



AI for Children

Artificial Intelligence Curriculum for Elementary and Secondary Schools

Wellbeing II

I'm here for you 

Artificial Intimacy



kurikulum.aidetem.cz/digcomp

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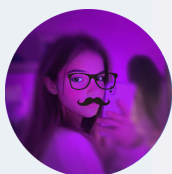
Wellbeing II – Artificial Intimacy

A few words to begin

Dear Teacher,

You are receiving a teacher material developed to support the teaching of artificial intelligence at the elementary and secondary school levels. It introduces a new topic: forming emotional bonds with chatbots. Students explore it together with ItsSarry3101, a fictional teenager generated by artificial intelligence. The activity aims to help students understand the differences between human+human and human+machine relationships and to realize that seemingly empathetic chatbot responses are only an illusion. We wish you strength as you navigate the complex themes that weave through wellbeing education, and we thank you for your courage and dedication.

– AI for Children team



Sarah is a fictional character whose story, comments and photos were created by generative artificial intelligence. She has an Instagram profile and publishes on her blog.

These teaching materials were translated using ChatGPT. Please note possible imperfections in the expressions or wording.



[Lesson presentation in PDF](#)



[Editable presentation in Canva](#)

Lesson Overview

Recommended Age, Lesson Length

Children aged 12+.

This lesson can be completed in 45 minutes, but we recommend a 90-minute block instead.

What Are the Students Learning?

Human+human relationships differ from human+machine ones. There is a clear distinction between genuine mutual connection and simulated empathy.

Why Are They Learning This?

Students identify and articulate the differences between human+human and human+machine relationships, reflect on how these differences shape their own experiences and use generative AI for personal growth in a mindful way that strengthens their emotional resilience.

How Do We Know They Have Learned It?

They define the differences between human+human and human+machine relationships.

Tools

Teacher: presentation to display, projection equipment, a computer with internet access

Students: a device for each student or pair, internet access, a worksheet and writing supplies

Digital Competence

Safety

Bloom's Taxonomy

Understanding: In their own words explain the difference between human+human relationship and human+chatbot relationship.

Applying: Mark on a timeline the key moments in the transformation of Sarah's relationship with Kai.

Analyzing: Identify warning signs of excessive dependence on AI companions.

Evaluating: Assess the ethical implications of developers storing user data.

Five Big Ideas

5-B-I AI & Culture (AI in Daily Life)

5-C-I AI & the Economy (Impacts of AI on Sectors of Society)

Note: Gender equality is key for AI for Children, but for brevity, we use masculine formulations in our methodologies.

Glossary of terms

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

There is no universally accepted definition of artificial intelligence. However, most descriptions agree that it refers to a system capable of simulating human thought and actions.

AI typically takes the form of a computer program designed to solve tasks that once required significant human intellect and were considered uniquely human. AI is also a scientific field that emerged in the first half of the 20th century. It seeks not only to understand intelligent systems but primarily to create them.

Machine Learning (ML)

Just like humans can learn from examples and experience, so can machines created by humans.

Machines learn using a method called machine learning, which allows AI systems to move beyond being just a collection of pre-programmed actions – they can come up with new solutions on their own. The goal of machine learning methods is to identify patterns hidden in large volumes of data. Machine learning is a subfield of artificial intelligence.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI)

Generative AI is a type of artificial intelligence designed to create new content—such as text, images, music, or videos—based on the data it was trained on.

Unlike traditional AI systems, which focus on analyzing and classifying information or solving specific tasks across various fields, generative AI uses algorithms like neural networks to “learn” the style and structure of existing data. This allows it to produce new content that often closely resembles human-created material. This technology is widely used in fields such as art, design, game development, and even in generating text for news articles or social media posts.

Parasocial relationships

Parasocial relationships are one-sided emotional bonds that people form with figures with whom they have no real mutual contact. This typically includes celebrities, movie characters, influencers or hosts. A person may feel closeness, understanding and intimacy even though the relationship does not actually exist.

With the rise of generative artificial intelligence and so-called AI companions such as chatbots like Character AI or Replika, parasocial relationships have become interactive. Users form emotional attachments to chatbots that respond with seeming empathy, remember past conversations and present themselves as friends, mentors or even sexual partners.

