

GROWING UP DIGITAL AUSTRALIA

Finding Balance and Wellness in a Digital Age

Wellbeing Australia Education Summit

6th September 2021



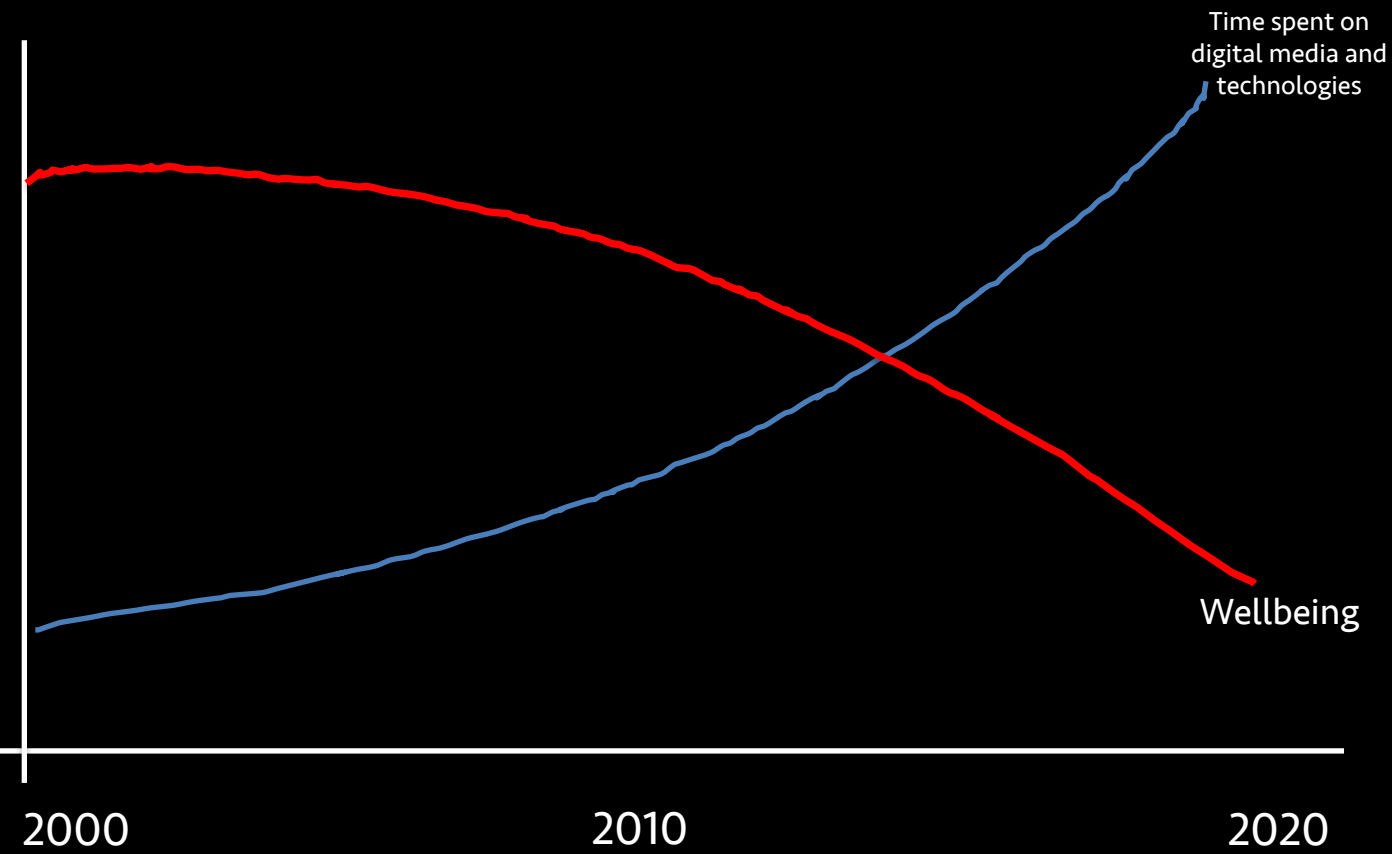
pasi_sahlberg

“Well-being includes the presence of positive emotions and moods (e.g., contentment, happiness) and the absence of negative emotions (e.g., depression, anxiety), satisfaction with life, fulfillment and positive functioning.”

– The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

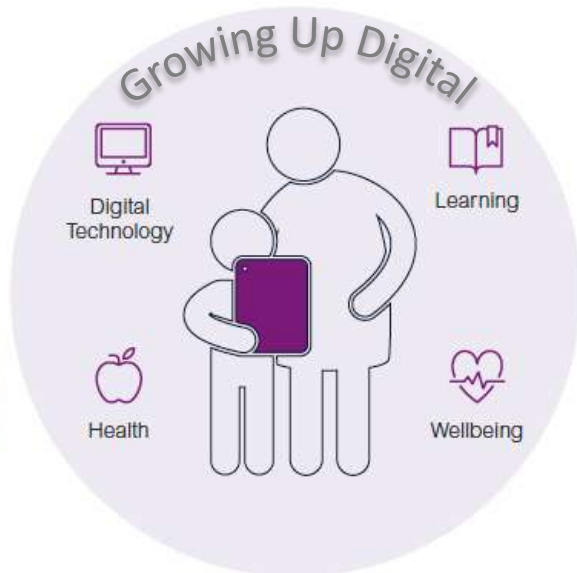
My thesis:

“Teacher well-being is linked to student well-being at school. When students are not well, that affects negatively teachers’ work, emotions and well-being. Hence, there is no teacher well-being without student well-being.”





