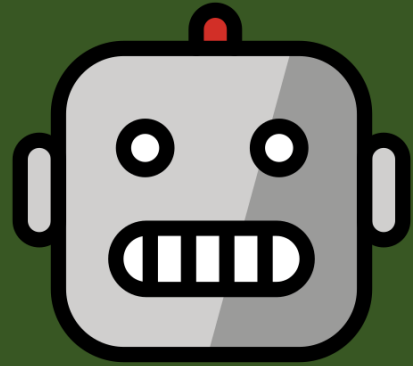


# The influence of AI on Relationships, Identity and Faith



*Gareth Cheesman*

“Any sufficiently familiar  
technology is indistinguishable  
from nature.”

Virginia Postrel (2020) *The Fabric of Civilization*:



“Is it OK that my AI helps me feel calm & happy?”

Tool



Like a mental health app

Media



Like a comfort book or TV show

Non-human being



Like a pet or assistance dog

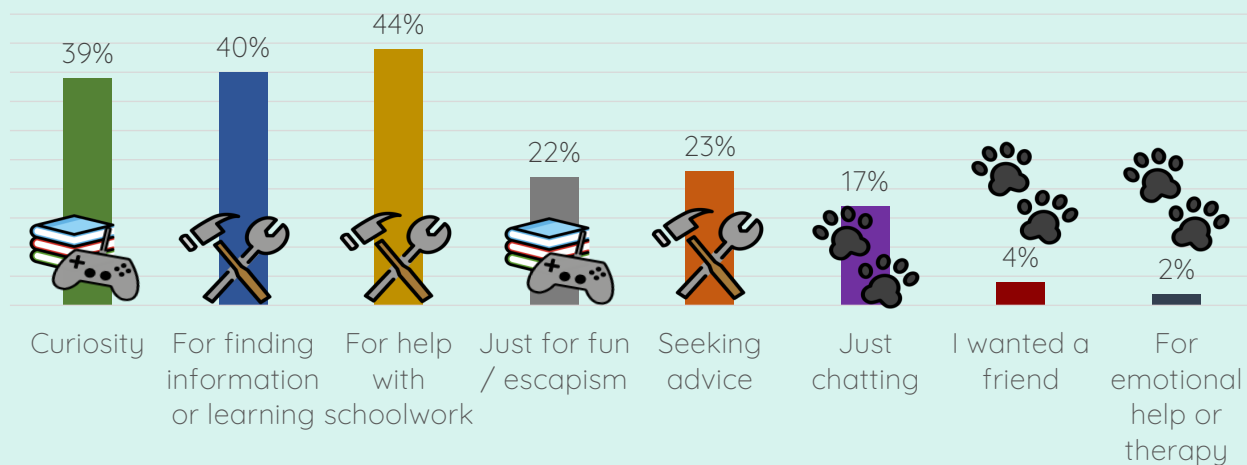
How are young people using AI?

