



**YOUNGMINDS**  
fighting for young people's mental health

**NHS**  
South London  
and Maudsley  
NHS Foundation Trust

**KING'S**  
*College*  
**LONDON**

## INFORMATION SHEET FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 13-15 YEARS OLD

*Ethical Clearance Reference Number: 20/LO/1187*

### **Study title**

Social media, Smartphone use and Self-harm in Young People (or 3S-YP for short)

### **You are invited to take part in a research study**

Before you decide, it is important you understand why we are doing this study and what taking part will involve. Please read this information sheet carefully and talk about it with your parent/carer. Your parent/carer will have a separate information sheet for them to read. Ask us if there is anything that you don't understand or you want more information - our contact details are on page 5.

### **1. Why are we doing this study?**

Many young people use social media (for example, Instagram) and have a smartphone. Although this technology is useful, there is concern about their effects on mental health and wellbeing. For example, studies have found that night-time use is related to poor sleep as well as mood changes. However, we don't know exactly how social media and smartphone use can impact on mental health, nor do we know how usage can change in association with changes in mental health.

In this study, we want to understand how social media and smartphone use are associated with changes in mental health and wellbeing in young people over the course of a year. Everyone is different which is why it's important for us to involve young people with a range of experiences to ensure our study best represents everyone. The information from this study will help us learn when and what type of support would be useful for young people who are experiencing difficulties. This study is being done by researchers at King's College London in partnership with the charity YoungMinds. You can find out more about YoungMinds from their website: [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk).

## **2. Why have I been invited to take part in this study?**

You are invited to take part because when you were seen at a mental health service in South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, you or your parent agreed researchers could contact you about relevant studies to find out if you would be interested in taking part. You are the right age to take part in this study as we want to understand the experiences of young people aged between 13-25 years old.

## **3. Do I have to take part?**

No! It is entirely up to you. Just tell your parent/carer or us if you don't want to take part.

## **4. What would taking part involve?**

If you want to take part and your parent/carer agrees, you will need to confirm this by completing an assent form and your parent/carer will need to confirm this by completing a consent form. Taking part in this study will involve us collecting the following information from you over the next 6 months: (1) your answers to an initial questionnaire and then a shorter questionnaire once a month; (2) your use of a smartphone; (3) your use of social media; and (4) relevant information from your health records. See the details below. If you don't have a smartphone or use social media just let us know, you can still take part in the rest of the study.

You and your parent/carer should indicate on the assent and consent forms what information you agree for us to collect. We will only collect information that you have both agreed for us to collect. We will also ask you if we can contact you in the future about other studies we are doing. You will be able to save a copy of the assent and consent forms for your records. Once you and your parent/carer have completed the assent and consent forms, you will need to follow the steps on the screen to start taking part.

## **5. What information will be collected from me?**

### **(1) Questionnaires**

You will be given a link to install our study app on your smartphone.

You will be asked to complete a confidential questionnaire about your mental health and wellbeing via our app. Or if you prefer, we can give you a link to complete it online. It will take about 15 minutes to complete. You can complete it at a time that suits you. There are no right or wrong answers.

We will then send you a reminder on the 1st of every month for the next 6 months to ask you to complete a shorter questionnaire. These will take about 5-10 minutes to

complete. If you don't respond to the last questionnaire, we may email or post it to you to give you another opportunity to tell us how you are doing.

## (2) Use of a smartphone

You will be asked to give us permission to collect information via our app over the next 6 months about how much you use your smartphone. This type of information is called metadata. For example, how much time you spend on your phone per day and how much time you spend on your phone apps. We will not be collecting any information about what you are doing in the apps. If you're using an Android device, you may need to go to the Settings app on your phone to approve the 3S-YP app permissions.

## (3) Use of social media

You will be asked to give us permission to collect information over the next 6 months on your use of social media. We will ask you to provide a copy of your data when you join the study and again, 3 and 6 months later. We will send you the instructions on how to do this. We would collect the time of your "likes" and posts on social media and the content of your posts on social media. We would like to collect this information from any accounts you may have on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube. We may contact you during the study to ask if you would be happy to add other social media platforms that become popular among young people. You will be able to choose which, if any, of your accounts we can collect information from.

