**Online Supplement**

Table A1

Search Terms Used for the Formulation of the Search Strings in the Systematic Search

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **PICO concept** | **Search Terms** |
| **Population** | Healthy individuals receiving digital peer support, whether informally or formally |
| **Intervention (or Exposure)** | Digital peer support |
| **Comparison** | Digital professional support (therapists, clinicians, and psychologists) |
| **Outcome** | Mental health (e.g., anxiety, depression, mental well-being, psychological well-being, life satisfaction, distress, loneliness, internalizing symptom, and externalizing symptom)  Physical health (e.g., weight management, obesity, life style behaviour and/or promotion, physical activity, sleep, dietary intake, eating habits, BMI, blood pressure, and glucose level) |
| **Inclusion and exclusion criteria were established *a priori*** | |
| **Inclusion** | (a) be a full-text empirical study written in English;  (b) healthy individuals receiving digital peer support, whether informally or formally  (c) provide sufficient statistics for calculation of effect sizes; interventions needed to list sample sizes, means, standard deviations (SDs), and/or odds-ratios. For studies that lacked statistical information needed to calculate effect sizes, authors were contacted to provide the missing data;  (d) interventions needed to have at least one active engagement of digital support: informal naturally occurring peer support (peers who face similar mental and physical health concerns and/or common health related interests; Fortuna et al., 2019), formal unpaid and/or paid peer support (peers who are trained and/or participate in consumer or peer-run program e.g., community volunteers/health workers and coaches; Fortuna et al., 2019), and professional support (therapists, clinicians, and psychologists);  (e) include at least one measure of mental health (e.g., anxiety, depression, mental well-being, psychological well-being, life satisfaction, distress, loneliness, internalizing symptom, and externalizing symptom) and/or physical health (e.g., weight management, obesity, life style behaviour and/or promotion, physical activity, sleep, dietary intake, eating habits, BMI, blood pressure, and glucose level) |
| **Exclusion** | a) wrong study designs (e.g., qualitative studies, theory or protocol papers for intervention) with no relevant statistics for the calculation of effect sizes (340 articles);  (b) did not report sufficient statistics required to compute effect sizes (authors of these studies failed to respond to requests for the needed information; 98 articles);  (c) did not have full-text available (14 articles);  (d) wrong population (e.g., individuals with clinical conditions; 198 articles);  (e) wrong interventions (e.g., digital peer supporters’ training; 501 articles);  (f) did not have English translations (32 articles) |

*Note.* Included both UK and US spelling and truncated terms for all the search terms listed.

