

CO-DESIGNING IN-SITU DIGITAL INTERVENTIONS FOR LGBTQ+ YOUTH AT RISK OF SELF-HARM

In our recent randomised controlled trial, young LGBTQ+ people found Purrble helpful for supporting emotion regulation and mental health. However, they also reported that it offered limited support during acute distress and did not help them recognise when to seek further support. This highlights the need for additional scaffolding and complementary digital tools to better meet their mental health needs.

TO OVERCOME THESE LIMITATIONS, THIS STUDY SOUGHT TO INVESTIGATE PERCEPTIONS OF DIGITAL INTERVENTIONS AND CO-DESIGN A COGNITIVE WRAPPER FOR PURRBLE.

Over a span of 12 months, 21 young LGBTQ+ individuals participated in five workshops, which ran concurrently with three stakeholder workshops. The insights gathered from each session were utilised to pinpoint potential core design directions, which were then integrated into the subsequent workshops between participant groups.



01. Current digital interventions

Purrble was found to support cognitive change, an area with few existing resources. To build on this, the intervention design focused on reframing thoughts through cognitive reappraisal.

Explorations of reappraisal were conducted to clarify its definitions, along with the scaffolding required for successfully applying this skill to distress. Common scenarios where Purrble was starting to facilitate cognitive change were identified and prioritised.

02. What is appraisal?



Participants explored various forms of digital delivery, including a single-session intervention featuring psychoeducational materials, a tailored action plan, a chatbot, and a daily writing exercise. They evaluated the utility of each option in relation to distress and cast their votes on their preferences.



03. Exploring digital delivery

Young LGBTQ+ individuals proposed the idea of consolidating resources—such as psychoeducation, action plans, and writing exercises—into a reappraisal app. During an asynchronous workshop, the developed materials were evaluated to ensure they contained acceptable and comprehensible content.

04. Proposed intervention materials



Stakeholders and young LGBTQ+ individuals expressed a strong desire for further development of a reappraisal app. They found the co-design process to be empowering and a valuable opportunity to contribute meaningfully to supporting youth at risk of self-harm.



05. Reflecting on the process

TO PROGRESS, IT IS ESSENTIAL TO OBTAIN CLINICAL INSIGHTS TO VALIDATE REAPPRAISAL SKILLS, IN CONJUNCTION WITH SOFTWARE EXPERTISE.