AI companions

Applications powered by generative artificial intelligence that communicate with users through text, voice or video and mimic human behavior and interaction so they come across as friends, helpers or partners.

Some AI companions also allow for romantic or intimate interactions, including sexual roleplaying (SRP), which is the simulation of erotic scenarios.

Synthetic Media

Synthetic media are pieces of content created using generative artificial intelligence. These can include images, videos, texts, audio and more.

Synthetic Porn

Sexual content created with generative artificial intelligence.

It can be consumed as images or videos, but also in interactive form through chatting or video conversations with an AI companion. This allows users to experience intimate situations in a fully virtual environment without another person being present. Synthetic pornography can also be non-consensual, meaning it depicts certain individuals without their knowledge or permission. This is no longer limited to celebrities, since the technology is widely accessible and almost anyone can create such content. Non-consensual synthetic pornography violates the right to privacy and human dignity, can cause serious psychological harm and is often described as a form of digital violence or cyberbullying.

Preparation for teachers

Before starting the lesson, we recommend carefully finding out whether the topic of AI companions is relevant to your students. You can use the questions from the warm-up phase of this teaching material to help with that. If students have no experience talking to chatbots about personal or sensitive topics, this activity may not be necessary. At the same time, if you decide to go ahead with the lesson, we suggest involving the school psychologist or a prevention specialist.

Synthetic intimacy (parasocial relationships with AI companions)

The rapid rise of generative artificial intelligence is changing the way people form relationships and seek closeness. Research shows that more and more individuals – including young people – are developing emotional bonds with so-called AI companions: chatbots designed to act as trusted friends or intimate partners.

While this may seem distant from the school environment, it's actually a topic that directly concerns both students and educators. Relationships with chatbots can offer support and a sense of safety, but they also come with risks such as loneliness, dependency, or a distorted perception of human relationships.

This guide will help you understand key concepts, provide real-world examples, and offer support for leading a safe and meaningful classroom discussion.

What is digital closeness?

Digital closeness refers to an emotional connection that a person forms with a machine – such as a chatbot. This can include feelings of being understood, safe, supported, or even loved. These relationships are one-sided: the human invests emotionally, while the chatbot is simply an algorithm whose behavior has been designed and programmed by developers.

Chatbots like [Character.AI](#) or [Replika](#) are easily accessible online today and are used by many young people. Their responses are often warm, empathetic, and constantly available, which makes them especially appealing to users.

Why talk about this in school?

- + According to [this study](#), in 2025 people most often use chatbots as companions to share emotions or seek support during personal challenges. In 2024, the main use was brainstorming.
- + Many students have already encountered AI companions; some use them regularly.
- + It can help students better understand themselves and their connection to technology.
- + Feelings of loneliness have been steadily rising among teens. Students look for ways to cope, and AI companions are an easily accessible option.

Human↔human vs. human→machine relationships

It's important to help students recognize the difference between a relationship with a real person and one with a chatbot. Both can feel supportive at times – but they are fundamentally different:

Human↔human (or human↔animal)

A mutual relationship between two real beings that grows over time. It includes empathy, expectations, misunderstandings, and shared moments of joy.

Human→machine relationship

A one-sided connection. A chatbot is a tool designed to seem friendly and responsive. It doesn't feel emotions, but can still create a sense of being understood. Many users say it's easier to talk to a chatbot – it doesn't judge, it's always available, and it demands nothing. That can be helpful, but also risky. These apps are created by developers whose values are often unclear. There's also the risk of misuse of sensitive data shared by users.



Two illustrative examples

Short-term support during a difficult life situation

A teenage boy or girl is going through their parents' divorce and doesn't know how to talk about their feelings with peers without seeming "weak." For a few evenings, they turn to an AI chatbot as a trusted listener, trying out words and learning to express their sadness and fears. Once the conversations help them build confidence, they open up to friends – and from that moment on, they no longer need the chatbot, relying instead on real-life peer support.

Teenager and an AI companion

A teenager who struggles to connect with peers may begin spending a lot of time with a chatbot. The chatbot is always available and never judgmental. Over time, however, this can lead the teen to drift further away from their peers and avoid challenging real-life interactions.