Table A2

Full Search Strings

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Database | Search String | Number of Outcomes |
| Ovid  APA PsycInfo [Coverage: 1806 to May Week 1 2024] | (digital peer support training) OR (digital peer support curriculum) OR (digital peer counselling) OR (digital peer disclosure) OR (digital peer reactions) OR (digital peer responses) OR (digital self-help group) OR (digital self help group) OR (digital support group))  AND ((randomized controlled trial on mental health) OR (intervention on mental health) OR (programs on mental health) OR (mental health) OR (wellbeing) OR (well-being) OR (psychological wellbeing) OR (psychological well-being) OR (randomized controlled trial on physical health) OR (intervention on physical health) OR (programs on physical health) OR (physical health) OR (physical wellbeing) OR (physical well-being)) ab, ti, sh, id.  (digital AND peer support) OR (digital AND peer support AND training) OR (digital AND peer support AND curriculum) OR (digital AND peer counselling) OR (digital AND peer disclosure) OR (digital AND peer reactions) OR (digital AND peer responses) OR (digital AND self-help group) OR (digital AND self help group) OR (digital AND support group))  AND ((randomized controlled trial on mental health) OR (intervention on mental health) OR (programs on mental health) OR (mental health) OR (wellbeing) OR (well-being) OR (psychological wellbeing) OR (psychological well-being) OR (randomized controlled trial on physical health) OR (intervention on physical health) OR (programs on physical health) OR (physical health) OR (physical wellbeing) OR (physical well-being)) ab, ti, sh, id.  ((digital OR eHealth OR web-based OR internet-based OR mobile OR gamification OR forums OR social media OR social networking sites OR Discord OR Facebook OR Instagram OR Reddit OR Snapchat OR Telegram OR TikTok OR Twitch OR Twitter OR WeChat OR WhatsApp OR YouTube OR online OR website OR app OR virtual OR video OR podcast OR interactive tutorial OR discussion board OR video games).  AND  (peer support OR peer support training OR peer support curriculum OR peer counselling OR peer disclosure OR peer reactions OR peer responses OR self-help group OR self help group OR support group)  AND  (mental health OR mental wellness OR mental well-being OR psychological well-being OR psychological functioning OR psychosocial functioning OR psychosocial well-being OR anxiety OR depression OR internalizing symptoms OR externalizing symptoms OR physical health OR weight management OR obesity OR lifestyle behaviour OR lifestyle promotion OR physical activity OR sleep OR dietary intake OR eating habits OR BMI OR blood pressure OR glucose level)) ab, ti, sh, id | 62,550 |
| Embase  (Embase.com)  [Coverage: 2013 to 2024] | (digital peer support: ab,ti,kw OR digital peer support training: ab,ti,kw OR digital peer support curriculum: ab,ti,kw OR digital peer counselling: ab,ti,kw OR digital peer disclosure: ab,ti,kw OR digital peer reactions: ab,ti,kw OR digital peer responses: ab,ti,kw OR digital self-help group: ab,ti,kw OR digital self help group: ab,ti,kw OR digital support group: ab,ti,kw)  AND (randomized controlled trial on mental health: ab,ti,kw OR intervention on mental health: ab,ti,kw OR programs on mental health: ab,ti,kw OR mental health: ab,ti,kw OR wellbeing: ab,ti,kw OR well-being: ab,ti,kw OR psychological wellbeing: ab,ti,kw OR psychological well-being: ab,ti,kw OR randomized controlled trial on physical health: ab,ti,kw OR intervention on physical health: ab,ti,kw OR programs on physical health: ab,ti,kw OR physical health: ab,ti,kw OR physical wellbeing: ab,ti,kw OR physical well-being: ab,ti,kw)  (digital:ab,ti,kw OR ehealth: ab,ti,kw OR web-based: ab,ti,kw OR internet-based: ab,ti,kw OR mobile: ab,ti,kw OR gamification: ab,ti,kw OR forums: ab,ti,kw OR Online: ab,ti,kw OR website: ab,ti,kw OR app: ab,ti,kw OR virtual: ab,ti,kw OR video: ab,ti,kw OR podcast: ab,ti,kw OR interactive tutorial: ab,ti,kw OR discussion board: ab,ti,kw OR video games: ab,ti,kw).  AND  (peer support: ab,ti,kw OR peer support training: ab,ti,kw OR peer support curriculum: ab,ti,kw OR peer counselling: ab,ti,kw OR peer disclosure: ab,ti,kw OR peer reactions: ab,ti,kw OR peer responses: ab,ti,kw OR self-help group: ab,ti,kw OR self help group: ab,ti,kw OR support group: ab,ti,kw)  AND  (mental health: ab,ti,kw OR mental wellness: ab,ti,kw OR mental well-being: ab,ti,kw OR psychological well-being: ab,ti,kw OR psychological functioning: ab,ti,kw OR psychosocial functioning: ab,ti,kw OR psychosocial well-being: ab,ti,kw OR anxiety: ab,ti,kw OR depression: ab,ti,kw OR internalizing symptoms: ab,ti,kw OR externalizing symptoms: ab,ti,kw OR mental health disorders: ab,ti,kw OR physical health: ab,ti,kw OR physical health: ab,ti,kw OR weight management: ab,ti,kw OR obesity: ab,ti,kw OR lifestyle behaviour: ab,ti,kw OR lifestyle promotion: ab,ti,kw OR physical activity: ab,ti,kw OR sleep: ab,ti,kw OR dietary intake: ab,ti,kw OR eating habits: ab,ti,kw OR BMI: ab,ti,kw OR blood pressure: ab,ti,kw OR glucose level: ab,ti,kw)  (social media: ab,ti,kw OR social networking sites: ab,ti,kw OR discord: ab,ti,kw OR facebook: ab,ti,kw OR instagram: ab,ti,kw OR reddit: ab,ti,kw OR snapchat: ab,ti,kw OR telegram: ab,ti.kw OR tiktok: ab,ti,kw OR twitch: ab,ti.kw OR twitter: ab,ti,kw OR wechat: ab,ti,kw OR whatsapp: ab,ti,kw OR youtube: ab,ti,kw)  AND  (peer support: ab,ti,kw OR peer support training: ab,ti,kw OR peer support curriculum: ab,ti,kw OR peer counselling: ab,ti,kw OR peer disclosure: ab,ti,kw OR peer reactions: ab,ti,kw OR peer responses: ab,ti,kw OR self-help group: ab,ti,kw OR self help group: ab,ti,kw OR support group: ab,ti,kw)  AND  (mental health: ab,ti,kw OR mental wellness: ab,ti,kw OR mental well-being: ab,ti,kw OR psychological well-being: ab,ti,kw OR psychological functioning: ab,ti,kw OR psychosocial functioning: ab,ti,kw OR psychosocial well-being: ab,ti,kw OR anxiety: ab,ti,kw OR depression: ab,ti,kw OR internalizing symptoms: ab,ti,kw OR externalizing symptoms: ab,ti,kw OR mental health disorders: ab,ti,kw OR physical health: ab,ti,kw OR weight management: ab,ti,kw OR obesity: ab,ti,kw OR lifestyle behaviour: ab,ti,kw OR lifestyle promotion: ab,ti,kw OR physical activity: ab,ti,kw OR sleep: ab,ti,kw OR dietary intake: ab,ti,kw OR eating habits: ab,ti,kw OR BMI: ab,ti,kw OR blood pressure: ab,ti,kw OR glucose level: ab,ti,kw)  [these search terms below do not apply to Embase]  (digital: ab,ti,kw AND peer support: ab,ti,kw AND training: ab,ti,kw OR digital: ab,ti,kw AND peer support: ab,ti,kw AND curriculum: ab,ti,kw OR digital: ab,ti,kw AND peer counselling: ab,ti,kw OR digital: ab,ti,kw AND peer disclosure: ab,ti,kw OR digital: ab,ti,kw AND peer reactions: ab,ti,kw OR digital: ab,ti,kw AND peer responses: ab,ti,kw OR digital: ab,ti,kw AND self-help group: ab,ti,kw OR digita: ab,ti,kw l AND self help group: ab,ti,kw OR digital: ab,ti,kw AND support group: ab,ti,kw)  AND (randomized controlled trial: ab,ti,kw AND mental health: ab,ti,kw OR mental health: ab,ti,kw AND intervention: ab,ti,kw OR mental health: ab,ti,kw AND programs: ab,ti,kw OR mental health: ab,ti,kw OR wellbeing: ab,ti,kw OR well-being: ab,ti,kw OR psychological wellbeing: ab,ti,kw OR psychological well-being: ab,ti,kw OR randomized controlled trial: ab,ti,kw AND physical health: ab,ti,kw OR intervention: ab,ti,kw AND physical health: ab,ti,kw OR programs: ab,ti,kw AND physical health: ab,ti,kw OR physical health: ab,ti,kw OR physical wellbeing: ab,ti,kw OR physical well-being: ab,ti,kw) | 19,811 |
