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Digital Learning Week 2025

AI and the future of education:
Disruptions, dilemmas and directions

2-5 September 2025 - Paris, France

Open Ideas Lab B: AI and healthy and thriving learners: Co-creating guiding principles for health education tools

Date: Friday, 5 September 2025

Time: 9:30 – 13:00 with coffee break from 11:00 to 11:30 (3h00)

Room: VIII (Capacity: 43 persons)

Overview

This Open Ideas Lab, co-organized by UNESCO's Section of Health and Education and the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (UNESCO IITE), will bring together educators, technologists, researchers, and policymakers to examine how artificial intelligence (AI) can be used responsibly in education for health and well-being.

The lab will offer a participatory space to reflect on how AI is reshaping teaching and learning in areas such as sexuality education and socio-emotional learning, and how it affects learners' physical health, mental health, relationships, and overall well-being.

Through expert insights, practical tool demonstrations, and structured group dialogue, participants will work together to co-develop an initial set of guiding principles to ensure that AI-driven tools promote inclusive, learner-centred, and developmentally supportive educational experiences.

As one of the featured events at UNESCO's Digital Learning Week 2025, this lab will contribute to ongoing efforts to shape AI futures in education that uphold human rights and safeguard learner well-being.

Objectives

- Explore key ethical, pedagogical, and regulatory considerations for using AI tools in health and well-being education, including sexuality education and socio-emotional learning.
- Co-develop a preliminary set of guiding principles for the responsible design, implementation, and use of such tools.
- Provide participants with concrete examples and practical ideas for integrating AI into health and well-being education.

About the session

The integration of AI into education systems is accelerating, opening new possibilities for supporting teaching and learning across subjects. While most applications to date have focused on cognitive domains such as science, AI is now entering human-centred areas, including education for health and well-being, socio-emotional learning, and relationship and sexuality education.

This shift brings both opportunities and challenges. AI must be used in ways that are inclusive, safe, and aligned with learners' developmental needs, particularly when applied in these contexts. Important considerations include the appropriateness of using AI to engage with sensitive topics, the

need to ensure inclusivity and safeguard learner well-being, and the importance of clearly distinguishing educational from digital health functions, especially in relation to sexual and reproductive health content.

Without clear guidance and safeguards, AI in these fields could perpetuate inequalities, reinforce bias or exclusion, or contribute to over-regulation of legitimate educational content. Shared understanding, practical guidance, and robust ethical frameworks are therefore essential. These should address platform governance and accountability, data protection, and content integrity, while fostering collaboration among educators, learners, developers, researchers, and policymakers.

Digital Learning Week 2025, held under the theme “*AI and the Future of Education: Disruptions, Dilemmas, and Directions*”, offers a timely platform for this conversation. Within this framework, UNESCO’s Section of Health and Education and UNESCO IITE will host an Open Ideas Lab focused on the responsible integration of AI into education for health and well-being. The session will work to co-create preliminary guiding principles for using AI in educational areas that address interpersonal relationships, emotional development, and learner well-being, and will also consider how AI-enabled environments may influence, intentionally or not, learners’ physical, emotional, and psychological health.

Facilitators

Ms Kathleen Chau, Programme Specialist, Section of Health and Education, Division for Education for Peace and Sustainable Development, UNESCO

Ms Yulia Plakhutina, Associate Programme Officer, UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (IITE)

Mr Donald Tererai, Project Officer, UNESCO Regional Office for Southern Africa

Structure

The participatory Open Ideas Lab will follow the structure outlined below:

➤ **Welcome and framing**

- Opening remarks to introduce the purpose and objectives of the session
- Kick-off insight: Framing reflections on the use of AI in health education
- Housekeeping notes and practical information for participants

➤ **Thematic segments: Tool showcases and facilitated dialogue**

The lab will include three interactive segments, each consisting of:

- Tool demonstration
- Expert reaction
- Facilitated participant dialogue
- Report-back and questions

1. Thematic segment 1 – Responsible AI innovation in health education for young people and educators

This segment will explore what it means to design and implement AI tools for health education in ways that are inclusive, ethical, and responsive to the real needs of young people and educators. While AI presents new opportunities to personalize and scale learning on topics such as mental health and sexuality education, it also risks reinforcing harmful biases, whether related to geography, gender, or sexual identity, and amplifying patterns of censorship and exclusion. The discussion will examine key

challenges such as over-filtering of sensitive content, lack of representation in training data, unequal access, and inconsistent platform policies. It will also highlight strategies for ensuring meaningful participation of young people and educators in the design, governance, and evaluation of AI tools, so that innovation genuinely supports safe, accurate, and empowering learning experiences.

2. *Thematic segment 2 – From learning to diagnosis: navigating the boundaries between educational AI and health services*

This segment will examine the regulatory challenges at the intersection of educational and digital health AI tools, with a focus on sexual and reproductive health. As AI tools increasingly offer personalized information and support to young people, questions arise about how they should be classified, licensed, and governed, particularly when used with minors. The discussion will consider how to design educational tools so they do not fall under health services regulations, and how existing frameworks in both education and health can provide guidance. Examples such as menstrual health trackers, which operate at the crossroads of education and health, will serve as entry points for this discussion.

3. *Thematic segment 3 – Understanding impacts on well-being of young people: How AI may perpetuate risks and help prevent them*

This segment will explore how AI technologies are increasingly shaping the emotional, social, and physiological well-being of young people, often in ways that are not yet fully understood. Emerging research suggests that uncritical or prolonged use of AI tools may affect young people's emotional well-being, potentially contributing to anxiety, body image concerns, or social isolation. In some cases, AI systems have also been shown to amplify violence, including bullying and harassment.

At the same time, AI can be designed to promote safety and well-being. The discussion will examine promising AI-powered tools for detecting online bullying, flagging violent behaviour, and supporting mental health monitoring in educational settings. It will also explore how educators can use AI responsibly in health education to create safer, more supportive learning environments, without reinforcing control or surveillance.

➤ **Harvesting and collective debrief**

Session facilitators will summarize key takeaways and present an initial set of cross-cutting principles. Participants will also be invited to contribute to a collaborative follow-up process after the session.

Overall target audience:

- Educators and school leaders
- Education for health and well-being and sexuality education specialists
- AI developers
- Digital learning experts
- Policymakers and regulators
- Civil society organizations working in education and digital rights

Facilitators' bios



Kathleen Chau Global sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) specialist, and menstrual health advocate, with over 20 years' experience at the global level and in West Africa. Kathleen is deeply committed to advancing SRHR and holds a Master of Science from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.



Yulia Plakhutina With over 12 years at UNESCO, Yulia has led projects on digital health education, reaching over 20 million users worldwide. She advances UNESCO's global work to expand comprehensive sexuality education through digital spaces, including the use of AI and emerging technologies. Yulia holds Master's degrees in Global Development (Harvard University) and Sociology (Bielefeld University and Saint Petersburg State University).