2020
Phase 2:
Parent and Grandparent Perspectives



2019
Phase 1:
Teacher and Principal Perspectives

2022
Phase 3:
Young People's Perspectives



Growing Up Digital Australia

Phase 1: Teachers



1876

respondents



48%

have more than **20 years** teaching experience



73%

are female



48%

are teachers



31%

are principals



16%

are administrators



95%

work in primary and secondary schools



26%

work in rural, remote and regional schools

Phase 2: Parents

2500 parents



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



“Most teachers acknowledge the benefits of technology. But 84% of Australian teachers think that digital technologies are a growing distraction in school.”

Australian classrooms are becoming more complex places to teach and learn.

In the last 3-5 years, students with:



Emotional challenges
have increased
94%



Social challenges
have increased
93%



Behaviour problems
have increased
93%

Cognitive challenges
have increased
84%

“Smartphones are a distraction not just for student who owns them but also for other children who do not have them and for the teacher . This start stop routine is affecting their brain and reducing concentration spans.”



59%

observed a **decline**
in students' overall
readiness to learn.

“With 20 years of teaching experience I have noticed a significant decrease in students ability to focus and concentrate, a significant increase in the number of students with social emotional and physical needs.”

Parenting is harder than it used to be.

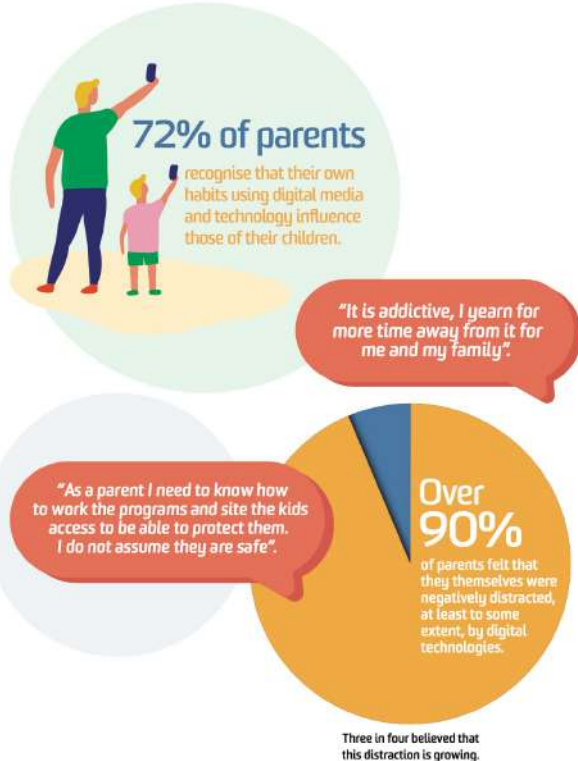


83% of parents think that their children are negatively distracted by digital technologies.

3 of 4 parents

think it is harder to control their child's digital habits since they have got their own screen-based device.

Parents know they are role models but are distracted.



“Digital technologies affect teachers, too”

2 in 3

say technology is a growing distraction in their life.



89%

aged 25 or younger agreed that digital **technology poses an increasing distraction.**



24%

felt they were addicted to digital technology, and this number increased to **61% aged 25 or younger.**

These results indicate that **younger educators** are most at risk of the **negative effects of technology** overuse.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Digital media and technologies are powerful tools that enable new ways to teach and learn, but at the same time they disrupt, distract and disturb teachers' work that often harm their well-being and health.
2. Negative distraction caused by problematic interactive media use (PIMU) is a common challenge among teachers and students in schools in homes as well. It is often associated to declining well-being.
3. Digital wellness is an important part of teacher, student and family well-being, and efforts to improve it need to engage each and everyone. We're all in this together.

What to do?

1. Avoid binary solutions to complex problems. Instead, consider some of the following: social and emotional learning, positive education/schools, mindfulness, relationships, student engagement, and play
2. Adopt a whole-school or whole-community approach to more ethical and healthy use of technology. Study what we know about it, engage in conversations with others, and lead school-wide or community-wide action for change.
3. Arrange 'digital diet' experiments in your school with families. Try to step away from optional online life for a while, experience more analog activities, and reset values for good life in your school.

Final word

Well-being in school (both student and teacher) is often addressed by good intentioned projects and campaigns. But why do we assume that these initiatives can improve well-being in the schoolhouse if other aspects of the education system are perpetrating student and teacher ill-being?

THANK YOU!