| CINAHL complete  [Coverage: 1954 to 2024] | (TI (digital peer support OR digital peer support training OR digital peer support curriculum OR digital peer counselling OR digital peer disclosure OR digital peer reactions OR digital peer responses OR digital self-help group OR digital self help group OR digital support group) OR AB (digital peer support OR digital peer support training OR digital peer support curriculum OR digital peer counselling OR digital peer disclosure OR digital peer reactions OR digital peer responses OR digital self-help group OR digital self help group OR digital support group) OR MW (digital peer support OR digital peer support training OR digital peer support curriculum OR digital peer counselling OR digital peer disclosure OR digital peer reactions OR digital peer responses OR digital self-help group OR digital self help group OR digital support group)  AND (TI (randomized controlled trial on mental health OR intervention on mental health OR programs on mental health OR mental health OR wellbeing OR well-being OR psychological wellbeing OR psychological well-being OR randomized controlled trial on physical health OR intervention on physical health OR programs on physical health OR physical health OR physical wellbeing OR physical well-being) OR  AB (randomized controlled trial on mental health OR intervention on mental health OR programs on mental health OR mental health OR wellbeing OR well-being OR psychological wellbeing OR psychological well-being OR randomized controlled trial on physical health OR intervention on physical health OR programs on physical health OR physical health OR physical wellbeing OR physical well-being) OR  MW (randomized controlled trial on mental health OR intervention on mental health OR programs on mental health OR mental health OR wellbeing OR well-being OR psychological wellbeing OR psychological well-being OR randomized controlled trial on physical health OR intervention on physical health OR programs on physical health OR physical health OR physical wellbeing OR physical well-being))  (TI (digital AND peer support OR digital AND peer support AND training OR digital AND peer support AND curriculum OR digital AND peer counselling OR digital AND peer disclosure OR digital AND peer reactions OR digital AND peer responses OR digital AND self-help group OR digital AND self help group OR digital AND support group) OR  AB (digital AND peer support OR digital AND peer support AND training OR digital AND peer support AND curriculum OR digital AND peer counselling OR digital AND peer disclosure OR digital AND peer reactions OR digital AND peer responses OR digital AND self-help group OR digital AND self help group OR digital AND support group) OR  MW (digital AND peer support OR digital AND peer support AND training OR digital AND peer support AND curriculum OR digital AND peer counselling OR digital AND peer disclosure OR digital AND peer reactions OR digital AND peer responses OR digital AND self-help group OR digital AND self help group)OR digital AND support group))  AND (TI (randomized controlled trial on mental health) OR (mental health AND intervention) OR (mental health AND programs) OR (mental health) OR (wellbeing) OR (well-being) OR (psychological wellbeing) OR (psychological well-being) OR (randomized controlled trial on physical health) OR (intervention on physical health) OR (programs on physical health) OR (physical health) OR (physical wellbeing) OR (physical well-being) OR  AB (randomized controlled trial on mental health) OR (mental health AND intervention) OR (mental health AND programs) OR (mental health) OR (wellbeing) OR (well-being) OR (psychological wellbeing) OR (psychological well-being) OR (randomized controlled trial on physical health) OR (intervention on physical health) OR (programs on physical health) OR (physical health) OR (physical wellbeing) OR (physical well-being) OR  MW (randomized controlled trial on mental health) OR (mental health AND intervention) OR (mental health AND programs) OR (mental health) OR (wellbeing) OR (well-being) OR (psychological wellbeing) OR (psychological well-being) OR (randomized controlled trial on physical health) OR (intervention on physical health) OR (programs on physical health) OR (physical health) OR (physical wellbeing) OR (physical well-being)  (TI (digital OR eHealth OR web-based or internet-based OR mobile OR gamification OR forums OR social media OR social networking sites OR Discord OR Facebook OR Instagram OR Reddit OR Snapchat OR Telegram OR TikTok OR Twitch OR Twitter OR WeChat OR WhatsApp OR YouTube OR online OR website OR app OR virtual OR video OR podcast OR interactive tutorial OR discussion board OR video games) OR  AB (digital OR eHealth OR web-based OR internet-based OR mobile OR gamification OR forums OR social media OR social networking sites OR Discord OR Facebook OR Instagram OR Reddit OR Snapchat OR Telegram OR TikTok OR Twitch OR Twitter OR WeChat OR WhatsApp OR YouTube OR online OR website OR app OR virtual OR video OR podcast OR interactive tutorial OR discussion board OR video games) OR  MW (digital OR eHealth OR web-based OR internet-based OR mobile OR gamification OR forums OR social media OR social networking sites OR Discord OR Facebook OR Instagram OR Reddit OR Snapchat OR Telegram OR TikTok OR Twitch OR Twitter OR WeChat OR WhatsApp OR YouTube OR online OR website OR app OR virtual OR video OR podcast OR interactive tutorial OR discussion board OR video games))  AND  (TI(peer support or peer support training OR peer support curriculum OR peer counselling OR peer disclosure OR peer reactions OR peer responses OR self-help group OR self help group OR support group) OR  AB (peer support or peer support training OR peer support curriculum OR peer counselling OR peer disclosure OR peer reactions OR peer responses OR self-help group OR self help group OR support group) OR  MW (peer support or peer support training OR peer support curriculum OR peer counselling OR peer disclosure OR peer reactions OR peer responses OR self-help group OR self help group OR support group)  AND  (TI (mental health OR mental wellness OR mental well-being OR psychological well-being OR psychological functioning OR psychosocial functioning OR psychosocial well-being OR anxiety OR depression OR internalizing symptoms OR externalizing symptoms OR mental health disorders OR randomized controlled trial on physical health OR intervention on physical health OR programs on physical health OR physical health OR physical wellbeing OR physical well-being) OR  AB (mental health OR mental wellness OR mental well-being OR psychological well-being OR psychological functioning OR psychosocial functioning OR psychosocial well-being OR anxiety OR depression OR internalizing symptoms OR externalizing symptoms OR mental health disorders OR randomized controlled trial on physical health OR intervention on physical health OR programs on physical health OR physical health OR physical wellbeing OR physical well-being) OR  MW (mental health OR mental wellness OR mental well-being OR psychological well-being OR psychological functioning OR psychosocial functioning OR psychosocial well-being OR anxiety OR depression OR internalizing symptoms OR externalizing symptoms OR mental health disorders OR randomized controlled trial on physical health OR intervention on physical health OR programs on physical health OR physical health OR physical wellbeing OR physical well-being)) | 12,082 |
| Total | | 94,443 |

