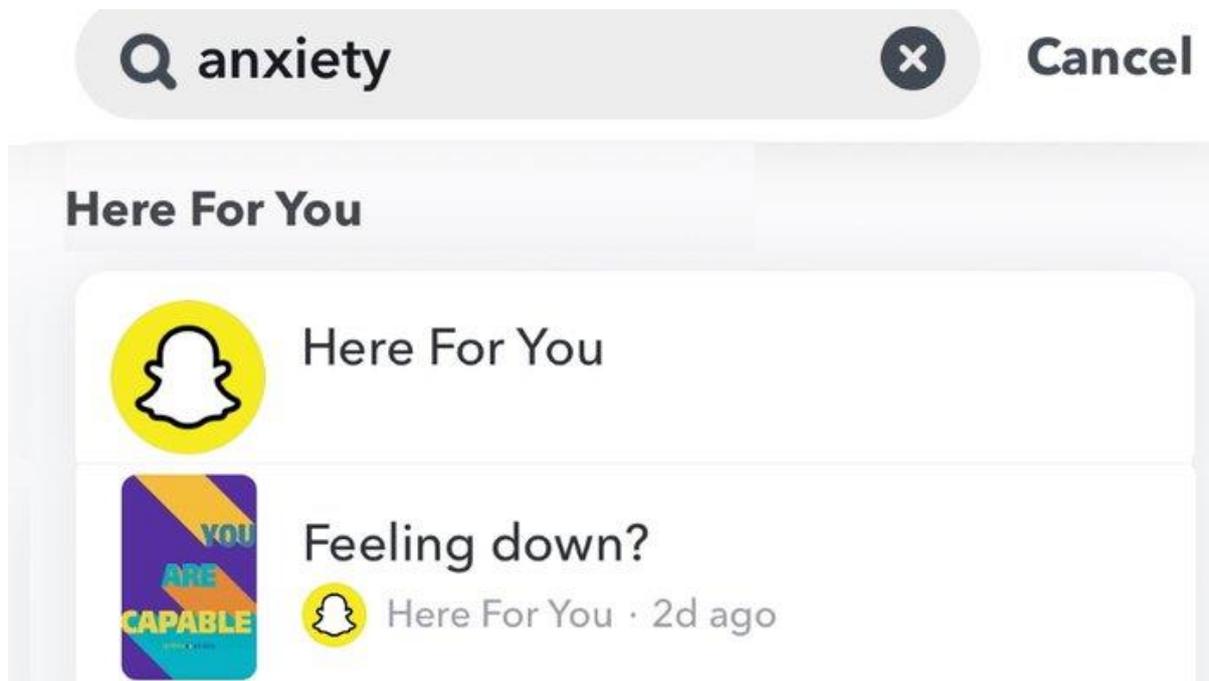


Snapchat Released A New Mental Health Tool



As often stated social media, and apps such as Instagram and Snapchat may be contributing to mental health issues of teenagers today. The focus on appearance, popularity and a fear of missing out may be having an impact on the self-esteem and sense of worth in children.

Social media apps are being forced to recognise this. In the UK Facebook/Instagram Snapchat and Google are being confronted with the need to address this and in April 2019 , announced a partnership with the Samaritans, a mental health service. This resulted in Facebook upgrading many of its policies around mental health, suicide and self-harm – almost driven to it after climbing numbers of online streamed suicides.

Now Snapchat is releasing a mental well-being tool called **Here For You** that will be embedded in the app. In a blog post the company announced:

***“Today, in honour of Safer Internet Day, we are announcing several resources to help uphold this responsibility. We’re starting with a new feature, called Here For You, that will provide proactive in-app support to Snapchatters who may be experiencing a mental health or emotional crisis, or who may be curious to learn more about these issues and how they can help friends dealing with them.*”**

Descriptions of this state the perspectives that users will be able to enter in any of a selection of words such as “anxiety” and be directed to relevant help services. This content they will supply is said to include expert advice, video content relating to the subject, and third-party contacts.

Descriptions also suggest that the app itself will monitor any searches for key word subjects being searched for e.g. stress, grief, suicide, depression, eating disorders, and then return with the response being a link to legitimate content. The Conversation references that a search for eating disorders will supply content from the National Butterfly Foundation or Eating Disorders Victoria.

This is definitely a step in the right direction. As yet there has been no substantive research produced into the effectiveness of this idea, so there is no way to know if this will work to encourage individuals to take up treatment or even read the material.

It will be vital that the company chooses the most appropriate services according the region, content, and work with actual scientific contributors that are accessible to clients.

It is a start to see the tech giants coming (reluctantly) to the table and begin considering the nature of the content that they have allowed to be freely accessible without consequence until now.

Let's see how this one progresses. Some more clarity from Snapchat , and some more reputable evidence on how well this performs will prove interesting to hear.

References

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