# Disclosure of Potential Conflicts of Interest

PRESENTER DISCLOSURE

Greo has received funds in the last three years from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (Canada), social responsibility arms of Canadian crown corporations with responsibility to conduct and manage gambling, non-profits, charities, and post-secondary institutions (Canada), New Zealand Ministry of Health, regulatory settlement funds (Great Britain), third-sector charities (Great Britain), and other international regulators.

In the last two years in my previous role at the Responsible Gambling Council, I worked on projects funded by the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (Canada), Carleton University (Canada), iGaming Ontario (Canada), Greo (Canada/UK), International Center for Responsible Gaming (US), MGM Resorts International (US), GambleAware (UK) and Playtech (UK).

- Our platforms
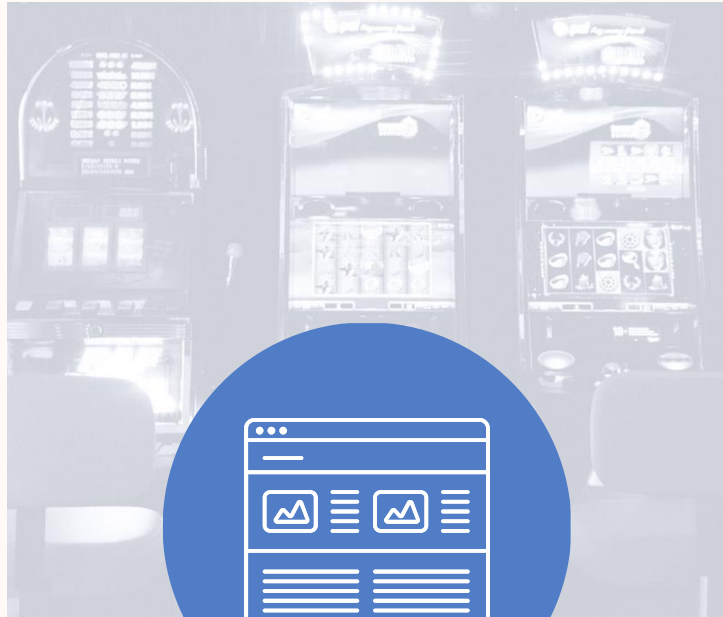
world's largest
international gambling
evidence centre
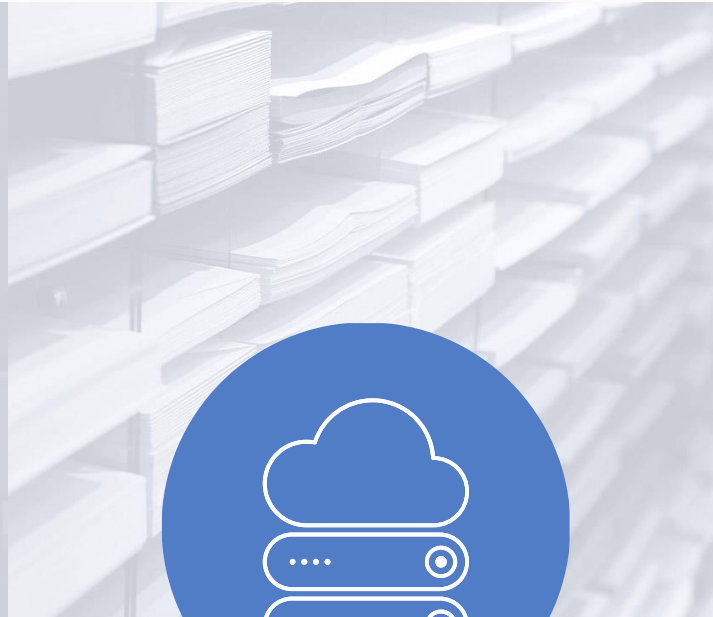
research-grade
gambling data
repository

