

Data for Children Collaborative with UNICEF

IMPACT COLLABORATIONS Challenge Question

Reference Number	ICMLH01
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Challenge Question

Prevention of adolescent mental health conditions: Is technology a possible source for good?

Background & Detail

Approximately half of all poor mental health conditions manifest by early adolescence, and available evidence suggests that around 10 to 20 percent of children and adolescents experience one of these conditions. Yet, serious data gaps remain around the magnitude of the problem, and what countries can do about it. In June, The GovLab partnered with UNICEF's Health and HIV team in the Division of Data, Analysis, Planning & Monitoring and the Data for Children Collaborative to undertake a consultation process with over 70 experts from around the world, including youth advocates, to examine and prioritize aspects of adolescent mental health based on a comprehensive topic mapping. The topic mapping covered aspects related to adolescent mental health on three levels: systems, community, and individual and family. The results from the two virtual workshops conducted as part of the consultation process found that prevention and promotion of adolescent mental health emerged as the top priority for those in attendance, coupled with concern over adolescent use of technology.

Based on these findings and the urgent need for prevention-based programs, the Data for Children Collaborative with UNICEF is looking to leverage data and data science techniques to explore ways online content (including associated platforms and applications) can be used for adolescent mental health prevention-related services. The topic is multi-layered and involves first assessing how adolescents engage with online content, services; identifying platforms for providing social support to adolescents or chat forums where adolescents convene to discuss issues of relevance to their well-being; and providing recommendations for prevention services. Other possible questions relate to how social media impacts stigma around mental health conditions, and whether, for instance, the use of certain content or search query correlates with or can predict a particular state of mind.

The aim of this collaboration is to understand how online content and social media platforms can be used to prevent adolescent mental health conditions.

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Desired Outcome

A publicly accessible report, which will be used by UNICEF as well as other third, public and private sector organisations for program development and to advise country partners, which provides a list of recommendations of how online content and social media platforms can be used to prevent adolescent mental health conditions.

Challenge Sponsor(s)

UNICEF

Stakeholder(s)

UNICEF and Scottish Government

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Skill Sets

below are the broad skill sets needed to meet this challenge. It is likely that there may be additional skills required. We encourage applicants to propose capabilities that may lie out with the skills below, as these will also be considered when forming a collaboration.

Data Science, Engineering and Analysis

- **Data Engineering**
- **Data Analysis**
- **Social Media Analysis**
- **Computational Social Science**

Description: The team will seek to gain insight from the way adolescents interact with online content. Data will come from a broad variety of sources, both traditional and novel. The team will need to navigate these engineering challenges and work in collaboration with topic experts to perform suitable analysis in order to answer the questions posed.

Estimated proportion of project time: 50-75%

Adolescent Mental Health

- **Clinical Research**
- **Policy Creation and Implementation**

Description: The team addressing this challenge question will need good understanding of issues that face adolescents. Knowledge of research around prevention methodologies and the challenges of implementing these methodologies will be key to answering this question.

Estimated proportion of project time: 35-25%

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Additional Information

Funding Availability

For this challenge question, The Data for Children Collaborative can fund project partners a portion of up to £92,000. The funding available to individual organisations will be dependent on the agreed contribution to the project once the collaboration has been formed and delivery plan approved.

We welcome applications from all sectors (private / public / third / academia) and encourage submissions from any team looking to do any in kind Data for Good work to develop their expertise.

If possible, we encourage private sector partners to provide time pro-bono. Funding is available at 70% of total contribution with 30% match funded through in-kind contributions. *This is an experimental development project and VAT will not apply to any agreed funding.*

Academic partners will receive 80% FEC.

Timescales & Deliverability

We would aim for the collaboration to begin work on a project by 1st November 2020. We envisage that a project addressing this challenge question should take approximately 6 months. The deadline for submissions is 11th September 2020 with the collaboration workshop taking place week commencing 21st September 2020.