Abstract

Digital technology use (i.e. digital activity) has been proposed to contribute to a decline in adolescents' mental health. In this talk, Prof. Barke will present a new model, developed with colleagues, of how risky digital activity may increase depressed mood via reciprocal pathways, creating negative developmental cycles. Specifically, he hypothesized that risky digital activity increases depressed mood by evoking frequent and persistent negative affective (e.g. anger) and cognitive reactions (e.g. "I feel stupid"). These effects, Prof. Barke postulates, are compounded when depressed mood further increases both risky digital activity and negative affective and cognitive reactions to it. The model also proposes that these negative impacts of risky digital activity can be mitigated by actively managing it and/or the reactions it evokes. All pathways are hypothesized to be moderated by nondigital factors. He will then describe the DIORA (Dynamic Interplay of On-line Research and Resilience in Adolescence) longitudinal study designed to test this model over a 12-month period. Next, he will introduce two new self-report questionnaire measures assessing, (i) specific digital activities and the reactions they evoke (The Digital Activity and Feeling Inventory; DAFI) and; (ii) young people's perceptions of digital risk and its management (My Life On-line; MYLO). Finally, he will present DIORA data to test elements of the model.