dedicated evidence
hubs + stakeholder
platforms

- Our products

regularly published
research snapshots

on-demand
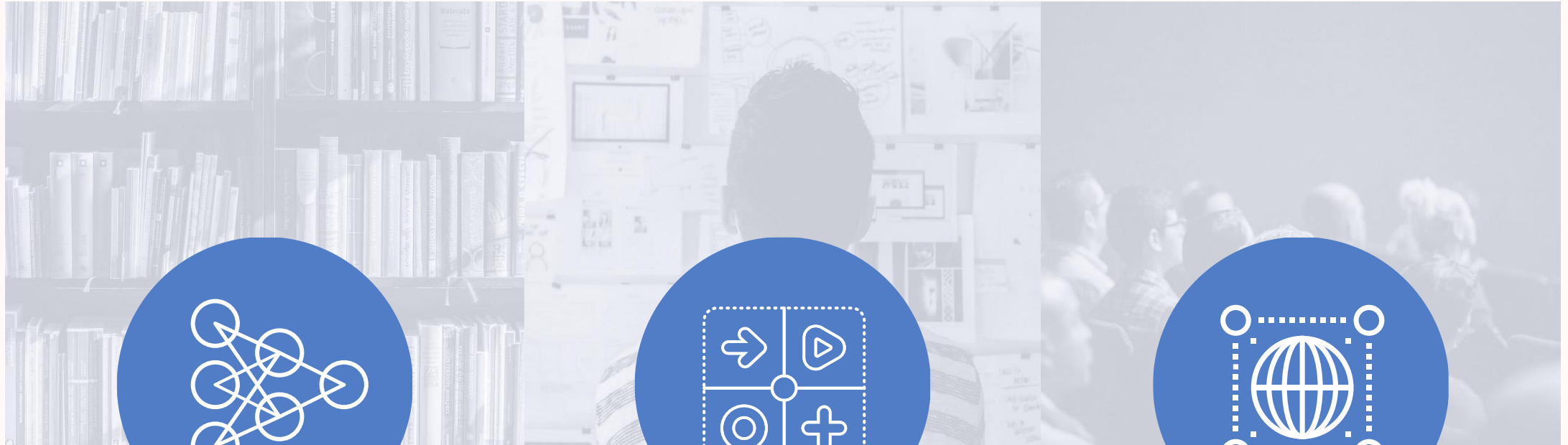policy briefs
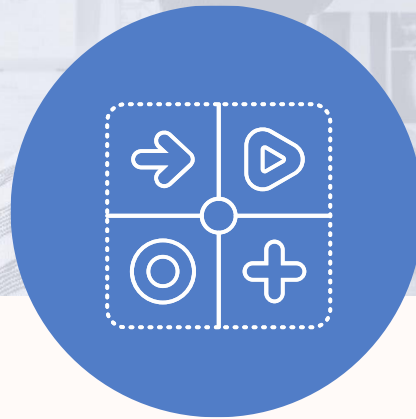
conceptual framework
of harmful gambling

● Our services

research and
evidence services

third-party
evaluation

stakeholder
engagement

Outline

1. Rationale for looking at digital wellbeing

2. Understanding digital wellbeing

3. Digital wellbeing and online gambling

4. Supporting digital wellbeing

5. Insights for online gambling

Rationale for looking at digital wellbeing

(Some) current issues

- Mental health
- Financial impacts
- Time online

Pandemic Impacts

Online Gambling Expansion

- Formats
- Operators
- Advertising

AI ·
Web 3.0 ·

Etc.

