

9th Annual Health *And...* Conference

HEALTH AND... **SOCIAL MEDIA:** **PREVENTING HARM AND** **PROMOTING HEALTH**



AGENDA

May 5, 2025 • 9:00 am to 2:30 pm

Breakfast and sign-in available beginning 8:30 am

- 9:00 am **Welcome & Introduction**
Lorna Thorpe, PhD, MPH
Chair, Department of Population Health, NYU Langone Health
- 9:15 am **Keynote Speaker and Q&A**
Introduction: Marie Bragg, PhD
Keynote: James Steyer, JD
CEO of Common Sense Media and Critically Acclaimed Author
- 10:15 am **Panel 1: Mitigating Health Risks Posed by Social Media**
Moderator: Brian Elbel, PhD, MPH
Panelists:
Annette Campbell Anderson, PhD
Omni Cassidy, PhD
Jay Van Bavel, PhD
- 11:15 am **Break**
- 11:30 am **Panel 2: Using Social Media to Improve Individual Health**
Moderator: Anna Van Meter, PhD
Panelists:
Thomas Kamber, PhD
Amanda Lenhart
Megan A. Moreno, MD, MEd, MPH
- 12:30 pm **Networking Lunch**
- 1:15 pm **Panel 3: Using Social Media for Population Health Improvements**
Moderator: Kellie Owens, PhD
Panelists:
César Escobar-Viera, MD, PhD
Terry Huang, PhD, MPH, MBA
Jared Watson, PhD
- 2:15 pm **Closing Remarks**
Lorna Thorpe, PhD, MPH
- 2:30 pm **Reception**
Smilow Café, NYU Langone Health, 550 1st Avenue

WELCOME

Greetings, and welcome to our ninth annual “Health *And...*” conference, **“Health *And...* Social Media: Preventing Harm and Promoting Health,”** sponsored by the Department of Population Health at NYU Langone Health.

Each year, the Health *And...* conference brings together industry leaders, policymakers, practitioners, and community members from the fields of medicine, public health, and beyond to explore the intersection of health and its many determinants.

During this interdisciplinary conference, leading researchers and practitioners will delve into the relationship between the rapidly evolving social media landscape and health and well-being. Throughout the day, we will explore health risks associated with social media use and discuss effective mitigation strategies. Our speakers will present research and insights into how social media can influence mental and physical health. From the potential dangers of polarization to the psychological effects of online interactions, we will cover a wide range of topics that highlight the complexities of digital engagement.

Throughout the day, experts will also demonstrate how social media platforms can be harnessed to improve health outcomes at both individual and population levels. They will highlight social media’s ability to foster social connectedness,

disseminate accurate health information, and bolster community engagement. We hope that today’s conference will provide new insights into how we can leverage social media as a powerful tool for public health.

Collaboration among diverse stakeholders is essential to achieving long-lasting improvements in population health. We are glad that you can join us today and hope that this conference will foster continued discussions, partnerships, and actions on these critical issues in the weeks, months, and years to come. You will have the opportunity to engage with thought leaders, participate in dynamic discussions, and network with peers who share your commitment to improving population health. Previous conference themes have included social connectedness, trust, childhood and opportunity, data science, and public action.

We hope you find the sessions enlightening and the conversations inspiring. Together, we can work towards harnessing the power of social media for better health while effectively managing its risks.

Sincerely,

Lorna Thorpe, PhD, MPH
Anita Steckler and Joseph Steckler
Professor and Chair
Department of Population Health
NYU Langone Health

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF POPULATION HEALTH

The Department of Population Health at NYU Langone Health is home to a diverse group of faculty researchers and staff working to improve the health of populations and advance health equity in New York City and around the globe by developing and testing real-world solutions in partnership with healthcare systems, communities, policymakers, and other sectors.

With colleagues across NYU Langone Health, as well as many New York City agencies, community-based organizations, and the private sector, the department conducts applied research to improve the effectiveness of healthcare and address broader social determinants of health. Through our education programs, we train students to become leaders in healthcare delivery, health policy, and public health. We seek not only to prevent and more effectively manage disease but also to advance equitable approaches to helping people and communities stay well.