Table A3

Characteristics of Digital Peer Support Interventions and Mental Health

|  | Control | | | Digital Peer Support | | | Alternative Treatment | | |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Study** | **M** | **SD** | **Total** | **M** | **SD** | **Total** | **M** | **SD** | **Total** | **Weight** | **Standardized Mean Difference** |
| Bilich et al. 2008 | 16.98 | 7.74 | 34 | 11.10 | 7.44 | 16 | 14.40 | 9.39 | 23 | 0.851 | 0.775a, 0.390b |
|  | (17.22) | (6.35) | - | (17.78) | (5.65) | - | (17.57) | (7.08) | - | - | 0.093a, 0.033b |
| Buglione et al. 1990 | - | - | - | 23.47 | 6.27 | 17 | 22.88 | 8.14 | 16 | 0.794 | 0.081b |
|  | - | - | - | (33.22) | (6.46) | - | (32.18) | (7.04) | - | - | 0.154b |
| Buntrock et al. 2016 | 19.42 | 6.85 | 204 | 16.84 | 5.24 | 202 | - | - | - | 0.877 | 0.423a |
|  | (26.42) | (7.99) | - | (26.25) | (7.85) | - | - | - | - | - | 0.021a |
| Ehlers et al. 2003 | 12.30 | 9.30 | 27 | 14.60 | 7.75 | 25 | 6.15 | 5.95 | 28 | 0.847 | 0.269a, 1.223b |
|  | (20.20) | (7.30) | - | (22.55) | (9.55) | - | (23.55) | (8.15) | - | - | 0.276a, 0.113b |
| Geraedts et al. 2014 | 13.30 | 6.35 | 171 | 11.70 | 7.20 | 171 | - | - | - | 0.871 | 0.236a |
|  | (18.15) | (5.10) | (231) | (18.15) | (5.65) | (231) | - | - | - | - | 0.000a |
| Horgan et al. 2013 | - | - | - | 33.50 | - | 118 | - | - | - | 0.859 | 0.097c |
|  | - | - | - | (37.00) | (7.94) | (118) | - | - | - | - | - |
| Leow et al. 2015 | 4.43 | 5.00 | 42 | 1.58 | 2.22 | 38 | - | - | - | 0.847 | 0.737a |
|  | (3.40) | (3.96) | - | (3.44) | (3.56) | - | - | - | - | - | 0.011a |
| McKay et al. 2002 | 15.31 | 9.15 | 33 | 13.86 | 12.62 | 30 | 15.65 | 11.34 | 70 | 0.862 | 0.132a, 0.149b |
|  | (15.27) | (12.25) | - | (15.83) | (12.79) | - | (17.36) | (11.34) | - | - | 0.045a, 0.127b |
| Moir 2016 | 4.85 | 3.44 | 121 | 4.65 | 3.69 | 111 | - | - | - |  | 0.056a |
|  | (4.78) | (3.61) | 142 | (4.99) | (3.65) | 133 | - | - | - | - | 0.058a |
| Titov et al. 2008 | 27.73 | 10.14 | 49 | 20.44 | 8.18 | 50 | - | - | - | 0.854 | 0.791a |
|  | (29.93) | (10.22) | - | (29.27) | (9.13) | - | - | - | - | - | 0.068a |
| Titov et al. 2008 | 28.62 | 8.90 | 40 | 19.87 | 9.43 | 41 | - | - | - | 0.848 | 0.954a |
|  | (0.84) | (8.50) | - | (30.16) | (10.36) | - | - | - | - | - | 3.094a |
| Travis et al. 2010 | - | - | - | 24.50 | 19.00 | 32 | - | - | - | 0.792 | 0.099c |
|  | - | - | - | (26.00) | (10.10) | 54 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Pavarini et al. 2023 | 45.04 | 9.28 | 50 | 55.56 | 6.3 | 50 | - | - | - | 0.855 | 0.939c,0.932a |
|  | (46.84) | (6.22) | - | (46.48) | (6.68) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Donovan et al. 2019 | - | - | - | 6.6 | 3.8 | 17 | - | - | - | 0.711 | 0.144c |
|  | - | - | - | (6.1) | (3.1) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Marinova et al. 2022 | - | - | - | 17.85 | 5.79 | 606 | - | - | - | 0.880 | 0.057c |
|  | - | - | - | (18.2) | (6.43) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Gregoire et al. 2022 | 14.09 | 6.69 | 53 | 11.26 | 6.9 | 54 | - | - | - | 0.856 | 0.30c, 0.416a |
|  | (13.75) | (6.61) | - | (13.39) | (6.75) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Suffoleto et al. 2021 | - | - | - | 1.36 | 0.96 | 26 | 1.57 | 1 | 26 | 0.827 | 0.073a,0.214b |
|  | - | - | - | (1.43) | (0.95) | - | (1.81) | (0.9) | - | - | - |
| Sin et al. 2022 | 43.3 | 9.19 | 204 | 44.5 | 8.31 | 203 | - | - | - | 0.877 | 0.137a |
| Baumel et al. 2018 | - | - | - | 19.18 | 9.23 | 19 | - | - | - | 0.729 | 0.975c |
|  | - | - | - | (36.11) | (13.34) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Birrell et al. 2023 | - | - | - | 7.73 | 5.55 | 83 | 7.21 | 5.64 | 83 | 0.866 | 0.059c,0.093b |
|  | - | - | - | (8.06) | (5.66) | - | (6.14) | (5.31) | - | - | - |
| Fortuna et al. 2022 | 34.77 | 6.63 | 10 | 32.11 | 1.99 | 11 | - | - | - | 0.744 | 0.543 |
