

DIGITAL HEALTH FUTURES

Insights into young people's use and opinions of digital health technologies

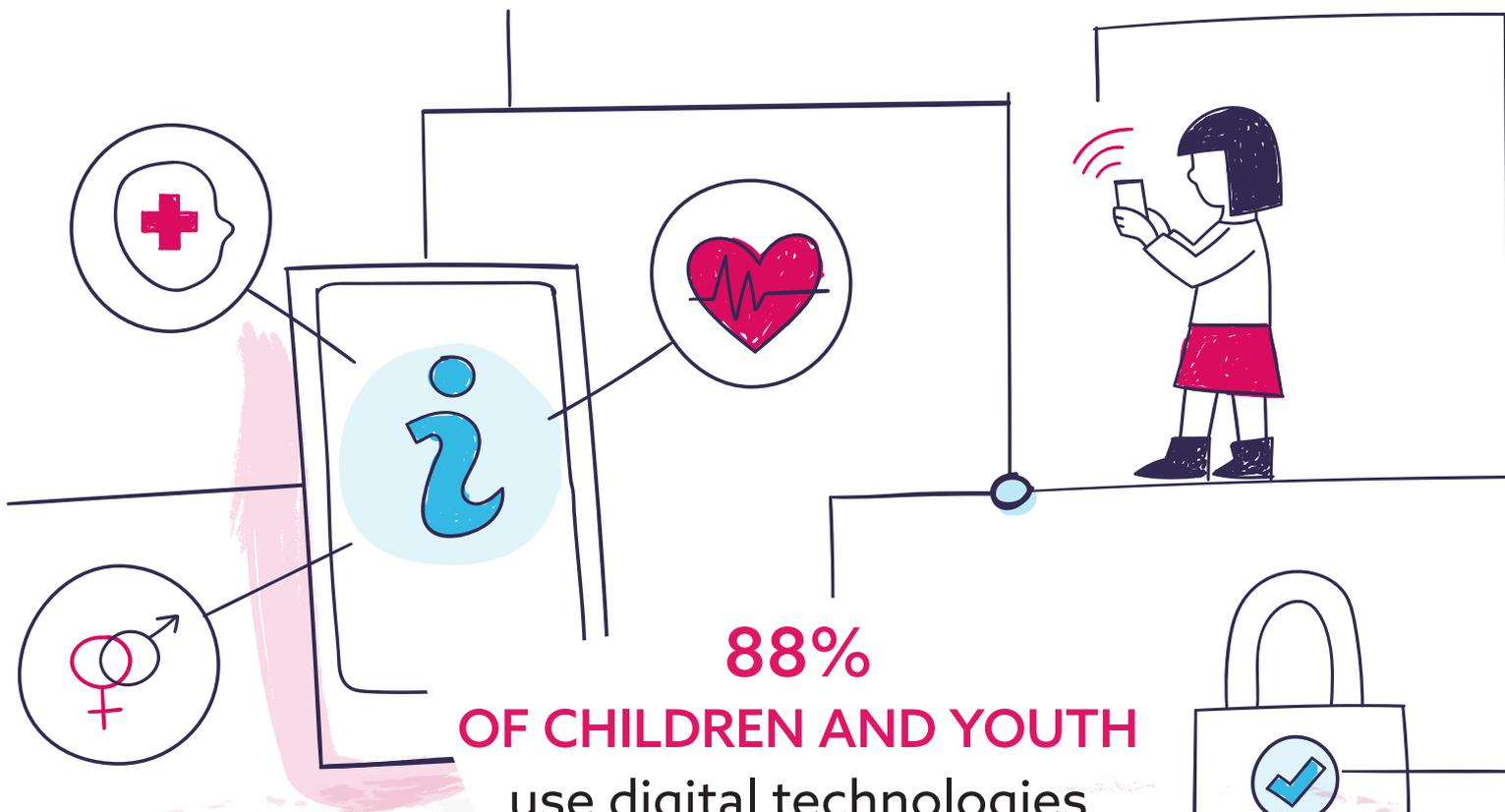
Summary report from a 2020 U-Report poll



Growing up **2030**
in a digital world

GOVERNING HEALTH FUTURES
THE LANCET & FINANCIAL TIMES COMMISSION

U-Report
VOICE MATTERS



88%
OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH
use digital technologies
to support their health
and well-being.