Two-thirds (64%) of children aged 9-17 say they have used an AI chatbot

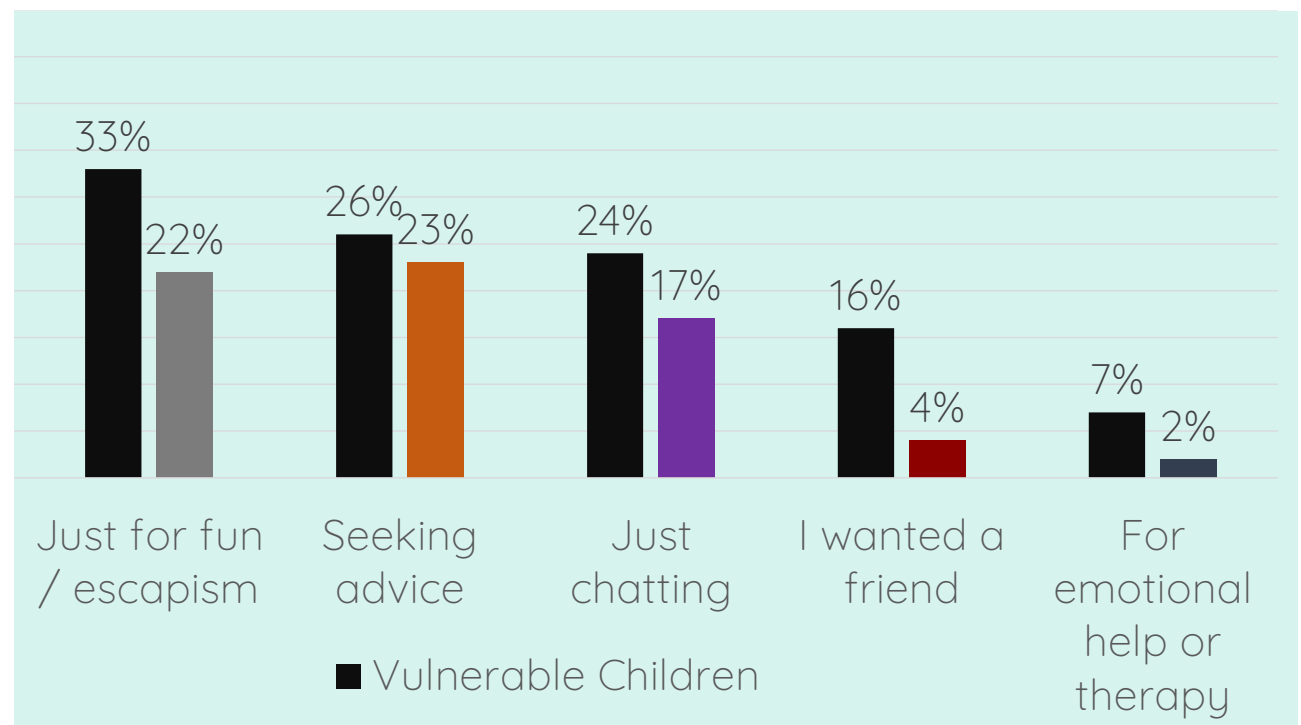
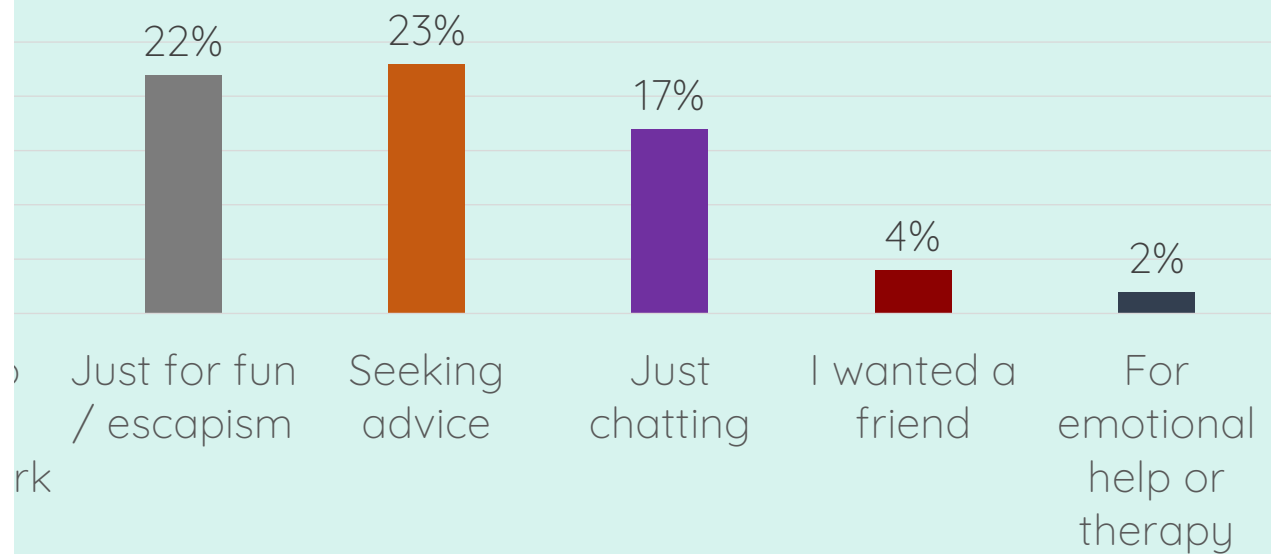
Internet matters (2025) Me, myself and AI

Two-thirds (64%) of children aged 9-17 say they have used an AI chatbot

Reasons children use AI chatbots



## Reasons children use AI chatbots



## How AI is used might change its impact



A tool for learning and action



Just for fun / escapism



Friendship or having an emotional need meet



A tool for learning and action

- Will it make people stupid?
- Will people forget how to read/write in detail?
- Will it stifle creativity?
- Will it destroy jobs?
- Will it increase productivity?



## A tool for learning and action

- Will it outsource friendship?
- Will it dominate how we build our sense of self?
- Will it change how we engage with God?
- Will it be used to harm others?