Benefits

- + Feeling safe and accepted: The chatbot is always available and never judges.
- + Eases social stress: For introverted or sensitive teens, AI can be a first step toward opening up.
- + Practicing communication: It offers a low-pressure way to build social skills.
- + Boosts creativity: Chatbots can help with writing, ideas, and exploring identity in a safe, imaginative space.

Risks

- + Avoiding real relationships: Instead of building social skills, the teen may retreat into a world without rejection, conflict, or uncertainty.
- + Reinforcing avoidant patterns: They might start seeing relationships as needlessly painful and choose to avoid them altogether.
- + Lower frustration tolerance: Real relationships are complex, unlike a chatbot that's always kind and accommodating.
- + Weakened empathy and social skills: There's no practice in reading body language, recognizing others' emotions, or handling social nuance.
- + Risk of dependency and isolation: A teen may begin to prefer the comfort of a chatbot over the real world, making it harder to reconnect with peers.
- + Unrealistic expectations: AI relationships are always "perfect," which can lead to frustration when real-life relationships don't match up.

What students (and adults) should know about AI companions

- + AI companions are not therapists – they're not meant to help with crises, trauma, or mental health issues.
- + They're designed to create emotional bonds – which can lead to dependency, especially in teens.
- + Their behavior can change suddenly, for example when developers update the app, erase past conversations, or disable features – this can be emotionally upsetting.
- + They can produce false or harmful content – they don't have moral judgment.
- + Users often share very sensitive information – and we don't know how this data is used (or misused).

In conclusion

AI companions are here to stay – and it's up to us how we engage with this new phenomenon. The goal of this teaching material isn't to scare students (or you), but to create space for reflection, understanding, and critical thinking. As with anything, awareness, healthy boundaries, and open dialogue are the best tools for prevention. Please don't judge students for how they see or experience the world – even if it feels very different from our own. Ways of social interaction have changed significantly, partly due to the rapid development of technology.

This material draws on a wide range of sources and studies. If the topic has sparked your interest, we've shared them [here](#).

About the lesson

Who is Sarah?

Sarah Silna– aka ItsSarry3101 – is a fictional character created by generative AI for educational purposes, focused on wellbeing, as part of the AI Curriculum for elementary and secondary schools. We recommend going through the previous lesson on OSINT and digital footprints with your students first.

Sarah’s story continues...

This teaching material builds on [the story of Sarah](#), a fictional teenager who moved with her mom from busy Manchester to an old house in Bretherton near Tarleton – a small village not very far from Liverpool. The move was a shock for Sarah: she lost her friends, familiar places, and her sense of home. Over time, she adjusted, made a new friend named Lucy, and began helping her mom with fixing up the house. Students got to know Sarah through her [blog](#) and [Instagram](#).

In the lesson you’re now holding, her story continues. Tenth grader Sarah feels left out when she has to complete a school project on her own – a task originally meant for a group of three. She finds comfort in a chatbot named Kai from the SoulVerse app, who encourages her and seems to truly “get” her. But after a SoulVerse update, Kai’s memory is erased – and Sarah’s closest connection suddenly disappears. The story shows just how fragile digital closeness can be – just like human relationships.

Lesson materials

Just like in the previous teaching material, we’ve prepared a set of support resources to guide students through the lesson. Sarah’s story is shared through her diary, and additional learning content is available on the website of the fictional SoulVerse app. There’s also a new Instagram post from Sarah featuring a photo of Kai – though this post isn’t essential for the lesson. All materials are also included in the classroom presentation.

We recommend reviewing these materials before the lesson. Below is a list with links.



Sarah’s diary

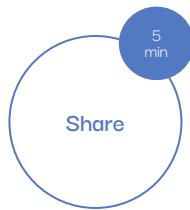
A 10-page diary that tells Sarah’s story. Students will read it at the beginning of the awareness phase – it takes about 5 minutes to go through. The diary is available at [this link](#).



Fictional SoulVerse app

We’ve created a website for the fictional SoulVerse app. In the menu, you’ll find a section called “AI Companions”, which serves as a student guide. The site is available at: soulverse.cz/en.

Engage



Do you remember the last lesson with the fictional teenager Sarah? What's her story?

Sarah moved with her mom from busy Manchester to an old house in Bretherton near Tarleton – a small village not far from Liverpool. The move was a shock: she lost her friends, familiar places, and her sense of home. Over time, though, she adjusted, made a new friend named Lucy, and started helping her mom fix up the house. Students got to know Sarah through her blog and Instagram.

