

PSYC 459
Socioemotional Development in the Digital Age
Winter 2025
See onQ for contact and course information

Overview of course

Children have been growing up with rapidly advancing technological opportunities for many years now, yet we have little understanding of how these experiences, reflect, shape, and interact with child and adolescent socioemotional development. The purpose of this course is to consider socioemotional developmental processes in light of these modern digital realities. Unfortunately, the research that has been done to date has mostly tried to expose potential harms to youth, while research guided by developmental science so far has been sparse. Moreover, not surprisingly, a large amount of research has been of poor quality and/or poorly interpreted. Thus, we will work together to understand this burgeoning area through the lens of ***normative social and emotional development***.

We will begin by first reflecting on the criteria we might use to evaluate causal claims, such as those that may be made about the effects of digital technology on development. Then, we will review core social and emotional developmental theories – one (or more) of these may form the basis of your final paper. This preparatory section will end with a consideration of the many issues with measures and methods in digital research. Over the next 5 class sessions, we will cover material in a roughly chronological order: infancy & toddlerhood, childhood, adolescence, and parenting. Each of these will begin with a class discussion of the central reading for the day. Then, each group, led by a different group member each time, will make a 5-10 minute presentation summarizing and critiquing one study or reading followed by a suggestion/question to get a class discussion started. The last few class sessions will be more open-ended discussion and will leave room for discussing final paper outlines and reflections on the ideas in the course.

Learning Objectives:

- Develop and hone high-level critical inquiry skills
- Review and apply theories of normative social and emotional development
- Critically evaluate research on digital phenomena in youth and families
- Formulate a coherent application of social or emotional developmental theory to digital experiences of youth and/or families

Technology Requirements

All course materials and any course announcements will be available through **onQ**.

There will be various times during class throughout the course when you will be asked to do an internet search or access onQ. Therefore, please bring your laptop or tablet with internet access to each class meeting. Please let the instructor know if this is a problem.

Course Requirements

All material for the course can be found online and distributed by the instructor via onQ. Students are expected to read all assigned readings carefully and critically. It is expected that all students contribute to class discussions as part of their participation.

1. **Initial Opinion Paper (0%).** In first class, in about 1 page provide your current evaluation of social and/or emotional development in the digital age. Emphasize what you think are important factors and how these effects may transpire over time. You are required to submit this, but the assignment itself will not be graded. Failure to submit will result in -10% off your final Opinion Change Paper grade (see below).
2. **Attendance (10%):** As stated in the rules and regulations of Queen's, you are expected to be present at every class. This is especially important for a seminar, where there is group discussion every class. We all really need your input and support as we try to figure out what is going on with children's development.
 - a. Everyone starts with an A for attendance, but this grade will be dropped to the next lower letter grade for every absence that was not acknowledged through email BEFORE the start of class. That is, if you do not send instructor an email that arrives before the start of class (11:30 Thursday) giving notice of your absence, your attendance grade will drop from A to A- (or A- to B+ if it is your second offense).
 - b. An exception may occur when there is documentation of an emergency that prevented you from sending an email beforehand.
3. **Paper Critique and Leading Class Discussion (20%):** Each group will provide 5 critiques of a paper – a 5-to-10-minute review and *critique* of an assigned reading ending with questions for class discussion – that will be led by one student within the group.
4. **Digital Diary Paper (10%).** During any 7-day period in weeks 1-11, keep a digital diary (at least) twice a day for which you answer two questions: what digital experiences did you have since the last report, and how does/did those experiences relate to your emotions and mood? At the end of that week, write a 1-2-page report on what you learned from that experience. You can use any app, Excel, or whatever. There may be some that have push notifications. Paper is due no later than March 26. We will discuss insights at the end of class on March 27th.
5. **Outline for Final Paper (10%):** Each of you will submit a 1-page draft outline on onQ for your final paper *before* class March 20. In class, each student will share their outline with their group and the group will spend 5-10 minutes providing feedback on each.
6. **Opinion Change Paper (10%).** Based on the opinion paper you wrote on the first day of class, you will submit a 2–3-page single spaced paper reflecting on how your thoughts did or did not change from your original evaluation. You can go beyond what you had written originally, but you must include specific responses to your original and provide evidence (and citations) to support your claims. Due *before class* on April 3. We will have an open discussion that day so be prepared to share your thoughts with the class.
7. **Final Paper (40%).** The final paper will be an applied analysis of socioemotional developmental theoretical models in relation to some aspect of digital experiences. The length must be a minimum of 5 pages single spaced with 12-point font and 1" margins. Topics will be provided by week 4 and discussed in more detail as deadline approaches. **DUE Friday April 11th at noon.** Papers will be submitted via TurnItIn on onQ.

