Shall I call, text, post it online or just tell it face-to-face? How and why Flemish adolescents choose to share their emotions on- or offline

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## Sample

22 Flemish adolescents, that was diverse regarding sex (59.1% females), age (14–18), and type of education (general:12, technical:3, arts:4, vocational:3)

# Abstract

Social sharing of emotions is a frequently used emotion regulation
strategy. This study adds to the emotion regulation literature and
the affordances of technologies perspective by providing a better
understanding of with whom adolescents share emotions on- and
offline, how they do this and why they use certain modes. In-depth
interviews with 22 Flemish adolescents (aged 14–18) show that
these youngsters share almost all experienced emotions, often
with multiple recipients and using multiple communication modes.
Although they mostly prefer sharing emotions face-to-face, they also
share by texting, calling, or posting something on Twitter, Facebook,
Snapchat, or Instagram. Our respondents generally make a more or
less conscious decision about what and how to share. The valence,
type, and intensity of the emotion, the affordances of the mode, social
norms, and impression management concerns influence this decision.

# Outcome

"All respondents preferred FTF communication. They really like the rich non-verbal cues in FTF communication; they could express their emotions more clearly FTF, see their body language and hear the intonation and reduce misinterpretation. Furthermore, they found the feedback and support of a higher quality. When FTF isn't possible, instead of waiting they often chose to call to talk about it or to send a text with the whole story or with just an abstract or teaser, so they could talk about it when they saw each other.
Although texting is lean in cues, they also often chose to text when talking FTF was not possible, because it is the standard mode of mediated communication and is inexpensive or free and “easy,”. Although calling is richer in cues, they felt less confident doing so, especially non-video calling since they felt less in control. In certain situations, they
preferred texting above talking FTF because they found it easier, liked to think about what and how to say it, and to be able to reread the messages of others on a later time to re-experience the feedback.
Concerned about their image and wanted to be liked by others, most of them would not do or post anything that could elicit negative feedback or damage their reputation. They do are aware that online not only their friends were watching, but also acquaintances and sometimes even strangers. When sharing negative or more private emotions, there was a greater risk of misuse of their information and be used against them. Yet, when they felt good about or are proud of, they wanted to share it with a whole bunch of people: all their family members and/or friends or even with acquaintances." (Vermeulen et al., 2018, pp. 86-91)