| Klimczak et al. 2023 | 45.4 | 17 | 77 | 33.8 | 24.4 | 76 | 33.6 | 22.2 | 77 | 0.871 | 0.453c,0.552a,  0.009b |
|  | 50.8 | (27) | - | (45.8) | (28.4) | - | (49) | (25.1) | - | - | - |
| Wright et al. 2022 | - | - | - | 40.1 | 8.7 | 40 | - | - | - | 0.810 | 0.80c |
|  | - | - | - | (47.1) | (6.6) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Drysdale et al. 2021 | 12.43 | 2.06 | 30 | 15.13 | 1.96 | 30 | 15.92 | 2.66 | 30 | 0.851 | 0.952c,0.338b,  0.934a |
|  | (12.85) | (3.25) | - | (12.8) | (0.92) | - | (12.8) | (1.74) | - | - | - |
| Pauksztat et al. 2022 | 1.62 | 0.18 | 66 | 1.30 | 0.18 | 65 | - | - | - | 0.862 | 0.978c |
| Kaplan 2011 | 2.02 | 0.06 | 150 | 1.88 | 0.04 | 150 | - | - | - | - | 0.920c, 0.975a |
|  | (2.05) | (0.06) | - | (1.96) | (0.04) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Tomasino et al. 2017 | 8.2 | 5.7 | 15 | 6.4 | 4.2 | 16 | 5.1 | 2.8 | 16 | 0.821 | 0.992c,  0.360a,0.364b |
|  | (9.3) | (3.7) | - | (11.2) | (5.4) | - | (10.6) | (3.2) | - | - | - |
| Schulz et al. 2016 | 14.41 | 11.42 | 49 | 10.27 | 9.87 | 50 | 10.35 | 10.22 | 50 | 0.864 | 0.748c,  0.388a,0.008b |
|  | (17.97) | (11.59) | - | (17.88) | (10.46) | - | (19.43) | (10.22) | - | - | - |
| Hensel et al. 2019 | - | - | - | 11.5 | 6.4 | 727 | 14.2 | 6.8 | 728 | 0.882 | 0.496c,0.409b |
|  | - | - | - | (14.8) | (6.9) | - | (16) | (6.5) | - | - | - |
| Nosek et al. 2016 | - | - | - | 7.81 | 3.38 | 19 | - | - | - | 0.729 | 0.74c |
|  | - | - | - | (11.4) | (6.36) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Smith et al. 2011 | - | - | - | 4 | 3 | 25 | 11.1 | 13.6 | 25 | 0.875 | 0.809c,0.721b |
|  | - | - | - | (9.1) | (8.4) | - | (3.5) | (2.8) | - | - | - |
| Setoyama et al. 2011 | 13.4 | 8.7 | 465 | 12.5 | 6.9 | 465 | - | - | - | 0.878 | 0.102a |
| Lepore et al. 2019 | - | - | - | 5.94 | 0.34 | 183 | - | - | - | 0.868 | 0.918c |
|  | - | - | - | (6.93) | (0.28) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Pretorius et al. 2009 | - | - | - | 2.9 | 0.2 | 101 | - | - | - | 0.855 | 0.932c |
|  | - | - | - | (3.9) | (0.1) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| McKay et al. 2001 | 19.9 | 14.2 | 34 | 14.9 | 12.5 | 34 | - | - | - | 0.846 | 0.166c,0.374a |
|  | (17.6) | (10.4) | - | (16.9) | (11.6) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Freeman et al. 2008 | - | - | - | 0.91 | 0.47 | 117 | 1.04 | 0.64 | 117 | 0.872 | 0.408c,0.232b |
|  | - | - | - | (1.13) | (0.6) | - | (1.31) | (0.64) | - | - | - |
| Wikerson et al. 2018 | - | - | - | 20 | - | 12 | - | - | - | 0.642 | 0.62c |
|  | - | - | - | (29.5) | - | 12 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Houston et al. 2002 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 0.855 | 2.7 (relative odd-ratio)a |
| Mouthan et al. 2013 | 4.1 | 3.5 | 150 | 3.6 | 3.2 | 150 | - | - | - | 0.874 | 0.027c,0.149a |
|  | (4.13) | (4.26) | - | (3.69) | (3.5) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Nelson et al. 2014 | - | - | - | 18.21 | 13.2 | 19 | - | - | - | 0.729 | 0.9680.299c |
|  | - | - | - | (21.86) | (11.11) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Stevens et al. 2022 | - | - | - | 24.1 | 6.1 | 151 | 24.6 | 6.1 | 151 | 0.875 | 0.475c,0.082b |
|  | - | - | - | (27) | (6.1) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Yeung et al. 2021 | - | - | - | 4.2 | 3.1 | 253 | - | - | - | 0.873 | 0.209c |
|  | - | - | - | (6.5) | (3.6) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Houwen et al. 2010 | 18.5 | 13.3 | 126 | 20.6 | 13.6 | 127 | - | - | - | 0.873 | 0.162c,0.156a |
|  | (20.9) | (12) | - | (22.8) | (13.4) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Bautista et al. 2022 | 10.92 | 5.15 | 17 | 7.5 | 10.12 | 18 | - | - | - | 0.799 | 0.622c,0.426a |
|  | (14) | (5) | - | (12.4) | (4.65) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Joyce et al. 2018 | - | - | - | 27.5 | 4.9 | 29 | - | - | - | 0.782 | 0.288c |
