

Participant Information Sheet for Young People

Loneliness in the digital world: Co-developing smartphone-based research to examine how online social experiences impact adolescent mental health

What is the purpose of the study?

We want to find out whether online or face to face social interactions make young people aged 12-15 feel more or less lonely.

Why?

We are all spending increasing amounts of time online and there are mixed views about whether digital social interactions are positive or negative. We would like to look at this in more detail and measure young people's feelings of loneliness throughout the day in relation to your different interactions which will allow us to understand more about mental health.

How?

You will be asked to download a smartphone App which you will use for two weeks and share your recent social interactions and how they have made you feel. You will receive four questionnaires each day, which should take less than one minute each to complete. No worries if you don't have your own mobile phone, we will provide you one, and please return to us at the end of the study.

Criteria?

- Aged 12 – 15 years
- Stay in Scotland
- Member of Generation Scotland

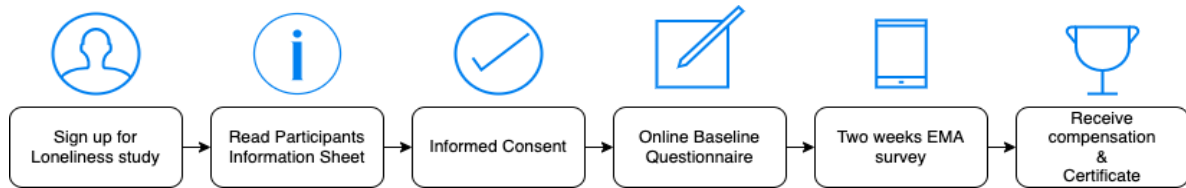
We would like to understand more about the health of people in Scotland over a longer period of time and use the health records and baseline questionnaires that Generation Scotland volunteers complete in order to do this. Therefore, we are asking participants of this study to join Generation Scotland.

You can join Generation Scotland here www.gen.scot

About Generation Scotland

Generation Scotland is the largest family health study in Scotland, and we follow the health and well-being of multiple generations of families over time. We are excited that we can now include young people in our study to help create positive change for the young population's future. Before you signed up for Generation Scotland, your parents/guardians confirmed that you are able to fully understand the questions you have been asked and what you have agreed. Therefore, no further parental consent needs to be obtained for the Loneliness in the Digital World project.

Next Steps



1. Sign up to Generation Scotland
2. Sign up to the Loneliness study
3. Read this Information Sheet
4. Confirm that you consent to join
5. Answer an online 10 minutes questionnaire
6. Download the App (don't worry, I can help you with that)
7. Use the App for two weeks (four times a day)
8. Receive £20 reimbursement and a certificate

Possible Benefits

You will receive £5 for completing the online questionnaire, and up to £15 more depending on the completion rate (i.e., £15 for 70% completion rate; £10 for 50% completion rate; £5 for 30% completion rate; £2 for under 30% completion rate). You will also receive a certificate of participation. Your participation in this study could make a meaningful impact on this important area of research.

Possible Disadvantages

In our study, we'll ask about good and challenging times with friends, loneliness, and mental well-being. If you've had tough social experiences, talk to your parents before deciding to join. If you participate but feel uncomfortable, you can stop anytime without giving a reason. For any worries, talk to your parents or contact Samaritans at 116 123 or Shout at 85258 for text support. Find more information, please go to the Loneliness website <https://www.gslonelinessteens.com/>

Further Support / Information

If you have questions about any aspect of this study, please contact Generation Scotland Teens (genscot_teens@ed.ac.uk), or Zhuoni Xiao (zxiao@ed.ac.uk) or call us [07385 008 242] who will do their best to answer your questions. You can also find a detailed Information Sheet and Parental version on the Loneliness website <https://www.gslonelinessteens.com/>