Learn more at med.nyu.edu/pophealth

Follow us on X **@pophealthNYC** throughout the day and post using the hashtag **#HealthAnd2025**



SPEAKER PROFILES



Annette Campbell Anderson, PhD

Deputy Director, Johns Hopkins Center for Safe and Healthy Schools

Dr. Annette C. Anderson is the deputy director of the Johns Hopkins Center for Safe and Healthy Schools and a dedicated advocate for educational equity and adequacy. A Baltimore native and graduate of Baltimore City Public Schools, her experiences have shaped a career committed to improving public education. Dr. Anderson has held a variety of school-based positions, including classroom teacher, teacher leader, curriculum coordinator, and assistant principal. She was the CEO and founding principal of Widener Partnership Charter School, Pennsylvania's first university-assisted charter school, which became a recognized model for university-public school partnerships. A sought-after expert on education policy and school safety, Dr. Anderson is frequently featured in media outlets. She was named the 2021 Educator of the Year by the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education and received the 2023 America Educational Research Association (AERA) Outstanding Public Communication of Education Research Award.



Marie Bragg, PhD

Assistant Professor, Department of Population Health, NYU Langone Health

Dr. Marie Bragg is an assistant professor in the Department of Population Health at NYU Langone Health and holds an affiliate appointment in the Marketing Department at NYU Stern School of Business. Her research examines the influence of social media and food marketing on adolescent health behaviors. She has received the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Early Independence Award and two NIH R01 grants to study how youth are affected by exposure to unhealthy food ads on social media, as well as to examine the impact of state-level policies that restrict social media among children. Dr. Bragg has testified on various food policy proposals before the New York City Council, the New York State Assembly, and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. She is an Aspen Institute Food Leaders Fellow and currently serves as a Senior Behavioral Expert at the Federal Trade Commission in the Bureau of Consumer Protection's Division of Advertising Practices.



Omni Cassidy, PhD

Assistant Professor, Department of Population Health, and Director, Food, Culture, & Tech Lab, NYU Langone Health

Dr. Omni Cassidy is an assistant professor in the Department of Population Health at NYU Langone Health where she directs the Food, Culture, & Tech Lab. She examines the intersections of food, culture, and technology with a focus on how food and beverage companies use advanced digital technologies to market unhealthy products to communities of color. Her research aims to leverage advanced digital technologies to develop, improve and inform interventions and policies that promote food sovereignty and more equitable food environments. Dr. Cassidy was an invited speaker at the 2024 TEDxNYU Langone Health event. Through her work, Dr. Cassidy strives to create higher quality food environments for people and the planet.



Brian Elbel, PhD, MPH

Professor, Department of Population Health and Associate Dean, Research Mission, NYU Langone Health; Professor, Population Health and Health Policy, NYU Wagner Graduate School of Public Service

Dr. Brian Elbel is the associate dean of Research Mission at NYU Langone Health and professor of population health and health policy at NYU Langone Health and NYU Wagner Graduate School of Public Service. He also directs the Section on Health Choice, Policy and Evaluation in the Department of Population Health at NYU Langone. Dr. Elbel examines how policies and the environment influence health and health behaviors, particularly obesity and chronic disease, for children and adults. He uses statistical and econometric methods and diverse data sources—including administrative records and sales data—to assess the impact of health policies. Dr. Elbel's research has been funded by the NIH, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Science Foundation and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. His work has been featured in national television, radio, and print media.



César Escobar-Viera, MD, PhD

Assistant Professor, Psychiatry, and Director, Program for Internet Delivered Interventions on LGBTQIA+ Mental Health (PRIDE iM), University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine

Dr. César Escobar-Viera is an assistant professor of Psychiatry and director of the Program for Internet Delivered Interventions on LGBTQ+ Mental Health (PRIDE iM Lab) and a primary faculty member at the NIMH-funded P50 ETUDES (Enhancing Triage and Utilization for Depression and Emergent Suicidality) Center, all at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. He is a trained psychiatrist and health services researcher with a master's degree in public health. As a researcher, his mission is to help eliminate mental health disparities among vulnerable youth and young adults. His research integrates mixed methods, research partnerships with youth, social media research, and clinical trials to explore both the benefits and risks of digital engagement on mental health and the clinical impact of chatbot-delivered interventions that target social media literacy, online victimization, social isolation, and youth suicide prevention. Through his work, Dr. Escobar-Viera aims to develop innovative, technology-based strategies that enhance mental health outcomes for at-risk communities.



Terry Huang, PhD, MPH, MBA

Distinguished Professor and Chair, CUNY Graduate School of Public Health & Health Policy, and Co-Director, NYU-CUNY Prevention Research Center

Dr. Terry Huang is a distinguished professor and chair of the Department of Health Policy and Management at the City University of New York Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy (CUNY SPH). He also serves as co-director of the Center for Systems and Community Design and co-director of the NYU-CUNY Prevention Research Center, a CDC-designated center. Previously, Dr. Huang played a leading role at the NIH on the integration of systems science and public health. A recognized authority in obesity and chronic disease prevention, his current research centers on the built environment, systems and human-centered approaches to community well-being, integrated clinical and social care models, and technology-enabled health solutions. Dr. Huang is also the founder of Firefly Innovations, a public health entrepreneurship platform at CUNY SPH, which accelerates early-stage startups focused on health equity and diverse entrepreneurs. His work, largely funded by the NIH and CDC, includes extensive lectures and publications. Dr. Huang has received several prestigious awards, including the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary's Innovation Award in 2010 and the NIH Director's Award in 2011. In addition, he received the National Cancer Institute Award of Merit in 2012 and was named Distinguished Scientist by the University of Nebraska Medical Center in 2013.