|  | - | - | - | (26) | (5.5) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Linke 2007 | - | - | - | 1 | 0.89 | 10000 | - | - | - | 0.884 | 0.778c |
|  | - | - | - | 1.70 | (0.91) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Paulson & Casile 2015 | - | - | - | 24.16 | 18.84 | 6 | - | - | - | 0.414 | 0.340c |
|  | - | - | - | (18.5) | (14.06) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Kramer et al. 2015 | - | - | - | 21.35 | 11.77 | 270 | - | - | - | 0.873 | 0.187c |
|  | - | - | - | (23.59) | (12.2) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Ebert et al. 2013 | 0.83 | 0.66 | 200 | 0.83 | 0.64 | 200 | - | - | - | 0.877 | 0.968c,0.00a |
|  | - | - | - | (1.5) | (0.69) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Owen et al. 2016 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 0.874 | 1.01 odd ratioc |
| Niemiec et al. 2018 | - | - | - | 3.5  (4.7) | 1.4  (1.2) | 37 | - | - | - | 0.804 | 0.920c |
| Zheng et al. 2021 | 0.07mean change | 0.05 | 477 | 0.08mean change | 0.10 | 477 | - | - | - | 0.881 | 0.128c |
| Houston et al. 2002 | - | - | - | - | - | 103 | - | - | - | 0.855 | 0.597c |
| Evette et al. 2007 | 1.64 | 0.52 | 52 | 1.63 | 0.68 | 26 | 1.72 | 0.56 | 26 | 0.856 | 0.017a, 0.144b |
| O’Dea et al. 2020 | 10.02 | 4.77 | 95 | 10.49 | 4.87 | 98 | - | - | - | 0.869 | 0.098a |
|  | (10.70) | (4.73) | - | (11.55) | (4.72) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Andersson et al. 2005 | 18.77 | 8.37 | 49 | 13.00 | 7.83 | 36 | - | - | - | 0.849 | 0.712a |
|  | 20.03) | (8.07) | - | (19.23) | (6.87) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Lieberman & Goldstein 2005 | - | - | - | 15.30 | 1.20 | 91 | - | - | - | 0.852 | 4.520c |
|  | - | - | - | (20.00) | (0.85) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Lee Dennis 2003 | 15.20 | 4.85 | 22 | 13 | 3.96 | 20 | - | - | - | 0.810 | 0.497a |
|  | (16.29) | (4.47) | - | (15.93) | (4.06) | - | - | - | - | - | 0.084a |
| Goldberg et al. 2015 | - | - | - | 2.24 | 1.43 | 2817 | - | - | - | 0.883 | 0.18prei-posti |
|  | - | - | - | (2.55) | (1.45) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Imanaka et al. 2013 | - | - | - | 0.5mean change | 17.1 | 96 | 1.1mean change | 11.1 | 97 | 0.869 | 0.698prei-posti |
| Kelly et al. 2021 | - | - | - | 3.96mean change | 8.32 | 72 | - | - | - | 0.843 | 0.410prei-posti |
| Morriss et al. 2021 | 3.26mean change | 1.89 | 395 | 3.62mean change | 2.12 | 695 | - | - | - | 0.881 | 0.295prei-posti |
| Shorey et al. 2019 | 12.4mean change | 2.1 | 69 | 11.4mean change | 2 | 69 | - | - | - | 0.863 | 0.96prei-posti |
| Bratava et al. 2023 | - | - | - | 6.47 | 1.65 | 815 | - | - | - | 0.881 | 0.569prei-posti |
|  | - | - | - | (7.41) | (1.65) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Dennis et al. 2009 | 34.4 | 12.07 | 350 | 33.63 | 11.01 | 351 | - | - | - | 0.880 | 0.129prei-posti |
|  | (36.88) | (12.84) | - | (35.1) | (11.85) | - | - | - | - | - | 0.067postc-posti |
| Baustita et al. 2022 | 10.29 | 5.15 | 18 | 7.5 | 3.78 | 17 | - | - | - | 0.799 | 0.082prei-posti |
|  | (11.4) | (5) | - | (12.4) | (4.65) | - | - | - | - | - | 0.763postc-posti |
| Kruzan et al. 2022 | 1.62mean change | 0.18 | 66 | 1.3mean change | 0.18 | 65 | - | - | - | 0.862 | 0.479prei-posti |
| Gillard et al. 2022 | - | - | 295 | - | - | 295 | - | - | - | 0.879 | 0.040postc-posti |
| Summers et al. 2021 | - | - | - | 4.74 | 3.82 | 347 | - | - | - | 0.876 | 0.550prei-posti |
|  | - | - | - | (7.07) | (4.62) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Kahl et al. 2020 | - | - | - | 17.7 | 12.74 | 1982 | - | - | - | 0.883 | 0.387prei-posti |
|  | - | - | - | (22.55) | 12.3 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Economides et al. 2019 | - | - | - | - | - | 102 | - | - | - | 0.855 | 0.454prei-posti |
| Moir et al. 2016 | 5.02 | 3.19 | 137 | 5.15 | 3.72 | 138 | - | - | - | 0.874 | 0.122prei-posti |
|  | (4.82) | (3.67) | - | (5.61) | (3.85) | - | - | - | - | - | 0.038postc-posti |

