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| **Understanding the impact of social media depictions of youth in a regional Australian town: Implications for health promotion** |
| **Background**The global use of social media has grown exponentially over the last decade. In particular, Facebook groups are shaping the conversations our communities are having by making them more public and visible. Negative discussions have a much larger reach, and can reinforce stereotypes and perceptions that are potentially harmful or health damaging. This phenomenon is particularly relevant to youth crime, with a number of community Facebook groups depicting youth negatively. In a regional community in Australia involved in the initial stages of a youth Justice Reinvestment (JR) project, the impact of social media depictions of youth surfaced as an important area of inquiry.**Methods**Using a collaborative qualitative research approach, twenty in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with community service providers, youth and Indigenous community members. A youth focus group was also held to triangulate data and compare themes from the preliminary analysis of in-depth interviews. This study was approved by the Charles Darwin University Human Research Ethics Committee (H18044)**Results**Service providers and Indigenous community members frequently described the depictions of local youth in social media as being negative, and subsequently advocated for more positive depictions of youth as a moral obligation. The youth interviewed were aware of these social media groups and negative depictions, but demonstrated disinterest from, and even a certain level of distain, for adults engaged in such Facebook activity. They perceived it had minimal impact on their lives and were only involved in the platform to connect with adult family members and to utilise certain functionalities lacking in other platforms.**Discussion**Whilst there was a strong social justice position among many service providers and Indigenous community members resulting in moral outrage about negative depictions of youth on social media, this same position was not necessarily shared by youth themselves. However, this study did reveal that pervasive racism within online Facebook group discussions is a major concern to all stakeholders and could be an opportunity for a united position between service providers, Indigenous community members and local youth as the JR process advances.**Keywords**Youth justice reinvestment, healthy communities, community Facebook groups**Thematic scope:** Make all urban and other habitats inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable and conducive to health and wellbeing**Preference for presentation:** Oral |