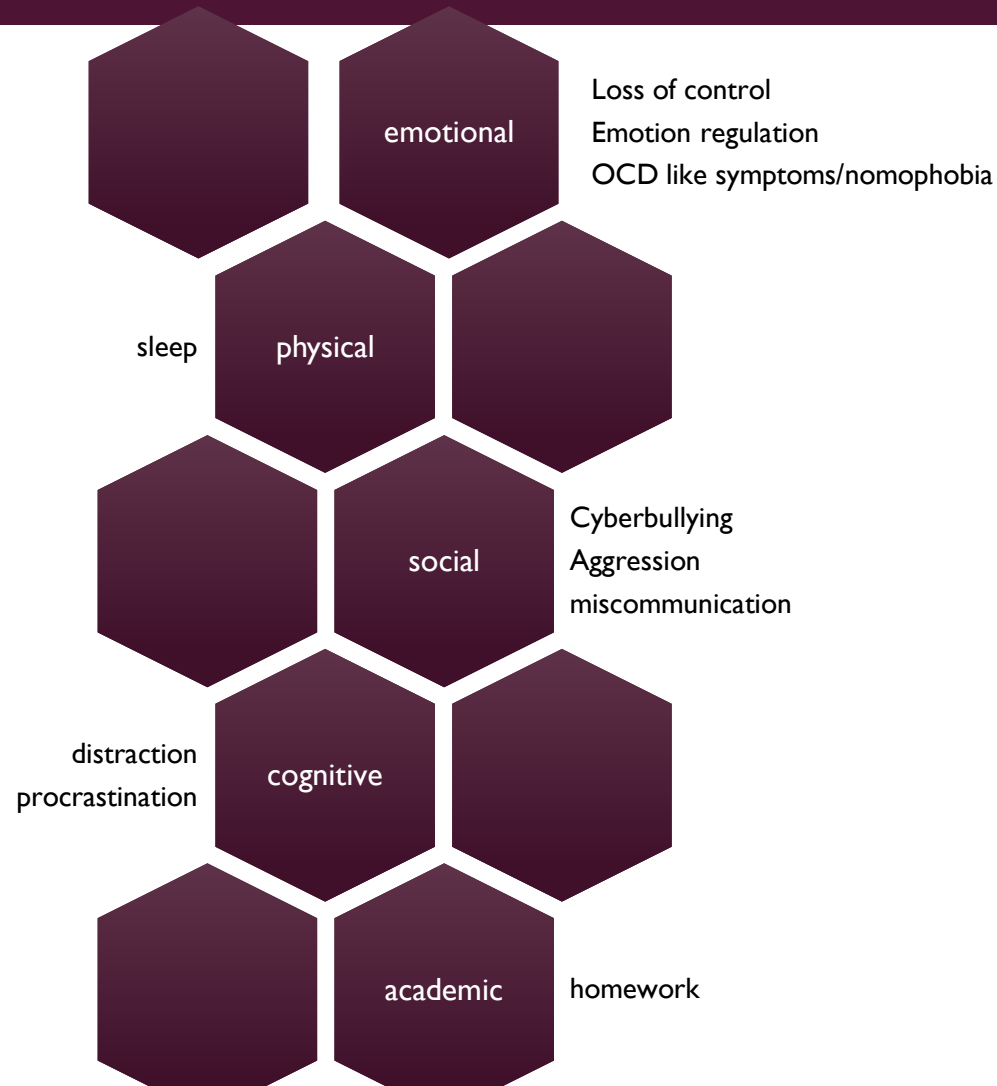
# MOTIVATING FACTORS



# IMPACTS

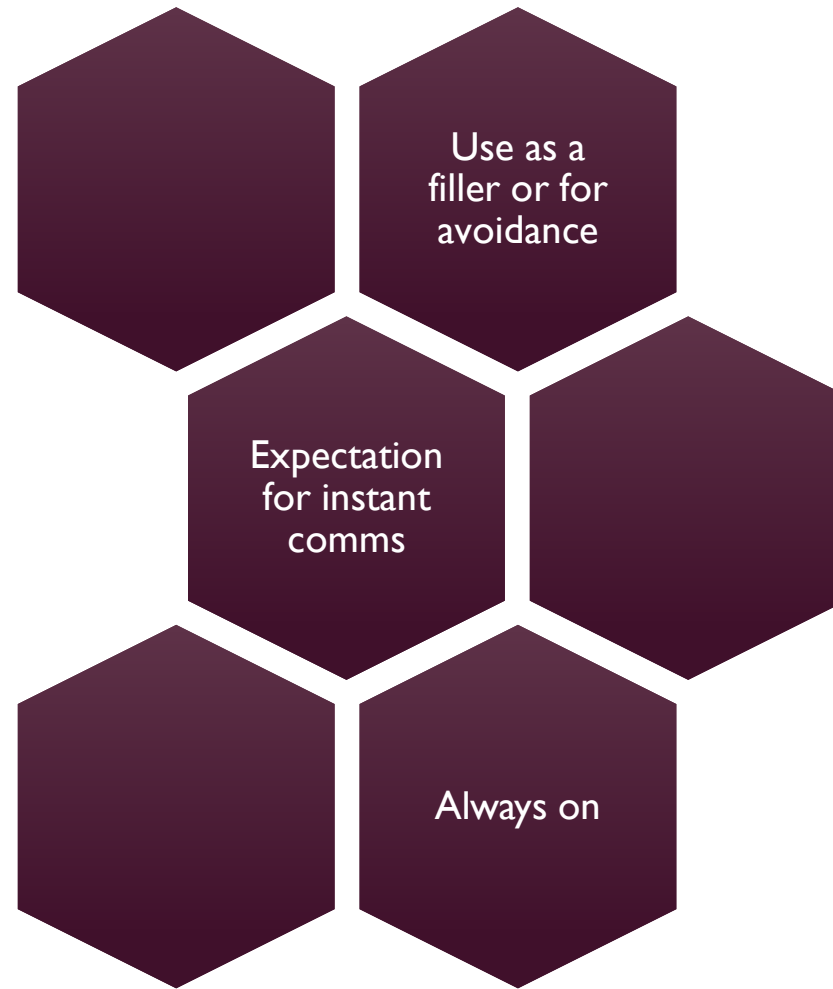
“or just stating the facts, we are not admitting to ourselves, people not admitting to ourselves that **it is a distraction** and it is stopping you from doing work” (FC2F1)

“With social media people don’t quite know if you are saying a joke because they don’t see the sarcasm, something might start up as a joke it might spiral into other things and people might end up hating each other with just a few words on instagram. I’ve experienced a bit of that. It happens quite often.” (FC3M5)



“I feel like social media is a **very judgmental place**, cause like if you’re sat there on your own with your phone you’re gonna be judgmental, like its in your nature.” (FC2F4)