*Note.* Pre-scores, where available, are added in parentheses. The mean (M), standard deviation (SD), and number of participants (Total) are provided according to their group (control, digital peer support, alternative treatment). Standardized Mean Differences (SMD) are provided, where a = SMD between digital peer support and control groups; b = SMD between digital peer support and alternative digital treatment groups, and c = SMD between pre- and post-digital peer support intervention. Odds ratios were converted to Cohen’s d/SMD in analyses.

Table A4

Characteristics of Digital Peer Support Interventions and Physical Health

|  | Control | | | Digital Peer Support | | | Alternative Treatment | | |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Study** | **M** | **SD** | **Total** | **M** | **SD** | **Total** | **M** | **SD** | **Total** | **Weight** | **Standardized Mean Difference (SMD)** |
| DeBar et al. 2009 | - | - | - |  |  | 228 | - | - | - | 1.404 | 0.105a |
| Goldberg et al. 2015 | - | - | - | 116.53  (118.96) | 14.08  (15.13) | 2817 | - | - | - | 1.466 | 0.166c |
| Mamede et al. 2021 | 10618.6 | 4377.3 | 149 | 10901.8 | 5068.3 | 149 | - | - | - | 1.419 | 0.060a |
| Keyseling et al. 2008 | 5.7 | 0.1 | 118 | 5.8 | 0.1 | 118 | - | - | - | 1.406 | 0.091a |
| Lara et al. 2016 | 26.8  (26.6) | 2.54  (2.52) | 37 | 26.2  (27.3) | 2.52  (2.54) | 38 | - | - | - | 1.280 | 0.435c  0.079a |
| Moravcova et al. 2022 | 111.6  (117.6) | 23.2  (22.3) | 50 | 107.8  (114.30) | 19  (20) | 50 | - | - | - | 1.324 | 0.333c  0.179a |
| Tsai & Liu 2015 | 522.1  (519.1) | 101.1  (114.2) | 57.5 | 556  (526.5) | 115.7  (128) | 58 | - | - | - | 1.331 | 0.236c  0.312a |
| Mi et al. 2022 | - | - | - | 0.69  (1.25) | 2.56  (3.77) | 268 | - | - | - | 1.414 | 0.174c |
| Sharps et al. 2019 | 1.38  (1.36) | 0.33  (0.31) | 10 | 1.28  (1.47) | 0.27  (0.28) | 10 | - | - | - | 0.901 | 0.690c  0.385a |
| West et al. 2016 | 7.1  (8.3) | 3.6  (3.6) | 29 | 9.9  (7.8) | 3.1  (4.5) | 29 | - | - | - | 1.231 | 0.54c  0.834a |
| Watanabe-Ito et al. 2020 | - | - | - | 6.2  (4.6) | 5.7  (2.5) | 42 | - | - | - | 1.153 | 0.364c |
| Carlsen et al. 2013 | 0.54  (0.21) | 0.88  (1.14) | 113 | 0.59  (0.14) | 0.87  (1.13) | 113 | - | - | - | 1.404 | 0.446c  0.057a |
| Morgan et al. 2011 | 3mean change | 3.45 | 32.5 | 4.8 mean change | 4.35 | 33 | - | - | - | 1.254 | 0.053c |
| Leahey et al. 2016 | 4 | 6.3 | 25 | 8.6 | 6.3 | 25 | 9.7 | 7.1 | 25 | 1.280 | 0.164b  0.730a |
| Tate et al. 2006 | 1544.2  1869.7 | 651.7  (778.9) | 64 | 1468.2  (2042.6) | 449.1  (875.6) | 64 | 1381.7  (1911.6) | 448.2  (770.9) | 64 | 1.392 | 0.825c  0.193b  0.136a |
| Harvey-Berino et al. 2004 | - | - | - | 7.6 | 7.3 | 127 | 6.5 | 5.5 | 128 | 1.411 | 0.170b |
| Lim et al. 2020 | - | - | - | 2.6 mean difference | 1.3 | 108 | - | - | - | 1.334 | 0.382a |
| Ross et al. 2022 | - | - | - | 83.3  (87.8) | 5.1  (5.1) | 1811 | 85.8  (86.3) | 2.9  (2.2) | 1812 | 1.467 | 0.602b |
| Fiks et al. 2017 | - | - | - | - | - | 87 | - | - | - | 1.304 | 0.450c |
| Tate el al. 2001 | 4.1 mean change | 4.5 | 45 | 1.6 mean change | 3.3 | 46 | - | - | - | 1.311 | 0.400c |
| Pretlow et al. 2015 | - | - | - | - | - | 43 | - | - | - | 1.160 | 0.700c |
| Webber et al. 2008 | - | - | - | 3.71 mean change | 4.46 | 21 | 5.22 mean change | 4.72 | 22 | 1.257 | 0.102c |
| Pappa et al. 2017 | - | - | - | - | - | 107886 | - | - | - | 1.471 | 0.830c |
| Anderson 2022 | 218.40  (218.44) | 40.37  (43.25) | 26 | 212.54  (218.75) | 58.15  (49.38) | 27 | 215.03  (219.95) | 43.36  (45.89) | 27 | 1.291 | 0.117c  0.049b |
| Johnson & Wardle 2011 | - | - | 1810 | - | - | 1811 | - | - | - | 1.467 | 0.043a |
| Turner-McGrievy et al. 2013 | - | - | - | - | - | 23 | - | - | 24 | 1.182 | 0.480a |
| Lee et al. 2018 | - | - | - | 32.5  (33.1) | 4.7  (4.8) | 22 | - | - | - | 0.940 | 0.126c |
| Dennison et al. 2014 | 91.34  (91.4) | 20.15  (20.31) | 262 | 89.59  (91.86) | 20.65  (20.96) | 262 | 90  (92.02) | 19.89  (20.09) | 262 | 1.451 | 0.086a  0.020b |
| Hageman et al. 2017 | 201.7  (196.8) | 33.5  (36.8) | 100 | 210.5  (200.4) | 35.8  (37.4) | 100 | 196.6  (200.4) | 40.8  (43.7) | 101 | 1.420 | 0.006a  0.128b |
| Richardson et al. 2010 | 5428  (3859) | 2667  (1586) | 162 | 6575  (4601) | 3127  (2074) | 162 | - | - | - | 1.423 | 0.388a |
| An et al. 2013 | 2.64mean change | 2.2 | 566 | 7.58 mean change | 7.10 | 566 | 6.51 mean change | 6.04 | 566 | 1.462 | 0.036c |
| Rosas et al. 2022 | 3.3mean change | 6.0 | 66 | 3.8mean change | 8.4 | 66 | 0.09mean change | 4.6 | 68 | 1.395 | 0.438c |
| Li et al. 2021 | - | - | - | - | - | 353 | - | - | - | 1.428 | 0.386c |
| Imanaka et al. 2013 | - | - | - | 0.61mean change | 1.0 | 96 | 0.3mean change | 0.8 | 97 | 1.392 | 0.282c |
| Sepah et al. 2017 | - | - | - | 22.7mean change | 0.70 | 220 | - | - | - | 1.402 | 0.691c |
| Ali et al. 2021 | - | - | - | 6.41  (6.33) | 1.18  (1.77) | 79 | - | - | - | 1.289 | 0.073c |
| Travis et al. 2010 | - | - | - | 38.7  (42.8) | 13.9  (17.7) | 54 | - | - | - | 1.215 | 0.258c |
| Hensel et al. 2019 | 0.69  (0.68) | 0.15  (0.16) | 406 | 0.71  (0.68) | 0.17  (0.16 | 406 | - | - | - | 1.452 | 0.182c  0.125a |
| Dennis et al. 2009 | 2.86  (4.85) | 1.62  (1.52) | 350 | 2.83  (4.97) | 1.53  (1.62) | 351 | - | - | - | 1.449 | 0.165c  0.019a |
| Linke et al. 2007 | - | - | - | 0.87  (1.32) | 0.69  (0.73) | 8933 | - | - | - | 1.470 | 0.634c |
| Owen et al. 2016 | - | - | 149 | - | - | 150 | - | - | - | 1.420 | 0.496a |
| Stevens et al. 2022 | - | - | - | 1.0mean change | 1.3 | 151 | 0.1 mean change | 1.3 | 151 | 1.420 | 0.769c |
| Paulson et al. 2015 | - | - | - | 24.16  (18.5) | 18.81  (14.06) | 6 | - | - | - | 0.321 | 0.341c |
| Freeman et al. 2008 | 1.04  (1.31) | 0.64  (0.64) | 119 | 0.91  (1.13) | 0.47  (0.60) | 119 | - | - | - | 1.407 | 0.408c  0.232a |
| McKeon et al. 2021 | - | - | - | 43.6  (48) | 9.5  (7.9) | 166 | - | - | - | 0.973 | 0.504c |
| Suffoleto et al. 2021 | 1.61  (1.51) | 1.11  (1.06) | 26 | 1.22  (1.37) | 0.03  (0.89) | 26 | - | - |  | 1.207 | 0.283c  0.355a |

*Note.* Pre-scores, where available, are added in parentheses. The mean (M), standard deviation (SD), and number of participants (Total) are provided according to their group (control, digital peer support, alternative treatment). Standardized Mean Differences (SMD) are provided, where a = SMD between digital peer support and control groups; b = SMD between digital peer support and alternative digital treatment groups, and c = SMD between pre- and post-digital peer support intervention. Odds ratios were converted to Cohen’s d/SMD in analyses.

