Purpose and life satisfaction during adolescence: the role of meaning in life, social support, and problematic digital use

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## Sample

Public school students in mid-adolescence volunteered to participate in this study. These students were deemed sufficiently mature and reflective to provide a range of responses to the questionnaire. The sample included 193 participants aged 14–18, 50% of whom were female. 73.0% of the sample was secular and 27.0% were religious

## Implications For Parents About

Parenting guidance / support

# Abstract

This study examined the characteristics of youth with different types of purpose in life, as well as the associations between adolescents’ life satisfaction, purpose in life, meaning in life, social support, and
problematic digital use. The sample included 193 participants aged 14–18 who completed self-report questionnaires on life satisfaction, purpose in life, meaning in life, social support, and problematic digital use. The following purpose in life clusters were found: (1) other-oriented goals (n = 33); (2) self-oriented goals (n = 42); and (3) both other- and self-oriented goals (n = 107).
Adolescents with both self- and other-oriented goals had significantly higher life satisfaction, meaning in life, and social support compared to the other groups. Meaning in life and greater support from parents and teachers were significantly associated with greater life satisfaction. In addition, having other-oriented
goals was associated with lower life satisfaction. Finally, support from parents (p = 0.05) mediated the association between problematic digital use and life satisfaction. Findings are discussed in light of previous research and the theoretical and practical implications are examined.

# Outcome

The current study found a significant correlation between higher levels of problematic digital use and lower levels of life satisfaction (Blau, Goldberg Benolol, 2018). In addition, the findings confirm that problematic digital use is significantly associated with lower levels of support from parents and close friends. Namely, the findings indicate that problematic digital use is associated with lower levels of social support from parents, which are in turn associated with lower satisfaction with life. It seems that having insufficient social support from parents is a risk factor for problematic digital use. In addition, problematic digital use may lead to increased social isolation, resulting in exacerbation of existing social functioning problems and decreased communication with parents, leading to a greater decline in social support. However, it is plausible
that problematic digital use is only one possible determinant of adolescents’ life satisfaction and/or one possible result of social dysfunction and lack of social support, and that there are other stronger correlates