Grading. Grades will be given in letter form and the proportions will be applied to the numeric equivalent based on the Arts and Science Letter Grade Input Scheme. Final grades will be converted back to a letter grade based on the Queen's Official Grade Conversion Scale.

Arts & Science Letter Grade Input Scheme

Assignment mark	Numerical value for calculation of final mark
A+	93
A	87
A-	82
B+	78
B	75
B-	72
C+	68
C	65
C-	62
D+	58
D	55

Queen's Official Grade

Conversion Scale

Grade	Numerical Course Average (Range)
A+	90-100
A	85-89
A-	80-84
B+	77-79
B	73-76
B-	70-72
C+	67-69
C	63-66
C-	60-62
D+	57-59
D	53-56

COURSE SCHEDULE

	Date	Topic	Reading (<i>italics = one per group</i>)	Due
1	1/9	Intro		
2	1/16	How do we know anything?		
3	1/23	History	Orben (2020)	
4	1/30	SE Development: A review	Buss, Cole, & Zhou (2019); Moreno & Uhls (2019); Navarro & Tudge (2022)	
5	2/6	Measures & Methods	Orben & Przybylski (2019); Verbeij <i>et al.</i> (2021); Griffioen <i>et al.</i> (2020); Kaye <i>et al.</i> (2020); Satchell <i>et al.</i> (2021); Parry <i>et al.</i> (2021)	Critique/Discussion 1
6	2/13	Infants & Toddlers	Puzio <i>et al.</i> (2022) Coyne <i>et al.</i> (2022); Krogh <i>et al.</i> (2021); Shin <i>et al.</i> (2021); Wan <i>et al.</i> (2021); Coyne <i>et al.</i> (2023)	Critique/Discussion 2
7	2/20	Reading week – no class		
8	2/27	Childhood	Hassinger-Das <i>et al.</i> (2020) Ackerman <i>et al.</i> (2019); Przybylski & Weinstein (2019); Shoshani <i>et al.</i> (2012); Schreurs & Vandenbosch (2021); Beyens <i>et al.</i> (2020)	Critique/Discussion 3
9	3/6	Adolescence	Ehrenreich (2022) Manago <i>et al.</i> (2020); Ehrenreich <i>et al.</i> (2020); Orben & Przybylski (2019); McFarland <i>et al.</i> (2023); Wisniewski <i>et al.</i> (2025)	Critique/Discussion 4
10	3/13	Parenting	Modecki <i>et al.</i> (2022) Stockdale <i>et al.</i> (2020); Krapf-Bar <i>et al.</i> (2022); McDaniel & Radesky (2018); Jensen <i>et al.</i> (2021); Padilla-Walker <i>et al.</i> (2020)	Critique/Discussion 5
11	3/20	Identity	Granic <i>et al.</i> (2020)	Paper outlines
12	3/27	Emotion Regulation and Flourishing	Hollenstein & Faulkner (2024); Rosič <i>et al.</i> (2024)	Digital Diary Paper
13	4/3	Wrap Up		Opinion Paper
	4/11			Final paper

