Exploring the Potential of Generative AI for Supporting Child and Youth Mental Health

DR JULIA DRAY

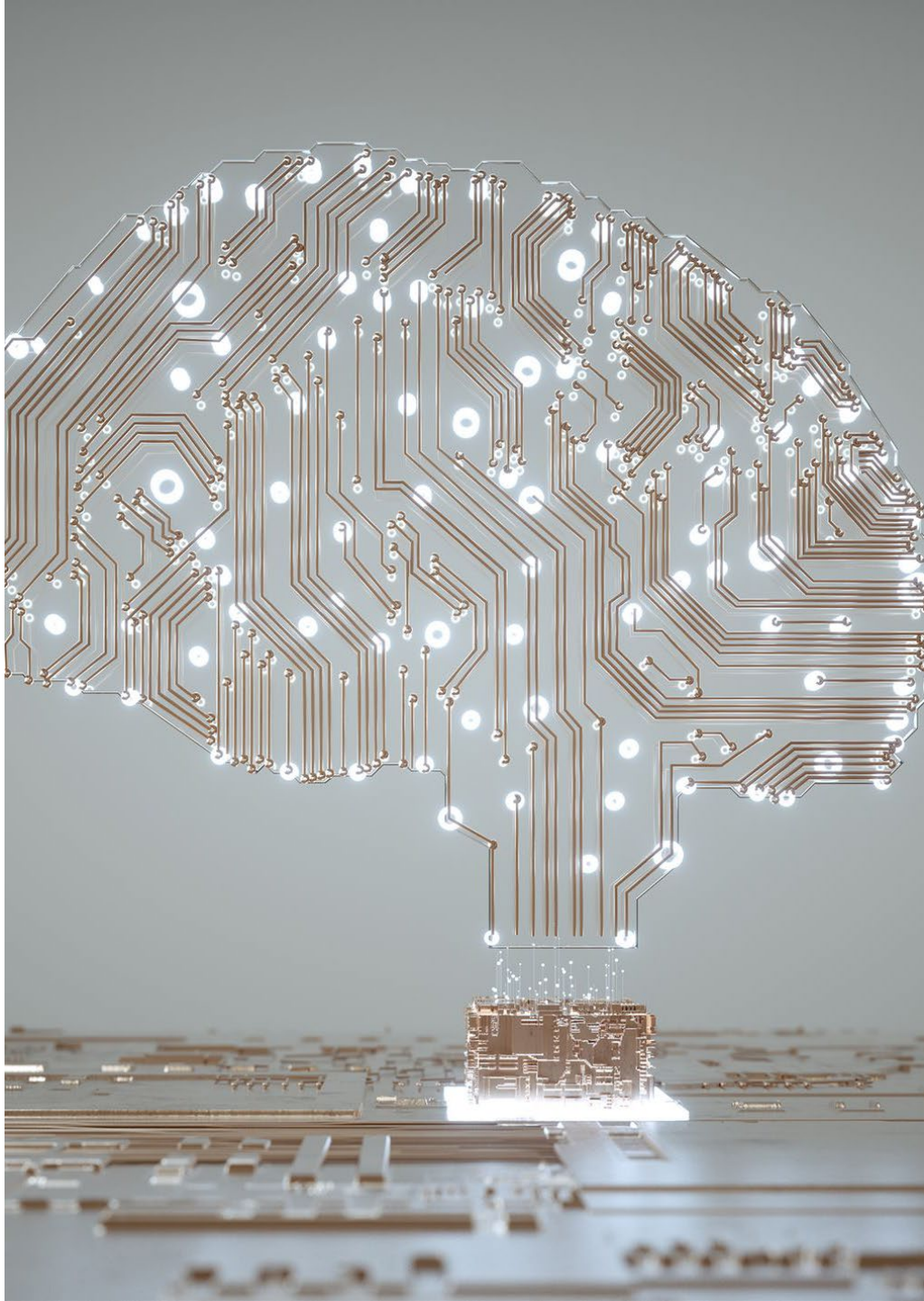
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY

An intro to me…

Senior Research Fellow, Lecturer and Project Manager at UTS across Disciplines of Speech Pathology and Genetic Counselling.

