

Symposium

📅 Sun. Sep 28, 2025 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM JST | Sun. Sep 28, 2025 12:00 AM - 1:30 AM UTC 🏛️ Session Room 5 (Conference Room A)

[Symposium 82] Youth Mental Health in the Digital Era: Perspectives from Young Psychiatrists

Moderator: Hiroyuki Yamaguchi (National Center of Neurology and Psychiatry)

[SY-82]

Youth Mental Health in the Digital Era: Perspectives from Young Psychiatrists

Hiroyuki Yamaguchi^{1,6}, Isa Multazam Noor², Toshihiro Shimizu^{3,6}, Su Myat Yadanar⁴, Akane Hayakawa^{5,6}, Tokuya Inaguma⁵ (1.National Center of Neurology and Psychiatry(Japan), 2.Dr Soeharto Heerdjan Neuropsychiatric Hospital(Indonesia), 3.Saitama Prefectural Psychiatric Hospital(Japan), 4.St Ann's Hospital(UK), 5.Tokyo Metropolitan Matsuzawa Hospital(Japan), 6.Japan Young Psychiatrists Organization(Japan))

[SY-82-01]

Digital Age Distress and Legal Substance Misuse in Japan: Understanding and Multifaceted Interventions for OTC and Prescription Drug Misuse in Young People

*Toshihiro Shimizu^{1,2} (1.Certified Non-Profit Organization Japan Young Psychiatrists Organization (JYPO)(Japan), 2.Local Incorporated Administrative Agency, Saitama Prefectural Hospital Organization, Saitama Psychiatric Hospital(Japan))

[SY-82-02]

Adolescent Cyber Addiction

*Su Myat Yadanar (Specialty Doctor, North London NHS Foundation Trust(UK))

[SY-82-03]

"Smartphone Addiction" and Mental Health in Japanese Youth: A Psychiatric Clinical Approach

*Akane Hayakawa, Tokuya Inaguma (Tokyo Metropolitan Matsuzawa Hospital(Japan))

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Keywords : Digital technology、 Youth mental health、 Young psychiatrist

The rapid advancement of digital technology has transformed how young people interact with their environments, peers, and society. Social media, games, mobile applications, etc., these tools are inflicting on the mental health of young people.

Young people are particularly vulnerable to the influences of digital environments during critical developmental stages. Social media, for instance, plays a dual role: while fostering connection and awareness, it also correlates with issues like cyberbullying, body image concerns, and impulsive behavior. In some countries, such as Australia, measures like prohibiting social media access for those under 15 years highlight growing societal concerns. Beyond social media, gaming and internet addiction have emerged as significant challenges, with links to impulse control disorders, substance use via online platforms, and gambling-related issues. The rise of online gambling and its accessibility through digital platforms further underscores the need for targeted interventions. Numbers of resources are available to recover from the above conditions. Interventions for cyber addiction include psychotherapeutic approaches, inpatient rehabilitation programs, and 12-step mutual support groups. Further, digital technology presents opportunities for mental health promotion. For example, mobile applications grounded in evidence-based therapies, such as cognitive-behavioral approaches, are proving effective in reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression.

In this symposium, we young psychiatrists from Indonesia, Japan, and Myanmar (currently living in the UK) will share our perspectives on the mental health challenges faced by young people in our clinical practice. As psychiatrists familiar with digital environments and tools, we can approach mental health care for young people in ways that resonate with them while also expanding support methods through the active use of new technologies. By considering both the risks and possibilities presented by the digital era, this symposium will highlight effective ways to mitigate potential harms and the potential of technology to enhance mental well-being.

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[Symposium 82] Youth Mental Health in the Digital Era: Perspectives from Young Psychiatrists

Moderator: Hiroyuki Yamaguchi (National Center of Neurology and Psychiatry)

[SY-82-01] Digital Age Distress and Legal Substance Misuse in Japan: Understanding and Multifaceted Interventions for OTC and Prescription Drug Misuse in Young People

*Toshihiro Shimizu^{1,2} (1.Certified Non-Profit Organization Japan Young Psychiatrists Organization (JYPO)(Japan), 2.Local Incorporated Administrative Agency, Saitama Prefectural Hospital Organization, Saitama Psychiatric Hospital(Japan))

Keywords : Legal Substance Misuse、 Digital Culture、 Adolescents and Young Adults、 Public Health

While the prevalence of illicit drug use remains comparatively low in Japan, there has been a notable increase in the misuse of legal substances. Recent surveys indicate a rapid increase in over-the-counter (OTC) drug misuse, particularly among female high school students, with its frequency significantly surpassing that of cannabis use. As a psychiatrist practicing addiction treatment in a medical institution, I frequently encounter cases of OTC and prescription drug misuse among young people.