COUSE READINGS

1. Intro (Jan. 9) – no readings
2. How Do We Know Anything? (Jan. 16) – no readings but best to read ahead a few weeks
3. History (Jan. 23)
 - a. Orben, A. (2020). The Sisyphean Cycle of Technology Panics. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 15(5), 1143–1157.
4. Developmental Theories review (Jan. 30)
 - a. Buss, Cole, & Zhou (2019). *Theories of emotional development: Where have we been and where are we now?* In Handbook of emotional development (pp. 7-25). Springer, Cham.
 - b. Moreno, M. A., & Uhls, Y. T. (2019). Applying an affordances approach and a developmental lens to approach adolescent social media use. *Digital health*, 5.
 - c. Navarro & Tudge (2022). Technologizing Bronfenbrenner: Neo-ecological theory. *Current Psychology*, 1-17.
5. Measurement & Methods (Feb. 6; 5 Critique/Discussions)
 - a. Whole class reading (this one is hard – just get the general idea as much as you can):
 - i. Orben & Przybylski (2019). The Association between Adolescent Well-Being and Digital Technology Use. *Nature Human Behaviour* 3, 173–82.
 - b. Critique/Discussions:
 - i. Kaye, L., Orben, A., Ellis, D., Hunter, S., & Houghton, S. (2020). The conceptual and methodological mayhem of “screen time”. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(10), 3661.
 - ii. Satchell, L. P., Fido, D., Harper, C. A., Shaw, H., Davidson, B., Ellis, D. A., ... & Pavetich, M. (2021). Development of an Offline-Friend Addiction Questionnaire (O-FAQ): Are most people really social addicts? *Behavior Research Methods*, 53(3), 1097-1106.
 - iii. Verbeij, T., Pouwels, J. L., Beyens, I., & Valkenburg, P. M. (2021). The accuracy and validity of self-reported social media use measures among adolescents. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 3, 100090.
 - iv. Parry, D. A., Davidson, B. I., Sewall, C. J., Fisher, J. T., Mieczkowski, H., & Quintana, D. S. (2021). A systematic review and meta-analysis of discrepancies between logged and self-reported digital media use. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 5(11), 1535-1547.
 - v. Griffioen, N., van Rooij, M., Lichtwarck-Aschoff, A., & Granic, I. (2020). Toward improved methods in social media research. *Technology, Mind, and Behavior*.
6. Infants & Toddlers (Feb. 13; 5 Critique/Discussions)
 - a. Puzio, D., Makowska, I., & Rymarczyk, K. (2022). Raising the Child—Do Screen Media Help or Hinder? The Quality over Quantity Hypothesis. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 19(16), 9880.
 - b. Critique/Discussions
 - i. Coyne, S. M., Shawcroft, J., Gale, M., Reich, S. M., Linder, L., McDaniel, B., ... & Booth, M. (2022). Digital distraction or accessible aid? Parental media use during feedings and parent-infant attachment, dysfunction, and relationship quality. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 127, 107051.

