

Exposure to Racism on Social Media and Acute Suicide Risk in Adolescents of Color: Results From an Intensive Monitoring Study

Oshin, L. A., Boyd, S. I., Jorgensen, S. L., Kleiman, E. M., & Hamilton, J. L. (2024). Exposure to racism on social media and acute suicide risk in adolescents of color: Results from an intensive monitoring study. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaac.2024.03.009>

Study Aim

To explore the proximal effects of exposure to social media (SM) racism on suicidal ideation (passive and active) among adolescents of color.

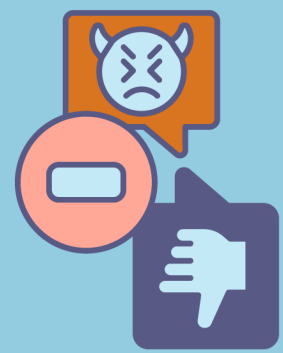
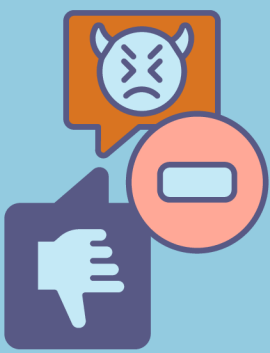


Who We Studied

35 adolescents aged 14-17 who identified as youth of color completed 8 weeks of daily and weekly surveys asking about exposure to racism on social media and whether teens had suicidal thoughts that day.

Why is the link between social media racism and suicidality in adolescents of color important?

- Suicide rates for youth of color have increased, and there is a lack of research that examines proximal risk factors for suicidal thoughts in adolescents of color
- Most research focuses on direct experiences of racism, which have been found to be detrimental to mental health and increase the risk for suicide
- SM has unique features, including permanence, publicness, and personalized algorithms, which may increase exposure to (and potential harms) of racism



- 63% of teens in our study were exposed to racism on SM, which suggests that racism on social media is **common** for adolescents of color.
- Adolescents of color had about 6 times greater likelihood of suicidal ideation on weeks they were exposed to SM racism.

Key Takeaways

- Exposure to social media-based racism can be a proximal risk factor for suicidal ideation among youth of color.
- Parents, educators, and clinicians should ask adolescents about their experiences with racism on SM, including exposure to racism (vs. only direct experiences) and work with them to develop healthy coping strategies.