Substance misuse among young people is intricately linked to the complex social and environmental factors within their lived experiences. For many young individuals grappling with academic and familial expectations, loneliness, and psychological distress, substance use often functions not as a pursuit of pleasure, but rather as an attempt at self-medication or a cry for help. Multiple contributing factors, including the pervasive influence of digital culture, impact of social media on self-perception, social isolation from the community, and limited access to mental health resources collectively contribute to the exacerbation of this issue.

This trend is recognized not only by medical professionals, but also by various other specialists, including educators and community health workers. They are actively seeking a paradigm shift from “Dame-Zettai (Absolutely No)” drug prevention education, the traditional method in Japan, toward approaches that integrate addiction treatment perspectives and address the unique challenges of the digital age. However, significant challenges persist in establishing effective prevention strategies and multisectoral collaborative frameworks.

This presentation analyzes this phenomenon based on experience from an addiction treatment hub hospital. It explores the urgent necessity of a comprehensive, community-wide framework that facilitates collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including healthcare, education, social welfare, families, and non-profit organizations, to support adolescents. This issue cannot be resolved solely within the medical domain; it requires active societal engagement and collaborative efforts from various sectors.

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[SY-82-02] Adolescent Cyber Addiction

*Su Myat Yadanar (Specialty Doctor, North London NHS Foundation Trust(UK))

Keywords : Cyber Addiction、Adolescent、Social Media

Abstract for Adolescence Cyber Addiction Cyber addiction is defined as uncontrollable use of the internet that results in excessive time consumption or social dysfunction and may have a similar pathology to other addictions, which result in interpersonal, family, and social problems. Cyber addiction is being addicted to cyberspace. It is the compulsive need to continuously checking social media, visit porn sites, or do online gaming. Concerns about the overuse of the Internet have arisen as a result of the release of reasonably priced personal computers, the expansion of Internet access, and its growing popularity. Addiction to the Internet is a growing public health concern. The International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11), the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), and the World Health Organization do not consider excessive Internet use to be a disorder. However, the ICD-11 lists gaming disorder. Classification of Internet Addiction includes cyber-sexual addiction, cyber-relational addiction, net compulsions, information overload and computer addiction. It is estimated that more than 40% of people on the planet today have access to the Internet, and more people are using mobile devices. Adolescents and young adults who are internet addicted may experience severe negative impacts in their lives, including deteriorations in their emotional and physical well-being, social interactions, and academic achievement. Numerous psychological, social, and academic issues, such as anxiety, depression, social isolation, and poor academic performance, have been linked to excessive internet use. This presentation will be highlighted on prevalence, implications, recent findings and management of cyber addiction.

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[SY-82-03] “Smartphone Addiction” and Mental Health in Japanese Youth: A Psychiatric Clinical Approach

*Akane Hayakawa, Tokuya Inaguma (Tokyo Metropolitan Matsuzawa Hospital(Japan))

Keywords : smartphone addiction、 youth、 Internet、 Gaming

With the rapid spread of smartphones in the last two decades, “smartphone addiction”—especially among youth—has become a global social issue. In Japan, as of 2024, as many as 99% of high school students own a smartphone and use it for an average of six hours a day to watch videos, play games, and search for information online. Furthermore, in a 2018 report by the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, approximately 520,000 middle and high school students were considered addicted to the internet or gaming.

Studies suggest that internet and gaming use are associated with unhealthy lifestyles and poorer academic performance (Sunday et al, 2021; Wacks & Weinstein, 2021).

“Smartphone addiction” has a significant impact on youth health, and urgent support for affected individuals is necessary. In this presentation, although “smartphone addiction” is a relatively new and still academically debated disorder, we will outline the current knowledge regarding its concept, pathological features, and diagnosis. We will then introduce the treatment approach for “smartphone addiction” at Tokyo Metropolitan Matsuzawa Hospital, including a brief case presentation.