Mis/ Disinformation

- Fake news
- Radicalization

With gaming ·
With media companies ·

Gambling Convergence
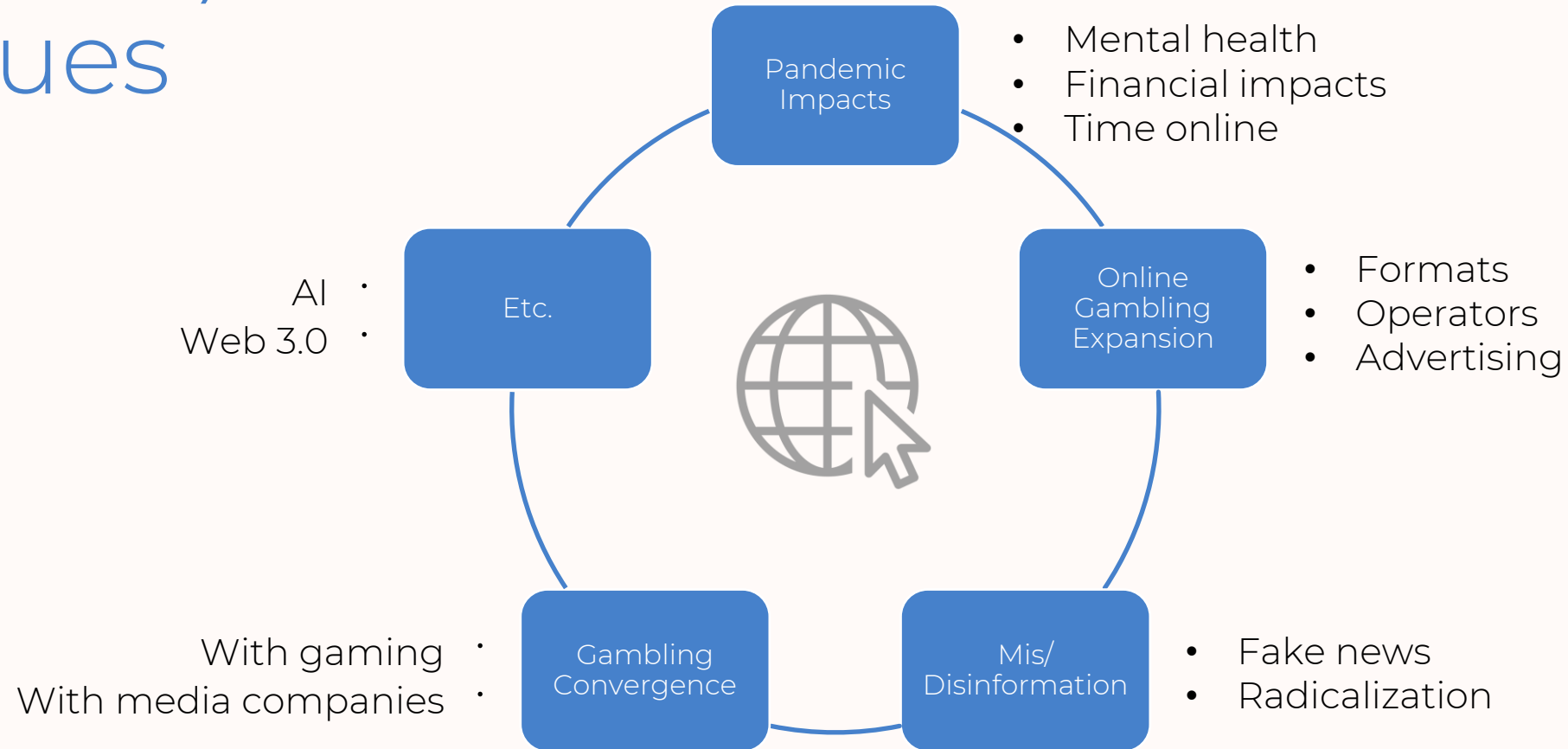
Why digital wellbeing?

→ It is an issue that will have **long tail impacts** at a **population health level**.

→ It is a topic that is particularly salient in relation to **young people**, so there will be **increasing need** in this area as they grow older.

→ There are **gaps in prevention and support** resources across online spaces.

→ The links between digital wellbeing and **online gambling** are largely unexamined – and gambling poses distinct risks.

Understanding digital wellbeing

What isn't digital wellbeing

→ We generally think we have an idea of what digital wellbeing is, but it has been **ill-defined**.

→ Digital wellbeing is **not**:

  → Digital **literacy**

  → Digital **resilience**

  → Digitally delivered **healthcare**/wellbeing support

What *is* digital wellbeing?

→ Digital wellbeing **is**:

> → A relatively **new** concept
>
> → Focused on the impacts of spending time in **various** online spaces
>
> → A **subjective** experience that varies **over time**
>
> → Inclusive of **positives** and **negatives** impacts
>
> → Fostered by **personal** and **design** factors

"Digital wellbeing is a subjective individual experience of optimal balance between the benefits and drawbacks obtained from mobile connectivity. This experiential state is comprised of affective and cognitive appraisals of the integration of digital connectivity into ordinary life. People achieve digital wellbeing when experiencing maximal controlled pleasure and functional support, together with minimal loss of control and functional impairment."

- Vanden Abeele, 2021 (938)

Fostering digital wellbeing

→ Digital technology can support digital wellbeing by meeting **psychological needs**.

Autonomy

Perception of being the cause of one's own actions

(Hassenzhal et al., 2013)

Competence

Feelings of capability and mastery over actions, vs. incompetence or ineffectiveness