- ii. Wan, M. W., Fitch-Bunce, C., Heron, K., & Lester, E. (2021). Infant screen media usage and social-emotional functioning. *Infant Behavior and Development*, 62,.
 - iii. Krogh, M. T., Egmoose, I., Stuart, A. C., Madsen, E. B., Haase, T. W., & Væver, M. S. (2021). A longitudinal examination of daily amounts of screen time and technofence in infants aged 2–11 months and associations with maternal sociodemographic factors. *Infant Behavior and Development*, 63
 - iv. Shin, E., Choi, K., Resor, J., & Smith, C. L. (2021). Why do parents use screen media with toddlers? The role of child temperament and parenting stress in early screen use. *Infant Behavior and Development*, 64,.
 - v. Coyne, S. M., Reschke, P. J., Stockdale, L., Gale, M., Shawcroft, J., Gentile, D. A., ... & Ober, M. (2023). Silencing screaming with screens: The longitudinal relationship between media emotion regulation processes and children's emotional reactivity, emotional knowledge, and empathy. *Emotion*.
7. READING WEEK FEB. 20 – NO CLASS
8. Childhood (Feb. 27; 5 Critique/Discussions)
- a. Hassinger-Das, B., Brennan, S., Dore, R. A., Golinkoff, R. M., & Hirsh-Pasek, K. (2020). Children and screens. *Annual Review of Developmental Psychology*, 2(1), 69-92.
 - b. Critique/Discussions:
 - i. Ackerman, Carson, Corretti, Ehrenreich, Meter, & Underwood (2019). Experiences with warmth in middle childhood predict features of text-message communication in early adolescence. *Developmental Psychology*, 55(2), 351–365.
 - ii. Przybylski & Weinstein (2019). Digital screen time limits and young children's psychological well-being: Evidence from a population-based study. *Child Development*, 90(1), e56-e65.
 - iii. Shoshani, A., Braverman, S., & Meirow, G. (2021). Video games and close relations: Attachment and empathy as predictors of children's and adolescents' video game social play and socio-emotional functioning. *Computers in Human behavior*, 114, 106578.
 - iv. Schreurs, L., & Vandenbosch, L. (2021). Introducing the Social Media Literacy (SMILE) model with the case of the positivity bias on social media. *Journal of Children and Media*, 15(3), 320-337.
 - v. Beyens, Pouwels, van Driel, Keijsers, & Valkenburg (2020). The effect of social media on well-being differs from adolescent to adolescent. *Scientific Reports*, 10(1), 1-11.
9. Adolescence (Mar. 6; 5 Critique/Discussions)
- a. Ehrenreich (2022). *Peer Relationship Processes in the Context of Digital Media*. Handbook of Adolescent Digital Media Use and Mental Health, 85-103.
 - b. Critique/Discussions:
 - i. Manago, Brown, Lawley, & Anderson (2020). Adolescents' daily face-to-face and computer-mediated communication: Associations with autonomy and closeness to parents and friends. *Developmental Psychology*, 56(1), 153–164.

- ii. McFarland, Sean, Tse Yen Tan, Kalee De France, and Jessica D. Hoffmann (2023). Taking a nuanced look at adolescent technology use and negative affect: the protective role of preparedness. *Frontiers in Psychiatry* 14.
 - iii. Ehrenreich, S. E., Beron, K. J., Burnell, K., Meter, D. J., & Underwood, M. K. (2020). How adolescents use text messaging through their high school years. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 30(2), 521-540.
 - iv. Wisniewski, P., Park, J., Badillo-Urquiola, K., Gabrielli, J., Doty, J. L., & Hartikainen, H. (2025). Moving Beyond Fear and Restriction to Promoting Adolescent Resilience and Intentional Technology Use. In *Handbook of Children and Screens* (pp. 403-410). Springer, Cham.
 - v. Orben, A., & Przybylski, A. K. (2019). Screens, teens, and psychological well-being: Evidence from three time-use-diary studies. *Psychological science*, 30(5), 682-696.
10. Parenting (Mar. 13; 5 Critique/Discussions)
- a. Modecki et al., (2022). What Is Digital Parenting? A Systematic Review of Past Measurement and Blueprint for the Future. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*.
 - b. Critique/Discussions
 - i. Stockdale, L. A., Porter, C. L., Coyne, S. M., Essig, L. W., Booth, M., Keenan-Kroff, S., & Schvaneveldt, E. (2020). Infants' response to a mobile phone modified still-face paradigm: Links to maternal behaviors and beliefs regarding technoference. *Infancy*, 25(5), 571-592.
 - ii. Krapf-Bar, D., Davidovitch, M., Rozenblatt-Perkal, Y., & Gueron-Sela, N. (2022). Maternal mobile phone use during mother–child interactions interferes with the process of establishing joint attention. *Developmental Psychology*, 58(9), 1639–1651.
 - iii. McDaniel, B. T., & Radesky, J. S. (2018). Technoference: Parent distraction with technology and associations with child behavior problems. *Child Development*, 89(1), 100-109.
 - iv. Jensen et al., (2021). Does Adolescent Digital Technology Use Detract from the Parent–Adolescent Relationship? *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 31, 469 - 481.
 - v. Padilla-Walker, L. M., Stockdale, L. A., Son, D., Coyne, S. M., & Stinnett, S. C. (2020). Associations between parental media monitoring style, information management, and prosocial and aggressive behaviors. *Journal of social and personal relationships*, 37(1), 180-200.
11. Identity Development (Mar. 20)
- a. Granic, I., Morita, H., & Scholten, H. (2020). Beyond Screen Time: Identity Development in the Digital Age. *Psychological Inquiry*, 31(3), 195 - 223.
12. Digital Emotion Regulation and Flourishing (Mar. 27)
- a. Hollenstein, T. & Faulkner, K. (2024). Adolescent digital emotion regulation. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 34, 1341-1351.
 - b. Rosič, J., Schreurs, L., Janicke-Bowles, S. H., & Vandenbosch, L. (2024). Trajectories of digital flourishing in adolescence: The predictive roles of developmental changes and digital divide factors. *Child Development*.