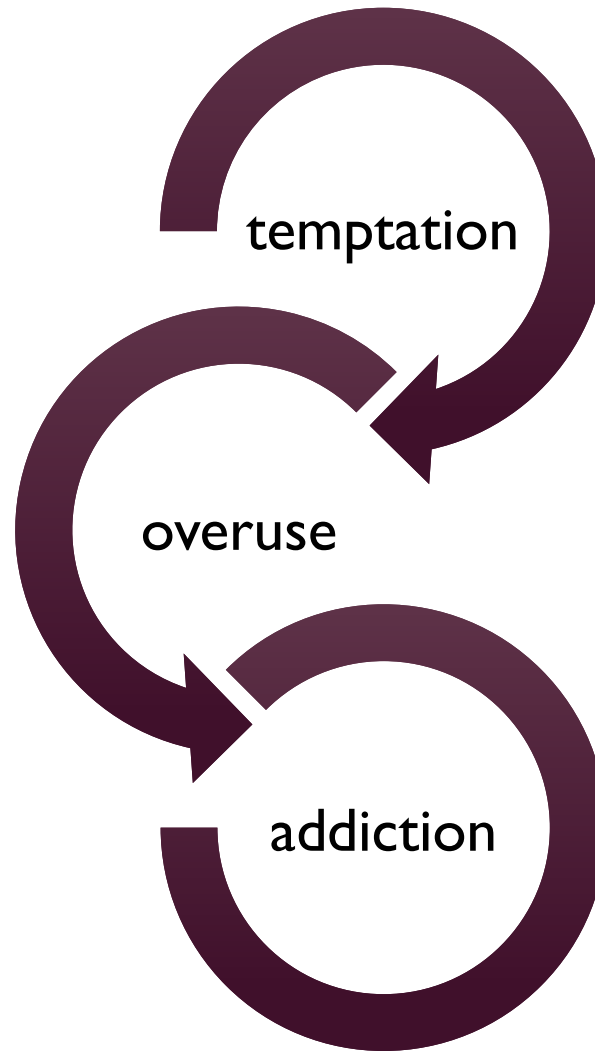
# COMMUNICATION ISSUES





# CONCERNS

“Talk about sexting, more every day things, about common issues” (FC2M2)

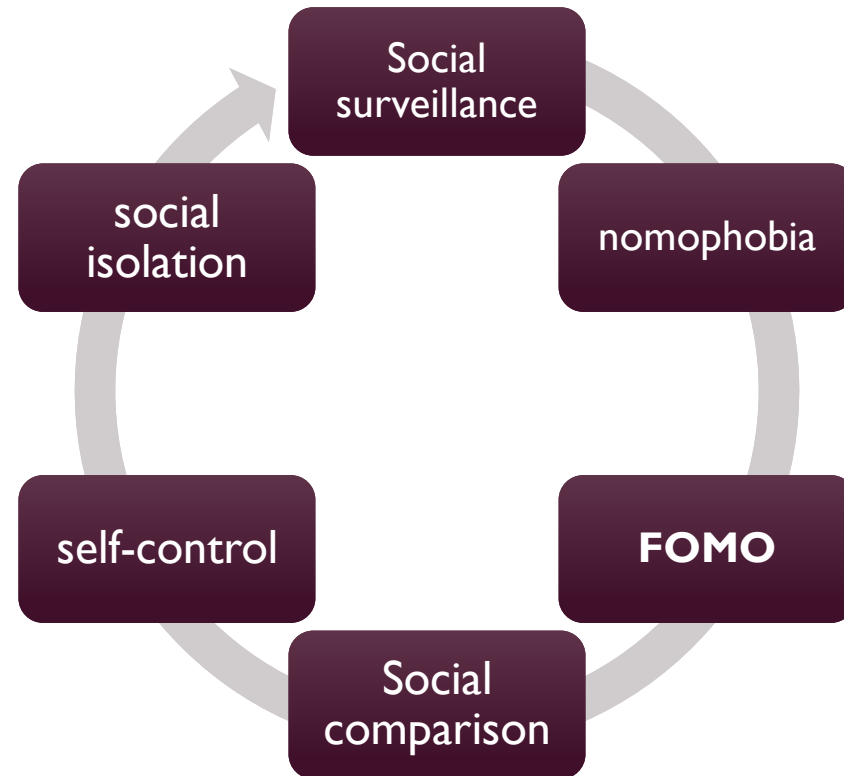


“I literally use it excessively, like I do not go off my phone” (FG6F2)

“I made my brother hide it while I was revising. It was so like addicts” (FC5F6)

# PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESSES

“I think on social media it is a lot easier to physically move your fingers and type in words and actually say something to someone because **you can write anything! but would you say that on on their face?**” (FC4M3)



“she can take a selfie like that and show everybody else how amazing her body is and then everybody would go **“Oh I want her body”** (FC2F5)

“I was in the worst mood I was being horrible because I didn’t have it “ (FG1F1)

# CONCLUSION

Internet addiction and gaming addiction can potentially affect a minority of individuals

Urgent need to address the less severe but pervasive psychological impacts in adolescents

Social Media are increasingly recognized for their addictive potential

IA's definitional, clinical and assessment status is a key area for prevention and intervention

Behavioral addictions need to be recognized and acted upon as mental health issues in prevention, education and public policy

Need for evidence based approaches in school prevention

Thank you

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