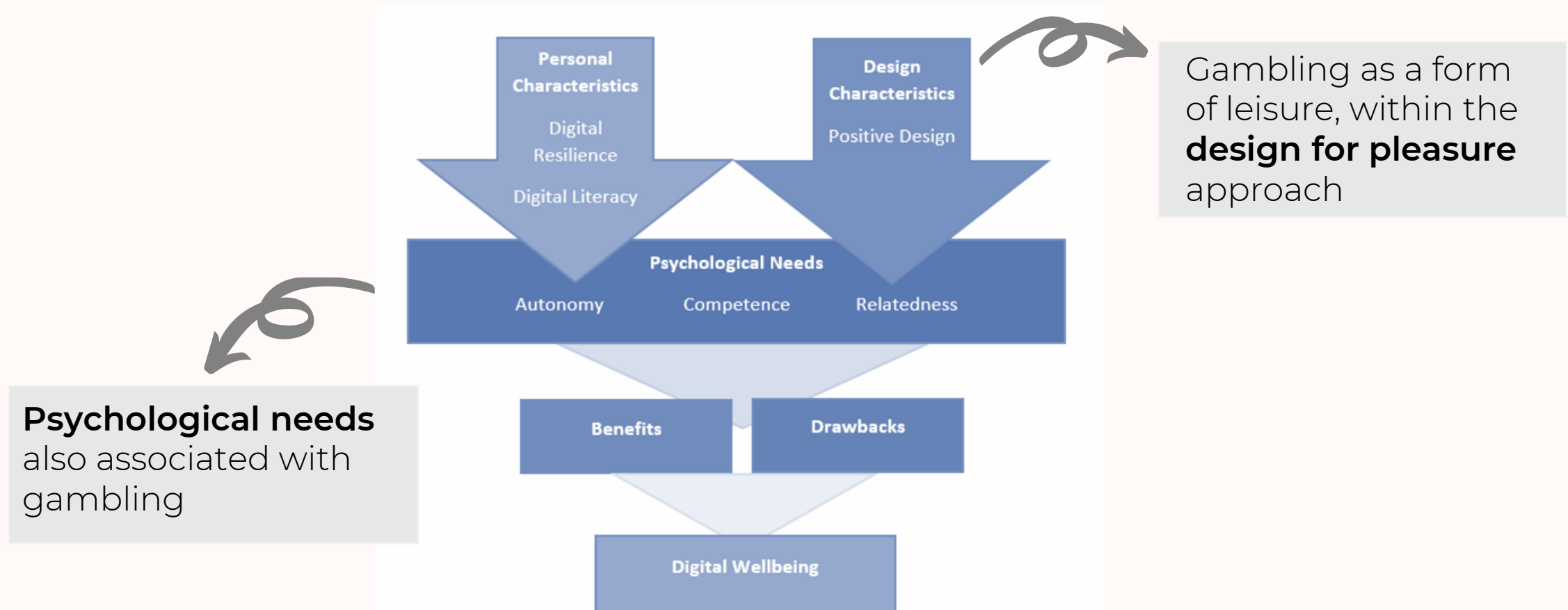(Hassenzhal et al., 2013; Shove et al., 2012).

Relatedness

General feeling of connection to others and a sense of belonging, vs. isolation and loneliness

(Lin, 2016; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Digital wellbeing and online gambling

Conceptual interconnections

Gambling as a form of leisure, within the **design for pleasure** approach

Psychological needs also associated with gambling

(Stark, 2021)

An initial look in survey data

→ **Lower digital wellbeing** among those with:

  → Past year **online gambling**

  → **Psychological needs** met by online gambling

  → Lower online **Positive Play** beliefs and behaviours

  → Online gambling **harms and problems**

→ **Overlap** in those with low wellbeing and high gambling harms:

  → 18-24 year olds, high involvement, riskier beliefs and behaviours
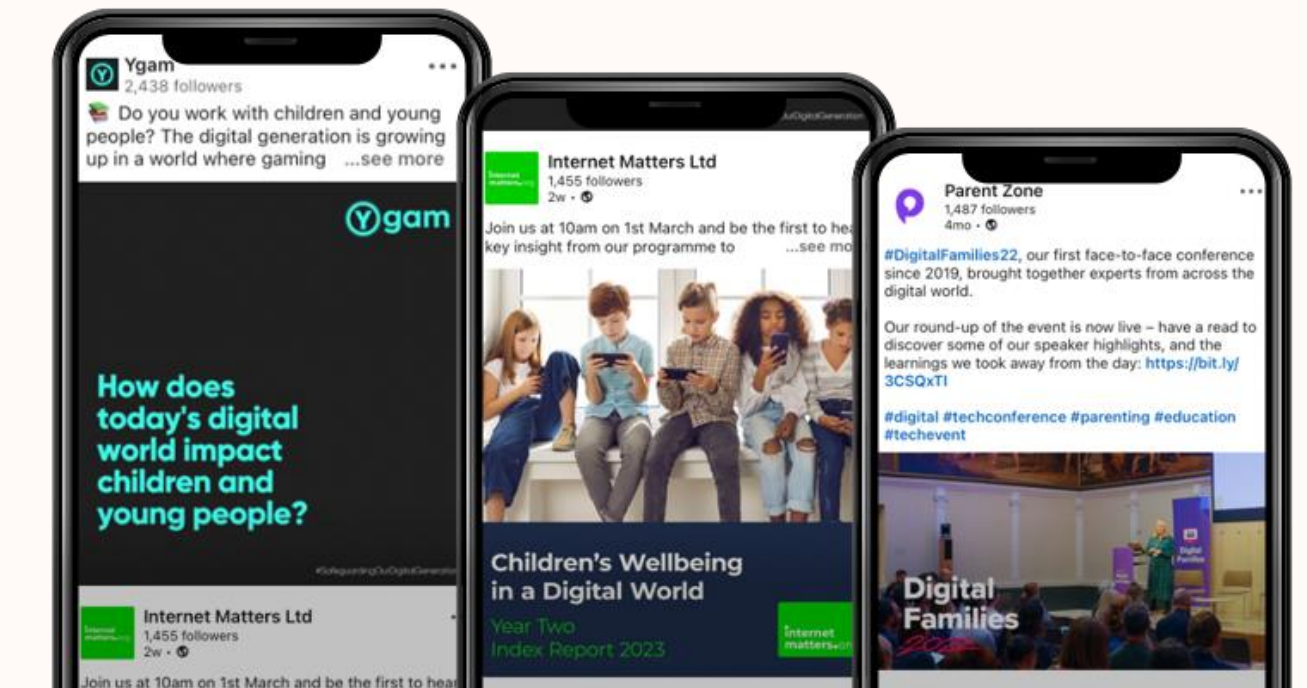
(Stark, 2021)