Below are examples of information we would and would not collect, using a fictional participant 'Adam' and their friend 'Sam'.

Examples of information that we would collect:

- We would collect a comment by Adam on one of Sam's status updates, including the time and content of the comment, without collecting Sam's status update itself, as Sam is not taking part in the study and his account is private.
- We would collect the fact that Adam "liked" a post by Sam, including the time it took place, but we would not collect Sam's post itself, as Sam is not taking part in the study and his account is private.
- We would collect the fact that Adam "liked" a public post by the BBC, including the time it took place, but we would also collect the post that was "liked" as it is public.

Examples of information that we would not collect:

- We would not collect anything posted by Sam as he is not taking part in the study and his account is private, nor would we record that he is a friend or contact of Adam's.

- We would not collect Adam's private Facebook messages or direct Instagram or Twitter messages.

We would not collect posts that Adam "likes", unless those posts are public, we will collect only the "like" action and the time it took place.

#### (4) Health records

South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust maintains health records for all their patients, which includes notes made by healthcare professionals. We would like your permission to collect relevant information from your records about when and why you've used mental health services at the Trust. It will help us to understand how services are being used by the young people taking part in this study. This information is difficult to get using surveys because it is hard to remember details, like dates and times, and what therapy or treatments were used. This information will be used for research purposes only. To access the information, we will need to share your name, date of birth and NHS number with the Trust so they can identify your records. We will not provide the Trust with any of the information you have given the study. We will look at your records at the Trust and only minimal information will be securely transferred from the system containing the information to a secure server managed by King's College London.

### **6. Is there anything I need to be worried about if I take part?**

There may be some questions that you find difficult or upsetting. If you are not comfortable answering any of the questions, you can skip them and move on. You can also take a break and come back to it or stop completing it if you want to.

**Please note, we are not able to offer you any medical advice or support.** We will not be analysing the information we collect in this study until we have finished so we are unlikely to know if you need support. If you think you need support, you should speak to your parent/carer, GP or other healthcare provider, or call NHS 111, as soon as possible. If you need urgent medical care, please go with your parent/carer to a local hospital Emergency Department or call 999. You will also find details for other organisations that you might find helpful on our website: <https://3syp.co.uk/useful-contacts.html>.

### **7. What if I change my mind?**

If you do decide to take part, you can change your mind about taking part at any time during the study without giving a reason. Just let us know if you no longer want to take part. Stopping taking part will not affect you in any way. Information collected up until that time will still be used unless you ask us not to.

## **8. Will the study help me?**

No, but you may find it helpful to anonymously disclose your experiences and feelings. You may like taking part in a study that will help us understand how to better help other young people in the future.

## **9. Payment**

We will send you a £10 Love2Shop voucher as a thank you when you start taking part in the study and then a £5 Love2Shop voucher as a thank you for every month that you continue to take part. At the end of the study, you will get an additional £10 Love2Shop voucher if you have provided your social media data at 6 months. We will also send you a Certificate of Participation as a thank you for your contribution to this research.

## **10. Will my information be confidential?**

King's College London is responsible for making sure your information is stored and used properly. King's College London will keep identifiable information about you for 10 years after the study has finished. People who do not need to know who you are will not be able to see your name or contact details. Your information will have a code number instead. We will keep all your information strictly confidential. The only time we may need to break confidentiality is if we are aware of a serious risk to you or to someone else, in which case we may need to share this information with the relevant authorities. But we would contact you and your parent/carer first to discuss it. At the end of the study, we will write a report about the results. We will write it in a way that no-one can work out that you took part in the study. A summary of the results will be available on the study website: [www.3syp.com](http://www.3syp.com).

## **11. How can I find out more about this study?**

Your parent/carer may be able to answer your questions. You can also ask us if you have any questions.

You can contact the Study Coordinator, Dr Amanda Bye, by email at [3syp@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:3syp@kcl.ac.uk) or call 07775 247 753.

Or you can contact the Chief Investigator, Dr Rina Dutta, by email at [rina.dutta@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:rina.dutta@kcl.ac.uk).

**Thank you for taking the time to read this – please ask us if you have any questions**