

Staying Well in the Digital Age

Internet Use and Student Mental Health

Counseling and Psychological Services
Student Support Center
University of Tsukuba



For university students, the internet and social media are essential for studying, job searching, and staying connected. Generative AI has also become a familiar tool for organizing ideas, finding information, and seeking advice. While these digital tools support daily life, they can sometimes stir strong emotions or cause distress. Anxiety or isolation may grow, and at times things can feel overwhelming. In a constantly connected world, caring for mental well-being is important.

Digital Risks and Mental Health

In today's connected world, there are risks to living online.

Digital Overuse Digital tools are convenient, but easy to overuse. Many platforms are designed to keep users engaged for as long as possible, which can affect daily routines and balance. Over time, reliance on these tools may increase feelings of loneliness or fatigue.

Exposure to Intense Content Some content—such as news about violence or war, or material related to self-harm or suicide—can be emotionally overwhelming. Algorithms may continue to show similar content once you engage with it. Repeated exposure to the same themes can gradually deepen their emotional impact.

Online Harassment Social media sometimes includes hostile comments or online harassment. This can occur within familiar communities, such as clubs or classes, or in larger public spaces. Not only those directly targeted, but also those who witness such interactions, may experience hurt, anger, or significant stress.

Noticing the Signs

If these patterns continue, they may signal mental fatigue. Consider taking a short break from digital spaces if you notice these signs.

- Spending more time online than you intended
- Comparing yourself to others and feeling down
- Continuing to read distressing news or posts
- Feeling hurt or personally targeted by hostile comments
- Posting harsh or heated comments online
- Losing interest in things you used to enjoy



Finding Balance Online

Stepping Back Online When you notice these signs or feel affected by online content, give yourself permission to step away for a while. Turning off notifications or setting screen-free time can help create physical distance from digital devices. It also helps to remember that online spaces often amplify extreme views and do not reflect the full reality of the world. Before posting or replying, pause and check in with yourself. Strong emotions can easily shape our words in ways we do not intend. A brief pause can make a meaningful difference—for you and for others.

Self-Care and Connection It is not always easy to care for yourself when you are under stress. That is why building supportive habits before you feel overwhelmed is so important. Basic routines—such as getting enough sleep, eating regular meals, and moving your body—provide a steady foundation for mental well-being. Talking casually with friends, family members, professors, or other trusted people can also help you process your thoughts and feel less alone. Even brief, casual talks can offer reassurance and perspective. It can also help to have a few screen-free ways to spend time alone calmly. Hands-on activities, cooking, stretching, journaling, or reading—anything that helps you unwind—can make it easier to reset and regain balance.

Seeking Support

If you are struggling, please do not hesitate to talk to someone you trust. Simply putting your feelings into words can help you sort through your thoughts and feel less alone. Consider reaching out to a family member, friend, professor, counselor, or another trusted person. Asking for help when you need it is never a sign of weakness.

Need Support or Someone to Talk To?

If you are experiencing difficulties, worries, or simply feel like talking with someone, please contact one of the offices below. You are always welcome to reach out.

Counseling and Psychological Services

Room411, University Hall (Bldg. B), 4th Floor | Tel: [029-853-2415](tel:029-853-2415)

General Consultation Services

Student Plaza; Bldg. 1D(Northside)-3rd Floor | Tel: [029-853-8430](tel:029-853-8430)

Kasuga Area; Room215, Bldg. 7B | Tel: [029-859-1207](tel:029-859-1207)

International Student Consulting Room (English, Chinese, & Japanese)

Room9P204, University Hall (Bldg. C), 2nd Floor | Mail: gc-support@un.tsukuba.ac.jp

<https://www.tsukuba.ac.jp/en/campuslife/support-international/counseling/index.html>

Learn more here

CPS & GCS

ISCR



(Japanese Only)

✓ For more information on student support services, please visit the “[Mental and Physical Health Support](#)” or “[SAFE LIVING](#)” section of the university website.