Communication

Any email sent to the instructor must have “PSYC459” in the subject line.

During class and with every onQ post or email to each other, you must be respectful and considerate. When providing feedback, make suggestions for how to improve or provide questions at points where you did not understand.

Academic Integrity

Queen’s students, faculty, administrators and staff all have responsibilities for upholding the [fundamental values of academic integrity](#); honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage. These values are central to the building, nurturing, and sustaining of an academic community in which all members of the community will thrive. Adherence to the values expressed through academic integrity forms a foundation for the "freedom of inquiry and exchange of ideas" essential to the intellectual life of the University (see the [Senate Report on Principles and Priorities](#)).

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the regulations concerning academic integrity and for ensuring that their assignments and their behaviour conform to the principles of academic integrity. Information on academic integrity is available in the Arts and Science Calendar (see [Academic Regulation 1](#)), on the [Arts and Science website](#), and from the instructor of this course. Departures from academic integrity include plagiarism, use of unauthorized materials, facilitation, forgery, use of forged materials, contract cheating, unauthorized use of intellectual property, unauthorized collaboration, failure to abide by academic rules, departure from the core values of academic integrity, and falsification, and are antithetical to the development of an academic community at Queen's. Given the seriousness of these matters, actions which contravene the regulation on academic integrity carry sanctions appropriate to the severity of the departure that can range from a warning or the loss of grades on an assignment to the failure of a course to a requirement to withdraw from the university.

Plagiarism

Because this course requires the submission of original writing assignments, each student is responsible to know and understand what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. Regardless of how and where you retrieve information for your written assignments (see paragraph on AI below), the principles of academic integrity apply. Please visit these helpful websites to help you make sure that you are able to write things in ***your own words***:

<https://www.queensu.ca/academicintegrity/students/avoiding-plagiarismcheating>

<https://integrity.mit.edu/handbook/academic-writing/avoiding-plagiarism-paraphrasing>

http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_paraphrase.html

Generative AI tools for writing: Although generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT) provide useful tools, **you cannot submit a proposal assignment for grading which has whole sentences copied from AI output.** That would be plagiarism (see previous paragraph). Writing is thinking – so if you did not write it, you did not think it. Building up YOUR critical thinking skills is the very point of this, or any, course. However, there is no reason to expect that some of you won’t use AI tools on your way towards your own, self-written papers. But I strongly recommend you do not use these tools instead of reading scientific papers and original sources – your goal is to mimic the form and style of these and the only way to achieve that is

to actually read. If you have read and understand this policy, email the instructor your favourite generative AI program name.