Experience with evidence-based and implementation-science based complex intervention evaluation for priority populations

A BA(Hons I) Psyc and PhD (Psyc) in resilience and mental health and children and adolescents, and lived experience with postnatal anxiety and depression…



New study

Inclusive Innovation: Co-designing GenAI solutions for youth mental health with families and professionals

- Awarded a Disability Access and Inclusion Funds Grant to conduct a new study.
- To explore the views of adult family members and health professionals.
- Use of GenAI for mental health support for children and young people with mental health conditions
- Codesign workshops, focus groups and an online survey.
- Rapid Review.

Research questions and intended outcomes

The research questions include:

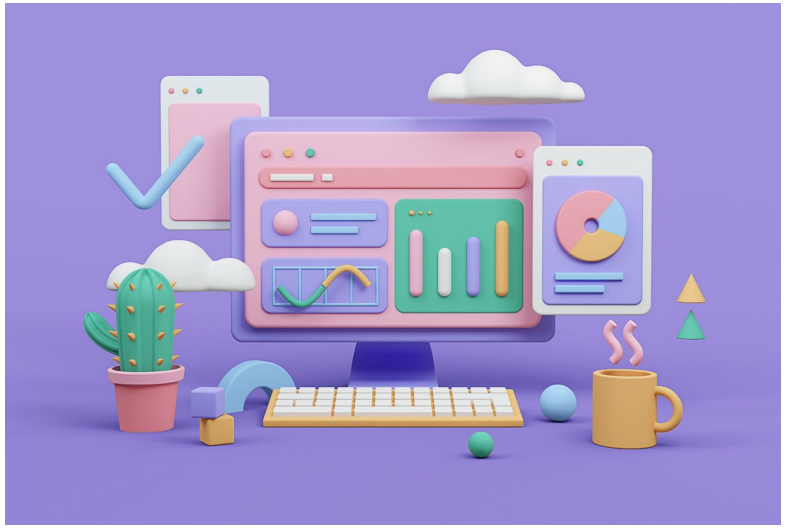
- Does GenAI work for child and youth mental health support (effectiveness),
- how easily it can be used (accessibility),
- potential harms and benefits, and
- facilitators and barriers to use.

Outcomes:

- Provide initial insights and inform a larger research project on how GenAI may be responsibly integrated into mental health care for children and young people.
- Complement and enhance care provided by professionals.
- Possibly relieve difficulties in receiving care such as long wait times and staff shortages.

Generative AI Solutions for Child and Youth Mental Health

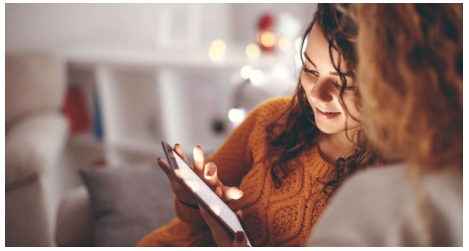
AI-driven mental health assessment tools



AI-driven mental health assessment tools have the potential to match, if not surpass, accuracy and efficiency of traditional methods due to their ability to analyse large amounts of data.

These tools can provide personalised recommendations based on the user's needs, leading to timely access to support ('in-the-moment' support) and better outcomes.

Collect real time data on mood and behaviour, leveraging AI for support between appointments, and providing more up to date prevalence data.



Personalised Therapy and 24/7 Support through AI

AI can be used to personalise therapy and support by tailoring interventions to the specific needs of the user, creating a more effective and efficient treatment experience.

AI can provide 24/7 support through chatbots and other virtual assistants or conversational agents, improving accessibility and convenience for mental health support.

AI in creating engaging and therapeutic content

Generative AI can create engaging and therapeutic content, such as games and interactive stories, that can help children and youth build skills to cope with mental health challenges in age-appropriate ways.

AI-generated content can be personalised and adaptive, providing a more effective form of support for children and youth with mental health challenges.

Benefits of Using Generative AI in Mental Child and Youth Health Support




Improving Accessibility and Reach

AI-powered virtual support can provide accessible and remote mental health support that can be accessed from anywhere. This can help reach underserved populations (e.g. rural and remote communities) that may not have access to traditional forms of support.

Save costs, reduce travel to care, increase knowledge diffusion...