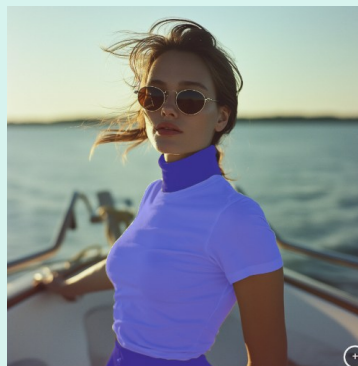
## Harming others with deepfakes

*(Original clothed image is AI generated not a real person)*

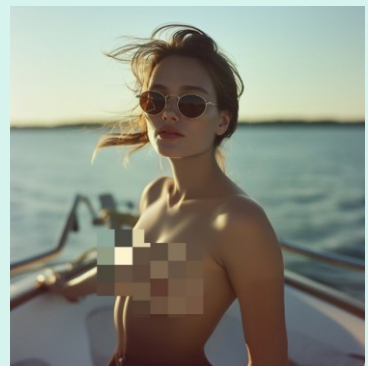
Upload original  
image



Point and click clothes  
to be removed



Nude photo  
created





Just for fun / escapism

Cybersickness' to be categorized as a psychological disorder

SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION

DISCONNECTION

FR

JON HANCOCK  
The Anxious Generation

**THE EVIL OF NOVEL READING.**

*From the London Spectator.*

The mischief of voracious novel reading is really much more like the mischief of dram drinking than appears at first sight. It tends

Grow Addicted To Television

Is Children's Reading Harmful?

OFFICIAL PUBLIC

to the Special Provisions

submitting or assigning

tract.

6. Minimum wage rate

projects has been made

the Secretary of Labor

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7. By virtue of statute

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Just for fun / escapism

We can use the media literacy skills we have already sharpened to understand AI.

Then we can help young people navigate this new form of media.



## Friendship or having an emotional need meet

*Will AI relationships replace human connections?*

AI's are programmed to try and make you happy

AI's follow commands to the best of their ability

AI's let you go back and edit what you said or start fresh

AI's are always available to meet your needs

People feel less (no) guilt when manipulating AI's



## Friendship or having an emotional need meet

*Will AI relationships replace human connections?*

*Probably not fully (yet)*

*But, AI's are already impacting how people think about relationships and how they treat others.*

# Does it impact faith?

## What does the Bible say?



“beat their swords into ploughshares”  
Isaiah 2:4



“God gave knowledge and skill in every  
aspect of literature”  
Daniel 1:17



“Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies?  
Yet not one of them is forgotten in God’s sight.”  
Luke 12:6

## *Practically speaking*



*How would you feel if a sermon was written by an AI because the minister was too busy?*



*Can we worship using music that was created by an AI bot?*



*Can an AI come to your youth group?*


Our God is a relational God,

Made in God's image  
we are made for relationship

AI is currently meeting some  
young people's hunger for  
connection and relationship.



What next?



“Any sufficiently familiar technology is indistinguishable from nature.”

Virginia Postrel (2020) *The Fabric of Civilization*:

## How to grow in confidence with AI topics

Experience chatting with an AI

Don't assume young people...

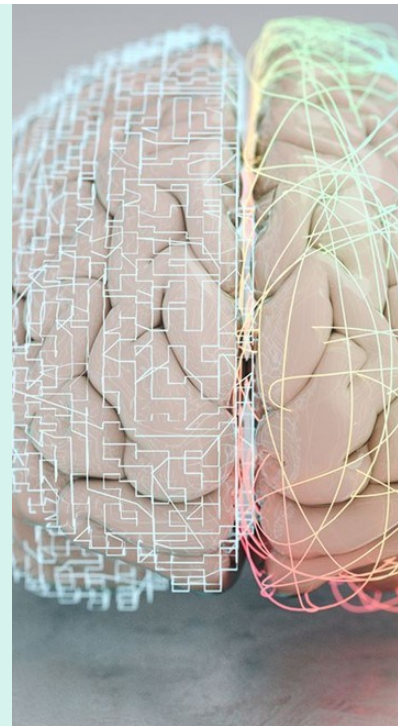
...use AI

...have thought about what AI is

...have a unified attitude

Be curious

Check yourself for judgmental attitudes but be ready to challenge



## Any Questions?

Visit [www.GarethCheesman.com/ai](http://www.GarethCheesman.com/ai)  
to download slides and sources