ABOUT U-REPORT

U-Report is a messaging programme for adolescent, youth, and community participation. It's a key tool to share information, raise awareness, and collect quantifiable data on specific areas that impact children, including the most vulnerable. Responses received are analysed in real-time, mapped, and displayed on a public dashboard.

U-Report allows young people from all over the world to share their views with decision makers.

For more information, visit www.ureport.in



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Thanks to the thousands of young people who participated in the poll and generously shared their experiences and opinions.

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What do you imagine **digital health** will look like in 2030?

Which **health issue** do you mostly use digital technologies for?

How can using digital technologies **negatively affect** your health and well-being?

Executive summary

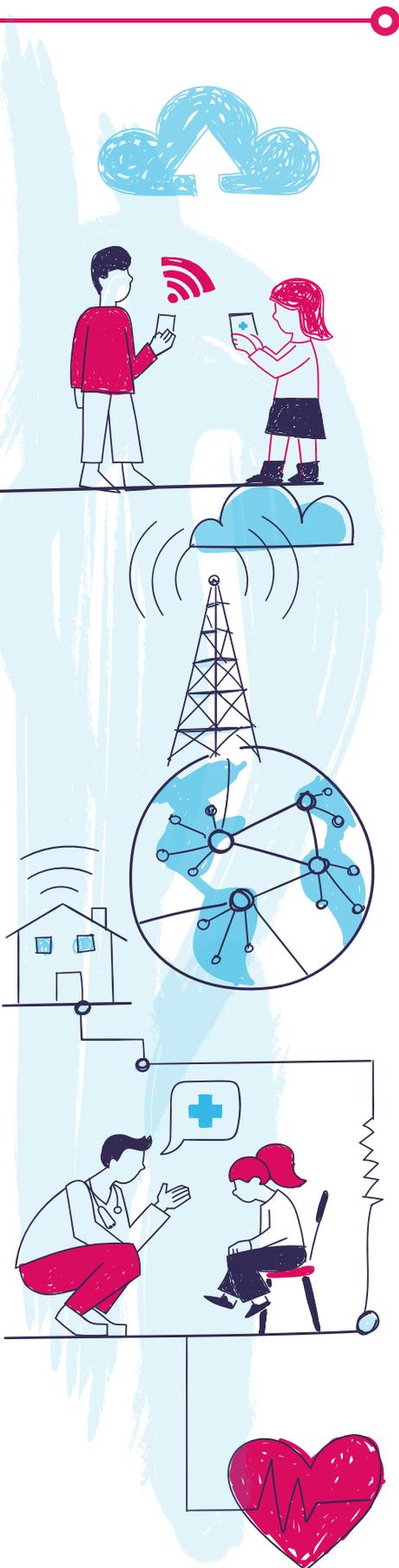
In October and November 2020, The Lancet and Financial Times Commission *Governing health futures 2030: Growing up in a digital world* collaborated with UNICEF to conduct a global poll with young people on digital health. The Commission wanted to better understand the expectations, demands, and concerns of young people in relation to the use of digital technologies and data for improving their health and well-being.

The poll asked young people to share how they currently use digital technologies for health, and their views on the benefits and risks of digital technologies. Respondents were also invited to share their opinions on what governments and technology companies should do to better govern digital health, as well as what they imagine digital health will look like in 2030.