Supporting digital wellbeing

What is being done?

→ **Individual interventions**: digital detox programs, self-help literature, digital wellbeing tools (e.g., to limit screen time)

→ Mixed effectiveness as they focus only on eliminating drawbacks (Vanden Abeele, 2021)

→ **Research and education:**

What is being done?

→ **Digital Resilience Working Group**:

→ Within the UK Council for Internet Safety (government, tech community, and charities)

→ Advance digital resilience **strategy** that enables people to have the skills and understanding to take action when encounter problems online

→ **Framework and resources** for organizations, policymakers, schools, and companies to use to embed digital resilience thinking in their offerings

→ Members include Google, Facebook, BBC, etc.

Understand
An individual understands when they are at risk online and can make informed decisions about the digital space they are in

Know
An individual knows what to do to seek help from a range of appropriate sources

DIGITAL RESILIENCE

Learn
An individual learns from their experiences and is able to adapt their future choices, where possible

Recover
An individual can recover when things go wrong online by receiving the appropriate level of support to aid recovery

Insights for online gambling

"By assuming that experiences of digital wellbeing are not only temporary and idiosyncratic, but also contingent upon a complex constellation of potentially interrelated factors, digital wellbeing is not reduced to a problem of psychologically predisposed individuals who use digital media excessively [...] As such, our experiences with these interactive, dialogical media (cf. Gergen, 2002) are not only of our own making, but also shaped by devices in their material form, and by normative expectations, behaviors and rituals that pertain to specific social and situational contexts. [...] To that end, we can approach associations between person- device- and context-specific factors as a constellation of pathways in a system that help or hamper specific individual in their quest for digital wellbeing."

- Vanden Abeele, 2021 (939)

How can this concept help us?

→ Encourage us to understand online gambling more **holistically and in context**:

→ In **people's lives** – other things they do online

→ The **person** themselves, the **device**/technology, social **norms**

→ **What** they are doing online and **why**

→ Improved insights can **benefit** those who spend time (gambling) online:

→ Support in **stigma reduction**

→ Increased **awareness, availability, and use** of resources across platforms

→ Improved online **experiences** and greater **digital wellbeing**

Where can we start?

→ Develop interventions that **disrupt the pathways** between/address variation within person, device, and/or context (Vanden Abeele, 2021).

→ Improve user experience by considering **how design can fulfill psychological needs** (Peters et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2019 in Dowthwaite, et al., 2020).

→ Prioritize **design for pleasure** features (i.e., limiting unnecessary data collection, implementing user feedback features, and allowing customization; Cecchinato et al., 2019; Peters et al., 2020).

→ Create initiatives that span **digital wellbeing** (including gambling) focused on:

→ **18-24** year olds

→ Building digital **literacy and resilience**

→ Level of **involvement**

→ Increasing positive **beliefs and behaviours**

Key takeaways

1 How can broadening our lens to digital wellbeing improve our understanding of online gambling?

2 What approaches can we adopt from digital wellbeing interventions to support those gambling online?

3 In what ways can consolidating our efforts under the umbrella of digital wellbeing bolster our impacts for people?

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For more information

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Thank You

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