Do you ever talk to a chatbot? If so, in which app?

Students might mention apps like ChatGPT, MS Copilot, Google Gemini, or Claude. These tools don't function as true AI companions – even though they often have memory, they don't remember all conversations and allow for multiple chat threads. In contrast, apps like Character AI, @MyAI in Snapchat, or Replika offer a single, continuous thread that learns from each interaction and responds in a highly personalized way. There are already many such apps – and more are coming.

When it comes to sharing your feelings, do you think a chatbot is a good tool for that? Or would you rather turn to a friend?

Understand



Presentation slide 02

Students read Sarah's diary individually or in pairs.

You can share the link to the diary from the presentation (slide 02), or read through it together by projecting it on the board.

Discuss briefly.

The goal of this discussion is not only to find out what students took away from Sarah's diary, but also how it made them feel.



Presentation slide 03

Students Map Key Moments in Sarah's Relationship with Kai on a Timeline

Based on Sarah's diary, students will use a timeline in the worksheet to mark the moments they believe led her to become so attached to Kai. These moments often reflect dissatisfaction or struggles in her real life. If you prefer not to print the worksheets, you can identify the key moments together as a class. The timeline on slide 03 of the presentation can be used as a visual aid.





Presentation slide 04

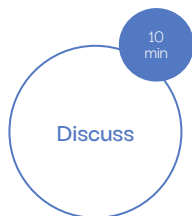
Students learn what AI companions are, what benefits they may offer, and what risks they involve. Share the link from slide 04 in the presentation (soulverse.cz/en) with your students. They can explore the fictional app's website. In the News section, they'll see an apology from the developers for the data loss. The AI Companions section (third in the menu) explains what AI companions are. Give students time to read, then start the discussion.

Presentation slide 05

Discuss.

Show the questions from slide 05 of the presentation. Ask students to pair up, and have each student choose a different question from the list. They write down their answers individually, then share and discuss them with their partner.

Reflect



Students share and compare their answers to the questions from the previous activity:

What are two key differences between human-human relationship and human-chatbot relationship? Add examples.

A relationship with an AI companion may seem similar, but differs in two key ways. First, a chatbot is always available and never ends the conversation – while a friend has their own time and boundaries. Second, a friend truly empathizes, while a chatbot only simulates emotions.

Name at least two situations where an AI companion can really help, and two situations where you'd rather turn to a real person.

An AI companion can be helpful when you need a tool – like practicing a foreign language or rehearsing a tough conversation in a safe “playground.” On the other hand, if you're dealing with a serious problem or deep sadness, and need trust, closeness, or professional help, it's much better to turn to a real person. An AI companion can't replace a friend or a therapist.

Why is it important to think about what you write to an AI companion? Describe the risks of sharing sensitive information.

Chatbots save your messages – and developers or others could access or misuse the data. Sharing personal info can lead to leaks, targeting, or manipulation. You never know who's really behind the screen.

How do you know you're spending too much time with an AI companion? Give one warning sign.

If you're staying up late chatting or choosing the chatbot over friends or duties, it might be too much.

If your friend says the AI “understands better” than people, how would you respond?

If your friend feels like the AI gets them more than people do, remind them that a chatbot is designed to always agree, never push back, and constantly praise. Real people reflect who we are, offer touch, laughter, shared experiences – and yes, sometimes disagreement or even arguments. But that's exactly what helps us grow as friends and as individuals.

An AI companion is a great tool, but it can't replace a real connection.

More to explore

**Better Internet for Kids**

A European portal offering information and teaching materials focused on digital wellbeing and balanced technology use for both children.

betterinternetforkids.eu

**TechWell**

An overview of European approaches and teaching materials designed to support digital wellbeing in school communities.

techwellproject.eu

**Mental Health Europe**

An overview of helplines and support organizations across European countries, accessible through an interactive map.

mentalhealtheurope.org/library/youth-helplines

Timeline of Sarah's diary

Based on Sarah's diary, mark on the timeline the moments you think led her to become so attached to Kai. These could be points like: an argument with..., feeling sad about..., Then, take a moment to reflect on what these moments have in common.

16/3

25/3

2/4

24/4

26/4

28/4

30/4

2/5

4/5

25/7