*More than
**23,000 children
and young people**
aged 14-35 from
176 countries
participated in
the poll.*

SUMMARY OF SURVEY FINDINGS

- **88% of respondents** use some form of digital technology for health-related purposes.
- Smartphone apps and websites are the **most common** technologies used.
- **Improving fitness** is the most popular health-related objective for users of digital technologies.
- **Half of respondents** said that accessing health information was the biggest way that digital technologies can help young people manage their health and well-being.
- **Inaccurate health information is the biggest concern** for young people using digital technologies, followed by uncertainties about their privacy and use of digital technologies making them less physically active.
- Young people want governments and technology companies to **increase access** to the internet and to quality, trustworthy health information. They also want to see **stronger regulation of online content** and services to protect them from harm and misinformation.
- Young people expressed a high degree of **uncertainty about what the future of digital health** holds.



YOUNG PEOPLE HIGHLIGHTED SIX MAIN ISSUES

that must be addressed by policymakers, technology companies, and other digital health actors:

- 1 Reduce the digital divide** so that all young people can benefit from digital technologies.
- 2 Improve the availability, accessibility, and quality of online health information.**
- 3 Introduce or strengthen regulation and oversight** mechanisms for online content and services accessible to young people through websites, smartphones, and social media platforms so that it does not undermine their health, well-being, or other rights.
- 4 Leverage young people's interest** in their fitness and health. Involve them in finding appropriate ways to maximise the benefits of digital health and to discourage excessive or harmful use of technologies.
- 5 Build young people's trust** in governments and technology companies through involving them at all stages of digital health design, implementation, and governance, as well as demonstrating that young people's views are being listened to.
- 6 Reduce young people's uncertainty** about digital health and increase their sense of agency by increasing digital health literacy and creating opportunities (both on and offline) for young people to imagine the health futures that they do and don't want to see.

The Commission has incorporated young people's views, captured through this poll and other mechanisms, into its report. The Commission will also continue to support the provision of spaces for young people to shape the future of digital health governance so that all young people can flourish in the digital age.

For more information, visit www.governinghealthfutures2030.org

Introduction

Digital technologies—and the data they generate—are being increasingly used by health professionals, policymakers, and individuals around the world to improve health and well-being. The field of digital health includes a growing range of tools and approaches from digital health records, smartphone apps, and video consultations with health workers, to artificial intelligence and virtual reality. Whilst digital transformations offer unprecedented opportunities to expand and enhance healthcare, they also present challenges and risks for young people's health, well-being, and rights.

The Lancet and Financial Times Commission *Governing health futures 2030: Growing up in a digital world* (the Commission) was established in 2019 to explore the convergence of digital health, artificial intelligence, and other emerging technologies with universal health coverage. The Commission has a special focus on improving the health and well-being of children and has developed a set of recommendations on the governance transformations required to allow all young people to flourish in a digital age.



WHAT DO YOUNG PEOPLE THINK?

Although subjected to a significant digital divide, children, and young people are major users of digital technologies but are under-represented—and often overlooked—when it comes to design and decision-making about digital technologies and digital health.

Since young people stand to inherit the governance models being designed today, the Commission wanted to better understand the expectations, demands, and concerns of young people in relation to the use of digital technologies for improving their health and well-being.

However, evidence and insights into young people's views and experiences in relation to digital health are predominantly limited to high-income countries. To capture a broader range of voices and perspectives, the Commission partnered with UNICEF's Office of Innovation and U-Report to conduct a global survey of young people.



KEY TERMINOLOGY

Artificial intelligence

The simulation of intelligent behaviour in computers or machines

Digital health

The use of digital, mobile, and wireless technologies to monitor or improve health and well-being

Digital technologies

Electronic tools, systems, and devices that generate, store, or process data

Governance

The act or process of governing or overseeing the control and direction of something

WHAT WE ASKED YOUNG PEOPLE

- 1 Which of these digital technologies do you use the most for health-related purposes?
- 2 Which health issue do you mostly use digital technologies for?
- 3 What is the biggest way that digital technologies can help you manage your health and well-being?
- 4 How can using digital technologies negatively affect your health

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