Tom Kamber, PhD

Executive Director, Older Adults Technology Services (OATS) from AARP

Dr. Tom Kamber is the founder and executive director of Older Adults Technology Services (OATS) and Senior Planet. He is a leading expert on aging and technology and is regularly featured in national media. Under his leadership, OATS and Senior Planet have developed award-winning programs for older adults across the United States and are now charitable affiliates of AARP. Dr. Kamber has taught courses on technology, urban studies, and philanthropy at Columbia University, and his research has been published in numerous professional and academic journals. He has presented his work on five continents and co-founded the Afro-Latin Jazz Alliance, a Grammy-winning organization. Dr. Kamber also serves on several nonprofit boards of directors and public commissions.

**Amanda Lenhart**

Senior Fellow, Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop; Affiliate, Data & Society Research Institute; Technical Expert Panel Member, American Academy of Pediatrics Center of Excellence on Social Media and Youth Mental Health

Amanda Lenhart is a senior fellow at the Joan Ganz Cooney Center at the Sesame Workshop and a long-time mixed methods researcher who has spent the bulk of her career studying how children and families engage with networked technologies. Previously, she served as the head of research at Common Sense Media, where she led research on youth mental health and social media, the role of smartphones and generative artificial intelligence (AI) in the daily lives of adolescents. Lenhart started her career at the Pew Research Center, where she was instrumental in founding the internet team pioneering research on teens and families for 16 years. Committed to translating rigorous research for broad national audiences, Lenhart has testified before congressional subcommittees and the Federal Trade Commission. Her work has been featured in numerous national publications and broadcasts, including the *New York Times*, *PBS Newshour* and *NPR's All Things Considered*. She currently serves on the Technical Advisory Panel to the American Academy of Pediatrics Center of Excellence on Social Media and Youth Mental Health, and as an advisor to the Adolescent Health and Wellness Advisory Panel Project at Stanford University.



Megan Moreno, MD, MEd, MPH

Professor of Pediatrics, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Co-Medical Director, American Academy of Pediatrics Center of Excellence on Social Media and Youth Mental Health

Dr. Megan Moreno is a professor of Pediatrics and affiliate professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is the academic chief for the Division of General Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine and serves as vice chair of Academic Affairs for the Department of Pediatrics. Dr. Moreno is the principal investigator of the Social Media and Adolescent Health Research Team (SMAHRT), where she researches the intersection of technology and adolescent health. Dr. Moreno has authored over 200 research articles as well as written and edited several textbooks. She is particularly interested in incorporation of youth voice in research, dissemination of research to reach teens and families, and the impact of research on clinical practice and policy. Dr. Moreno currently serves as the co-medical director for the American Academy of Pediatrics Center of Excellence on Social Media and Youth Mental Health.



Kellie Owens, PhD

Assistant Professor, Department of Population Health, NYU Langone Health

Kellie Owens is an assistant professor, sociologist, and empirical bioethicist in the Department of Population Health's Division of Medical Ethics at NYU Langone Health. Her work focuses primarily on the social and ethical implications of health information technologies, including AI and machine learning. Her research has also explored the impact of social media use on adolescent well-being. While a researcher at the Data and Society Research Institute she consulted with the U.S. Surgeon General's office on this topic, and her work was referenced in the Surgeon General's advisory on Social Media and Youth Mental Health. Dr. Owens' work is supported by an early career award from the National Human Genome Research Institute, and she has won awards from the American Sociological Association, the American Anthropological Association, and the Society for Social Studies of Science.