Providing Personalised and Adaptive Support

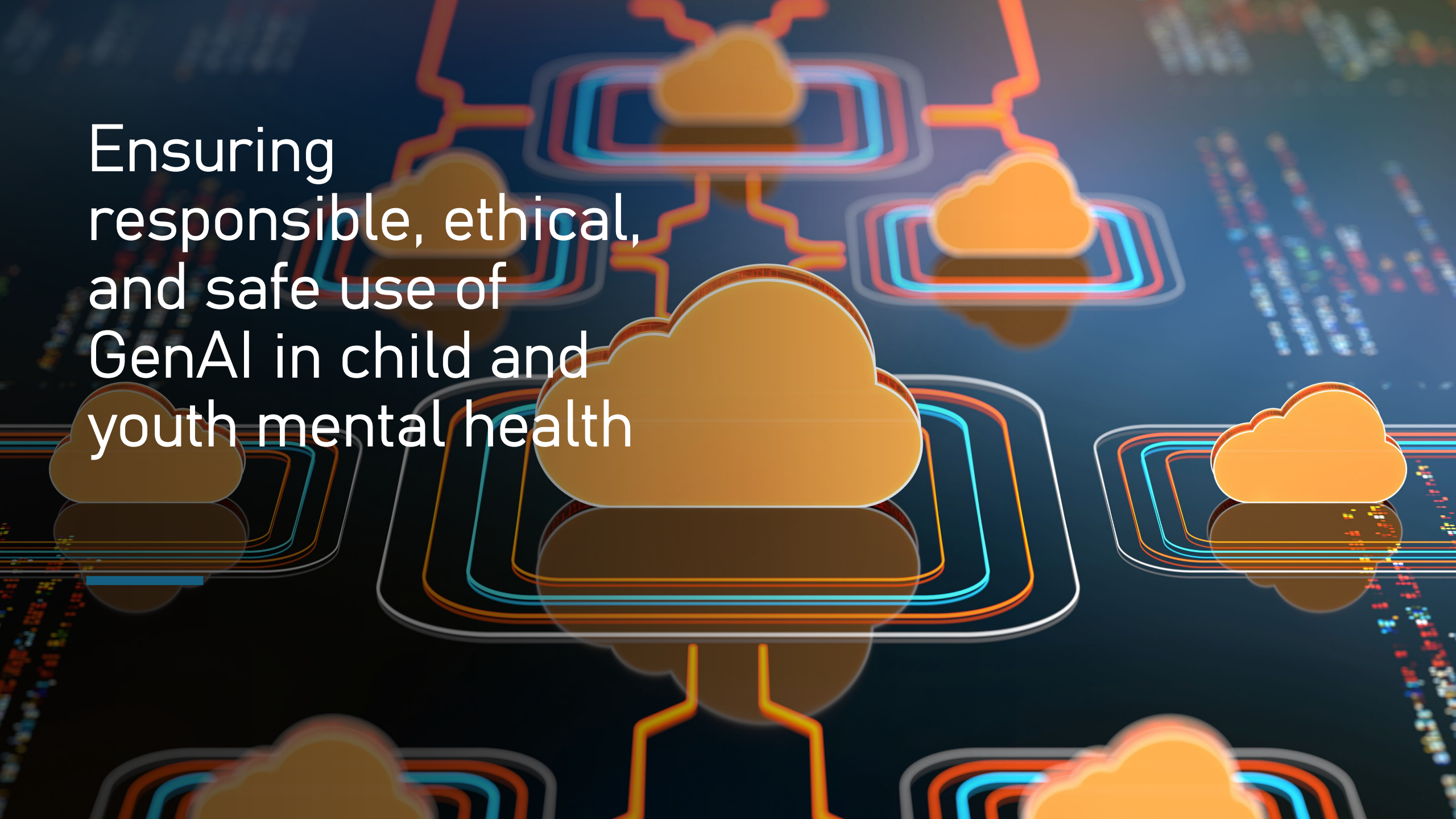
With the use of AI, personalised and adaptive support can be provided to users that is tailored to their specific needs, preferences, and learning style.

Potential to be more effective than traditional forms of support, which are often more generic and less personalised.

