YOUNG & RESILIENT RESEARCH CENTRE

Y&R 2026 SEMINAR SERIES

11 November: Linda Marsden

Social Strategies of resistance, regulation, and visibility: Online participation by young people experiencing intersectional disadvantage in Australia

Digital media are now central to how young people perform identity, maintain relationships and negotiate wellbeing. While much of the scholarship on digital intimacies focuses on connection, visibility and participation, less attention has been paid to the ways young people actively disengage from social media as a strategy of self-care, resistance or protection.



Linda Marsden

Drawing on my qualitative research conducted with young people in Australia, I examine how young people negotiate the tension between participation and withdrawal in digital spaces. The analysis conceptualises digital practice as dynamic and relational and demonstrates that young people experiencing intersectional disadvantage do not simply embrace or reject digital participation. Rather, they move between varying forms of connection and disconnection in response to shifting social, relational and material conditions.

I argue that digital disconnection can be understood as an intimate practice through which young people negotiate relationships, societal expectations and their own safety and wellbeing. The findings reframe disconnection as productive forms of resistance, regulation, and visibility rather than merely a withdrawal from connection. This research contributes to debates about youth wellbeing, platform cultures and the politics of online visibility by demonstrating how practices of disengagement can create new possibilities for agency and resilience.

Biography

Linda Marsden is a Senior Research Officer at the Young & Resilient Research Centre and the Institute for Culture and Society at Western Sydney University. Her research explores young people's digital practices, health, and identity, with a focus on participatory approaches, digital inclusion and social justice in digital environments.

11 November, 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM

Parramatta South EZ.1.57 & online

Lunch will be provided