Using Apps to Support College Student Mental Health

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Mental Health Apps – Rapid Growth

Fit for College Students

- Increased rates of distress and help-seeking

- Abundant barriers to seeking traditional mental health services

- Many students are digital natives

Apps *can* be effective

- Meta-analytic studies demonstrate that smartphone-based interventions are more effective than control conditions in reducing symptoms of anxiety (Firth et al., 2017a) and depression (Firth et al., 2017b)

- Effects smaller when compared to active control conditions

- Effects larger for interventions which incorporated other human/computerized aspects along the smartphone component

The main challenge:
Finding reliable and accurate digital mental health tools

How are people finding apps?

How PsyberGuide Works

Credibility

The Credibility Score represents the strength of the scientific research support for the app itself, and the therapeutic interventions the app provides.

User Experience

Our collaborators use the Mobile App Rating Scale (MARS) to assess the design, accessibility of information, and overall experience that the app provides.

Transparency

The Transparency Score represents the clarity of an app's privacy policy in detailing the data storage and collection procedures of a mobile health product and its associated servers.

Learn more about How PsyberGuide Works

Credibility

- The Credibility Score is a measure of the research support backing an app or digital tool. This measure aims to give users an idea of how likely it is that it will work.

- Apps are scored based on:
  - the level of research support they have
  - who funded the published paper(s) supporting the app's effectiveness
  - how specific the intervention the app proposes is - is it designed to target a specific condition or symptom, to help with overall well-being, or for tracking and monitoring? The more specific the intervention, the higher an app will score here.
  - Apps also receive scores for the number of ratings in app stores, the level of expert clinical input in their development, and how recently they have been updated.

Psyberguide.org

User Experience

- The User Experience rating is an app quality score.

- The Mobile App Rating Scale (MARS) is used to assess the quality of the user experience of apps.

Scoring

App quality scores for

SECTION

A: Engagement Mean Score = _____

B: Functionality Mean Score = _____

C: Aesthetics   Mean Score = _____

D: Information Mean Score = _____

App quality mean Score   = _____

App subjective quality Score = _____

Transparency

Rating	Explanation
Acceptable	A product that has been scored as acceptable has an acceptable level of data transparency; the privacy policy of the product provides sufficient and easily accessible information on the policies related to data collection, storage, and exchange. The information provided conforms to standards for collection, storage, and exchange of health information.
Questionable	A product that has been scored as questionable has a privacy policy that is unclear or lacking specific details of policies surrounding data collection, storage, and exchange or is questionable in its adherence to standards on collection, storage, and exchange of health information.
Unacceptable	A product that has been scored as unacceptable either a) does not have a privacy policy, b) has a privacy policy that excludes important information about data privacy, collection, storage, or exchange, or c) has a privacy policy that outlines practices for data privacy, collection, storage or exchange that do not conform to standards for health information.

Help me find an App

Click the buttons to search for apps related to the specified condition, or treatment type. The results will appear below.

You can click multiple search terms to narrow down the app results by the conditions and/or treatment types that you've clicked.

Once the results have appeared, use the toolbar on the left to filter the results by platform, audience, or cost. You can also sort the results by score or app name using the "sort by" menu in the left toolbar.

Assessments/Screening Chatbot/AI Cognitive Behavioral Principles Cognitive Training

Dialectical Behavior Therapy Gratitude Mindfulness Productivity

Psychoeducation/Information Symptom Tracking/Self-Monitoring

Borderline Personality Disorder Chronic Pain Eating Disorders Mood Disorders

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Phobias PTSD Schizophrenia Sleep

Stress and Anxiety Substance Use

This Way Up

Available For: 🖥

Credibility

5.00 out of 5.00

User Experience

Not Yet Available

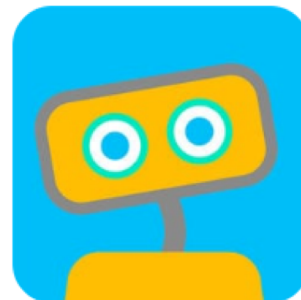**Transparency**

Not Yet Available

Expert Review Available

Mood Disorders | Stress and Anxiety | Cognitive Behavioral Principles

Woebot

Available For: 🍎 🤖

Credibility

4.64 out of 5.00

User Experience

4.38 out of 5.00

Transparency

Acceptable

Expert Review Available

Mood Disorders | Stress and Anxiety | Chatbot/AI | Cognitive Behavioral Principles | Symptom Tracking/Self-Monitoring

Designing and Implementing Digital Mental Health Tools to College Students

- Working with two Illinois state universities to design and implement a student stress management app

- User-centered design work revealed a rich social ecosystem surrounding mental health

- Students do not want to just connect with peers for mental health support, but they also rely on their peers as referral sources and, more generally, as sources of credible knowledge.

- This context shapes students' interest in and willingness to engage with different types of mental health support.

Let's talk more:
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