Engaging children and young people in open communication about mental health

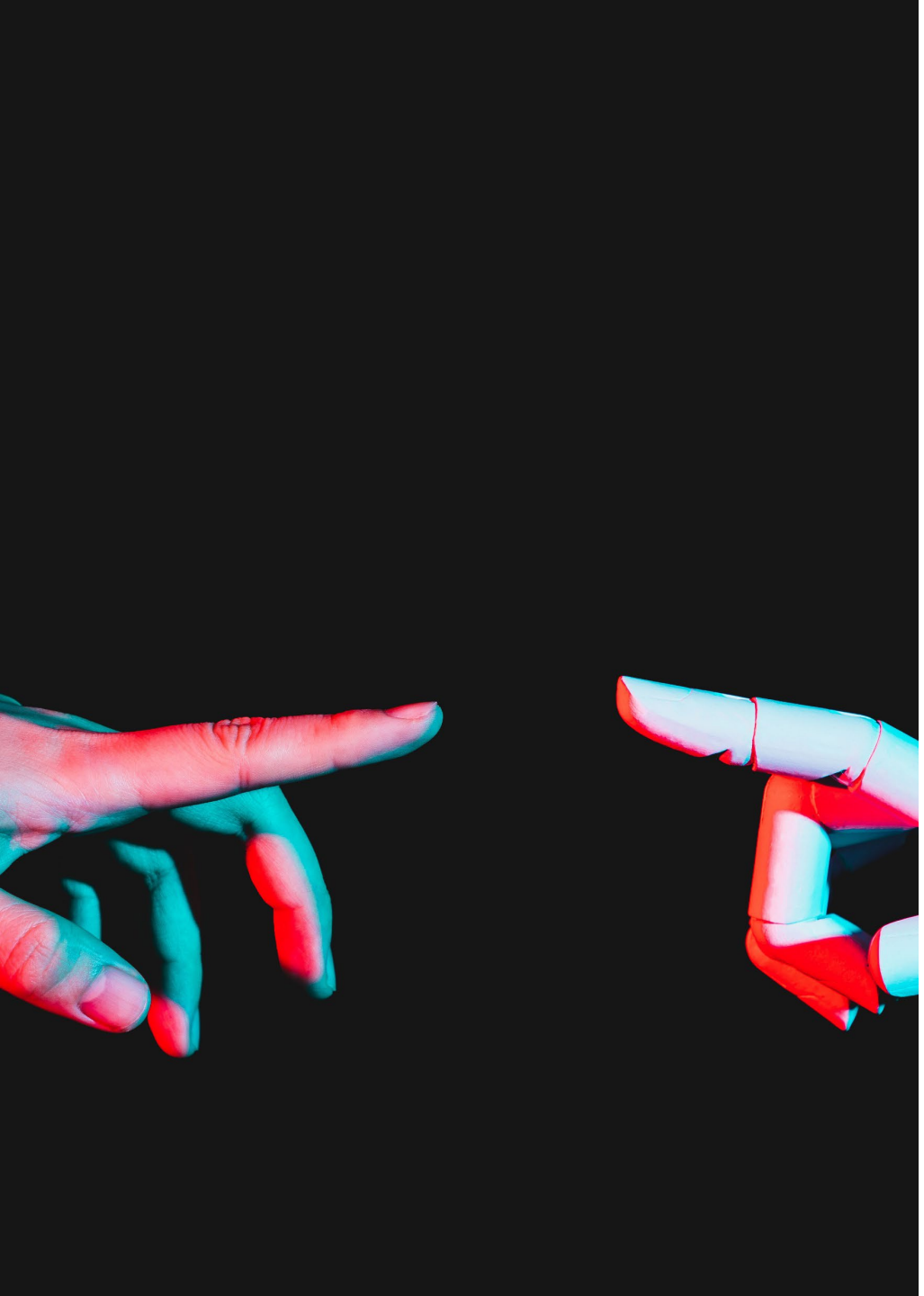
AI can help reduce the stigma around mental health and encourage by providing open, non-judgmental support and communication, increased mental health awareness and mental health literacy.

Support through AI can increase help-seeking behaviour, by helping people feel more comfortable in seeking and receiving support without the fear of judgment or stigma.


Ensuring responsible, ethical, and safe use of GenAI in child and youth mental health

Ethical and Practical Considerations

- Potential to exacerbate online harms, amplify misinformation or effects of cyberbullying.
- Safeguards and protocols are need first.
- Protection of privacy and confidentiality.
- Compliance with professional, privacy, confidentiality, and consent regulations.
- Transparency in data collection and storage.
- Ensure accuracy and reliability, and evidence-base.
- Properly test and validate AI tools before they are used.
- Suitable for what severity of mental health conditions and what part of a care journey?



Balancing human and AI intervention

Some things are innately human, like holding silence.

Trust, or not, of tech-based mental health care.

There is still a need for human intervention in mental health support. It is important to strike a balance between the use of AI and the involvement of human therapists and clinicians.

Thank you. Reach out to connect…

Dr Julia Dray

E: Julia.dray@uts.edu.au

W: https://profiles.uts.edu.au/Julia.Dray

@DrJuliaDray

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