Turnitin

This course makes use of Turnitin, a third-party application that helps maintain standards of excellence in academic integrity. Normally, students will be required to submit their course assignments through onQ to Turnitin. In doing so, students' work will be included as source documents in the Turnitin reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarized text in this course. Data from submissions is also collected and analyzed by Turnitin for detecting Artificial Intelligence ([AI-generated text](#)). These results are not reported to your instructor at this time but could be in the future.

Turnitin is a suite of tools that provide instructors with information about the authenticity of submitted work and facilitates the process of grading. The similarity report generated after an assignment file is submitted produces a similarity score for each assignment. A similarity score is the percentage of writing that is similar to content found on the internet or the Turnitin extensive database of content. Turnitin does not determine if an instance of plagiarism has occurred. Instead, it gives instructors the information they need to determine the authenticity of work as a part of a larger process.

Please read Turnitin's [Privacy Policy](#), [Acceptable Use Policy](#) and [End-User License Agreement](#), which govern users' relationship with Turnitin. Also, please note that Turnitin uses cookies and other tracking technologies; however, in its service contract with Queen's Turnitin has agreed that neither Turnitin nor its third-party partners will use data collected through cookies or other tracking technologies for marketing or advertising purposes. For further information about how you can exercise control over cookies, see [Turnitin's Privacy Policy](#).

Turnitin may provide other services that are not connected to the purpose for which Queen's University has engaged Turnitin. Your independent use of Turnitin's other services is subject solely to Turnitin's Terms of Service and Privacy Policy, and Queen's University has no liability for any independent interaction you choose to have with Turnitin.

Accommodations for Disabilities

Queen's University is committed to achieving full accessibility for people with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all their academic activities. The Senate Policy for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities was approved at [Senate in November 2016](#). If you are a student with a disability and think you may need academic accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact the Queen's Student Accessibility Services (QSAS) and register as early as possible. For more information, including important deadlines, please visit the [QSAS website](#).

Academic Consideration for Students in Extenuating Circumstances

Academic consideration is a process for the university community to provide a compassionate response to assist students experiencing unforeseen, short-term extenuating circumstances that may impact or impede a student's ability to complete their academics. This may include but is not limited to:

- Short-term physical or mental health issues (e.g., stomach flu, pneumonia, COVID diagnosis, vaccination, etc.)

- Responses to traumatic events (e.g., Death of a loved one, divorce, sexual assault, social injustice, etc.)
- Requirements by law or public health authorities (e.g., court date, isolation due to COVID exposure, etc.)

Queen's University is committed to providing academic consideration to students experiencing extenuating circumstances. For more information, please see the [Senate Policy on Academic Consideration for Students in Extenuating Circumstances](#).

Each Faculty has developed a protocol to provide a consistent and equitable approach in dealing with requests for academic consideration for students facing extenuating circumstances. Arts and Science undergraduate students can find the Faculty of Arts and Science protocol and [the portal where a request can be submitted](#). Students in other Faculties and Schools who are enrolled in this course should refer to the protocol for their home Faculty.

For guidance on submitting requests, please see refer to the Resource Guides available on the [Academic Consideration website](#) under "Applying for Academic Consideration."

If you need to request academic consideration for this course, you will be required to provide the following name and email address to ensure it reaches our team accordingly:

Instructor Name: **Tara Karasewich**
Instructor email address: **psyc.accom@Queensu.ca**

Students are encouraged to submit requests as soon as the need becomes apparent and to contact their Professors/Course Coordinators as soon as possible once Consideration has been verified. Any delay in contact may limit the Consideration options available.

Please follow up by emailing the instructor within 2 days of receiving verification of your Consideration request.

For more information on the Academic Consideration process, what is and is not an extenuating circumstance, and to submit an Academic Consideration request, please see the [website](#).