James P. Steyer, JD

CEO, Common Sense Media and Critically Acclaimed Author

James P. Steyer is a nationally recognized expert, entrepreneur, and advocate on issues related to children, education, media, and technology. He is the founder and CEO of Common Sense Media, the nation's leading nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering kids and families with the information, education, and advocacy they need to thrive in today's digital landscape. A prolific author, Steyer has written critically acclaimed books on the impact of media and technology on children, including *Talking Back to Facebook: A Common-Sense Guide to Raising Kids in the Digital Age* and *The Other Parent: The Inside Story of the Media's Effect on Our Children*. For more than 30 years, Steyer has taught popular courses on civil rights, civil liberties, and education at Stanford University, where he is a consulting professor in the Stanford School of Education as well as the Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity. Among other honors, Steyer received Stanford's highest teaching honor, the Walter J. Gores Award for Excellence in Teaching, which is awarded annually to three Stanford professors. Beyond Common Sense Media, Steyer has had founding and executive leadership roles at JP Kids, Children Now, and Center for the Next Generation, all organizations focused on children's education, media, and advocacy. Before founding Common Sense, he worked as a civil rights attorney with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund and co-founded the East Palo Alto Community Law Project, providing legal aid to lower-income families. A frequent commentator on national television and radio, Steyer regularly appears on programs such as *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, *The Today Show*, *Good Morning America*, *Fresh Air*, *The CBS Morning Show*, *CNN*, *Fox News*, *MSNBC*, and *20/20*.



Lorna Thorpe, PhD, MPH

Anita Steckler and Joseph Steckler Professor and Chair, Department of Population Health, NYU Langone Health

Dr. Lorna Thorpe is the chair of the Department of Population Health. Reflecting her career trajectory working in both public health practice and academic settings, she is a national leader in applying epidemiologic research to inform public policy and practice. Dr. Thorpe's research involves studying how social conditions and policies impact health, including evaluating the impact of policies on health, investigating drivers of disease at the neighborhood level, modernizing population health surveillance, and leading multi-institutional studies. She has worked in both academic and public health leadership settings. She began her research career as a Centers for Disease Control Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) Officer and later served as deputy commissioner for the New York City Health Department, where she oversaw Epidemiology.



Jay Van Bavel, PhD

Professor, Psychology, and Director, Center for Conflict & Cooperation, NYU

Dr. Jay Van Bavel is a professor of Psychology and Neural Science at NYU. He is also co-author of *The Power of Us: Harnessing Our Shared Identities to Improve Performance, Increase Cooperation, and Promote Social Harmony* (winner of the 2022 APA William James Book Award). His research examines how collective concerns—such as issues of group identity, social motivation, intergroup conflict and polarization, beliefs and misinformation, moral judgment and decision-making, social media, and public health—shape the brain and behavior. He studies these issues using a multidisciplinary approach that combines experimental social psychology, behavioral economics, cross-cultural samples, cognitive neuroscience methods, and computational social science. Dr. Van Bavel has published over 150 academic papers in top tier journals, including *Science*, *Nature* and *PNAS*, and is a Clarivate highly cited researcher. He has written for leading outlets such as *The New York Times*, *BBC*, *The Atlantic*, *Scientific American*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Guardian*, *TIME*, *The Washington Post*, and others, and his research has been cited in the U.S. Supreme Court and Senate. He has created TEDx and TED-Ed videos and consulted with the White House, United Nations, European Union, and World Health Organization.



Anna Van Meter, PhD

Associate Professor, Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, NYU Langone Health

Dr. Anna Van Meter is an associate professor in the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at NYU Langone Health. Her research focuses on mood disorders and associated clinical phenomena, including suicide, with an emphasis on leveraging technology to improve early symptom identification and access to evidence-based care for youth. She is particularly interested in smartphones as a tool to passively monitor mental health and deliver interventions. Dr. Van Meter has been honored with numerous awards, including a Visionary Grant from the American Psychological Foundation, the Association for Psychological Science's Rising Star award, and the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation's National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression (NARSAD) Young Investigator award.



Jared Watson, PhD

Assistant Professor, Marketing Department, NYU Stern School of Business

Dr. Jared Watson is an assistant professor of marketing at NYU Stern School of Business. His research focuses on understanding consumer behavior online, examining what motivates consumers to engage with others and how they respond to various marketer strategies. He is interested in how consumers process digital information from product reviews to influencer posts, and how news popularity labels (such as “most read” or “most shared”) influence media uptake. He often utilizes the theoretical lenses of information diagnosticity and persuasion knowledge to ask, “how can companies best present information to consumers” and “what do consumers need to make the right decisions”? Parallel research asks, “what leads consumers to provide such information online?” such as the influx of positive reviews for Black-owned businesses in the wake of George Floyd’s murder. A key theme in his work is understanding how behavioral science can lead managers, consumers, and policymakers to make better, more effective decisions. His work has been presented at academic conferences worldwide and published in leading journals such as *Journal of Consumer Research*, *Journal of Marketing*, and *Marketing Science*. Dr. Watson also serves on the Editorial Review Boards for *Journal of Consumer Research*, *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, and *Journal of Interactive Marketing*.



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