DESIGNING A SMARTPHONE APP FOR HEALTH PROMOTION IN ADOLESCENTS CANCER SURVIVORS: MILA CELESTIAL BLOOM

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OVERVIEW

- Background on pediatric cancer
- The Development Process of Mila Celestial Blooms
- Initial results from play testing

PEDIATRIC CANCER

- ~12,000 children each year, with slightly increasing Incidence rates
- > 300,000 survivors
- young people are living longer
- Survivors are risk for a number of late effects which can be complicated by unhealthy lifestyles

American Cancer Society, 2012.



Children's Oncology Group Recommendations

Good nutrition and regular exercise offer many benefits to childhood cancer survivors

- Promote healing of tissues and organs damaged by cancer and treatment
- Building strength and endurance
- Reducing the risk of adult cancers and other diseases
- Decreasing stress and providing a feeling of well-being

SELF-MANAGEMENT INTERVENTIONS ARE NEEDED

- There are few interventions available
- Existing interventions :
 - Have high attrition rates
 - Not designed to reach this geographically dispersed population
 - Not engaging or developmentally tailored



The Power of Self-Monitoring

- Monitoring can also help patients develop insights into patterns that affect their health.
- Monitoring provides patients with feedback, which can encourage continued change
- For monitoring to be effective it must be engaging













BEHAVIORAL CONCEPTS

- Behavioral Learning Theory
 - Classical and operant conditioning
 - reinforcement/ reward schedules
- Behavioral Economics
 - Loss Aversion
- Self-Determination Theory
 - increasing intrinsic motivation by building competence, autonomy, and relatedness

































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PLAY TESTING

- Healthy group of teens (n=5) ages 12-16 years volunteered to test the app
- Teens were given the app to use for 2 weeks
- Asked to use all aspects of the app and paid for use
- Brief focus-group conducted after 2 week period







WHAT WE LEARNED FROM PLAY TESTING

- Detected a number of software bugs
- Determined how to extract data
- Game Elements and Design
 - Need better indicator of personal best
 - Bronze, silver, gold badges
 - Need better orientation to the game
 - More upfront work needed to explain the game (better "onboarding")
 - Need to improve the way we deliver "challenges"

NEXT STEPS

- Feasibility Study (ongoing)
 - 15 participants and 8 week intervention
 - How long will teens play?
 - Will they use it every day?
 - Will they change their behavior (diet and physical activity) in the desired direction?
- Randomized Trial (grant proposal being planned)
 - Improve automated features and feedback
 - Design considerations
 - What is an appropriate control group?
 - Length of intervention? Boosters?









DR. SEUSS

THANK YOU

Collaborators

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