Table A5

Characteristics of Digital Peer Support Interventions and Mental Health

| **Authors** | **Year** | **N** | **SMD** | **Mean**  **age** | **Gender** | **Country** | **Ethnic composition** | **Plat form** | **Uptake (100%)** | **Duration** | **Follow up assessment** | **Study design** | **Source of support** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Leow et al. | 2015 | 80 | 0.8440 | 47.16 | 67.50 | 2 | 85% Chinese, 10% Malay, 3.8% Indian, 1.3% Caucasian | 2 | 54.80 | 16 | 16 | 4 | 3 |
| Ludman et al. | 2007 | 104 | 0.0756 | 50.20 | 71.00 | 1 | 87% Caucasian | 6 | 83.00 | 48 | 12 | 4 | 3 |
| O'Dea et al. | 2020 | 193 | 0.0925 | 14.82 | 86.53 | 1 | 97% Australian, 3% Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander | 1 | 68.90 | 4 | 12 | 3 | 2 |
| O'Dea et al. | 2020 | 193 | 0.1330 | 14.82 | 86.53 | 1 | 97% Australian, 3% Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander | 1 | 68.90 | 4 | 12 | 3 | 2 |
| Ehlers et al. | 2003 | 80 | 0.6790 | - | - | 1 | - | 6 | 92.90 | 12 | 36 | 4 | 3 |
| Ehlers et al. | 2003 | 80 | 0.7390 | - | - | 1 | - | 6 | 92.90 | 12 | 36 | 4 | 3 |
| Horgan et al. | 2013 | 118 | 0.0970 | 20.60 | 35.60 | 1 | 98% White | 2 | 13.60 | 12 | - | 1 | 1 |
| Buntrock et al. | 2016 | 406 | 0.3000 | 45.00 | 73.90 | 1 | 83.5% White, 0.2% African American, 0.2% Hispanic, 16% Not reported | 4 | 64.40 | 48 | 12 | 3 | 3 |
| Bilich et al. | 2008 | 89 | 0.3630 | - | 66.90 | 1 | - | 6 | 76.20 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| Bilich et al. | 2008 | 89 | 0.5540 | - | 66.90 | 1 | - | 6 | 76.20 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| McKay et al. | 2002 | 133 | 0.1030 | 59.00 | 53.10 | 1 | - | 2 | 84.00 | 12 | - | 4 | 2 |
| Andersson et al. | 2005 | 85 | 0.6260 | 36.40 | 78.00 | 1 | - | 4 | 62.40 | 10 | 24 | 3 | 2 |
| Andersson et al. | 2005 | 85 | 0.0960 | 36.40 | 78.00 | 1 | - | 4 | 62.40 | 10 | 24 | 3 | 2 |
| Geraedts et al. | 2014 | 231 | 0.1990 | 43.40 | 62.30 | 1 | 95.2% Netherlands, 4.8% other | 4 | 51.70 | 8 | 48 | 3 | 3 |
| Geraedts et al. | 2014 | 231 | 0.1440 | 43.40 | 62.30 | 1 | 95.2% Netherlands, 4.8% other | 4 | 51.70 | 8 | 48 | 3 | 3 |
| Lieberman & Goldstein | 2005 | 91 | 0.910 | 46.20 | 100.00 | 1 | - | 2 | 80.00 | 24 | - | 1 | 1 |
| Titov et al. | 2008 | 99 | 0.7000 | 38.13 | 59.00 | 1 | - | 4 | 78.00 | 10 | - | 3 | 1 |
| Titov et al. | 2008 | 81 | 0.9020 | 36.79 | 63.00 | 1 | - | 4 | 78.00 | 10 | - | 3 | 1 |
| Travis et al. | 2010 | 32 | 0.2740 | 55.40 | 25.00 | 1 | - | 6 | 59.30 | 12 | - | 1 | 2 |
| Lee Dennis | 2003 | 40 | 0.5520 | - | 100.00 | 1 | born in Canada 85% | 6 | 100.00 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| Buglione et al. | 1990 | 33 | 0.3450 | - | 42.40 | 1 | - | 4 | 73.00 | 6 | - | 4 | 3 |
| Pavarini et al. | 2023 | 100 | 0.9390 | 16-17 | 84.00 | 1 | 42% White British, 18% White Irish, 14% Black British, 2% Mixed | 5 | 78.00 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 1 |
| Donovan et al. | 2019 | 17 | 0.1440 | 19.30 | 50.00 | 1 | 67% White, 10% African American, 5% Asian, 14% Multiracial, 5% unknown | 1 | 88.20 | 4 | - | 1 | 1 |
| Marinova et al. | 2022 | 606 | 0.0570 | 17.30 | 78.70 | 1 | - | 4 | 40.00 | 12 | - | 1 | 1 |
| Gregoire et al. | 2022 | 107 | 0.3000 | 26.00 | 76.60 | 1 | 87% Canadian | 5 | 49.00 | 20 | 12 | 3 | 2 |
| Gregoire et al. | 2022 | 107 | 0.4160 | 26.00 | 76.60 | 1 | 87% Canadian | 5 | 49.00 | 7 | 12 | 3 | 2 |
| Suffoleto et al. | 2021 | 52 | 0.0730 | 18.70 | 79.00 | 1 | 97% White, 3% Black, 6% Hispanics | 6 | 91.20 | 12 | 12 | 1 | 3 |
| Suffoleto et al. | 2021 | 52 | 0.2140 | 18.70 | 79.00 | 1 | 97% White, 3% Black, 6% Hispanics | 6 | 91.20 | 12 | 12 | 3 | 3 |
| Sin et al. | 2022 | 407 | 0.1370 | 53.10 | 81.00 | 1 | 87% White, 4% Mixed, 5% Asian, 4% Black, 1% other | 4 | 85.00 | 40 | 40 | 3 | 4 |
| Baumel et al. | 2018 | 19 | 0.9750 | 31.95 | - | 1 | 40% African American, 25% White, 15% Hispanic, 10% Asian, 10% multiracial | 4 | 85.00 | 4 | - | 1 | 2 |
| Birrell et al. | 2023 | 166 | 0.0590 | 15.20 | 43.30 | 2 | 90.1% born in Australia | 1 | 77.30 | 48 | 48 | 1 | 2 |
| Birrell et al. | 2023 | 166 | 0.0930 | 15.20 | 43.30 | 2 | 90.1% born in Australia | 1 | 77.30 | 48 | 48 | 3 | 2 |
| Fortuna et al. | 2022 | 21 | 0.5430 | 37.30 | 66.60 | 1 | 21% White | 1 | 70.00 | 48 | - | 1 | 2 |
| Klimczak et al. | 2023 | 230 | 0.4530 | 21.70 | 76.00 | 1 | 89.3% White, 1.3% Hispanic, 2.7% Asian, 1.3% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander | 6 | 74.00 | 40 | - | 1 | 2 |
| Klimczak et al. | 2023 | 230 | 0.5520 | 21.70 | 76.00 | 1 | 89.3% White, 1.3% Hispanic, 2.7% Asian, 1.3% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander | 6 | 74.00 | 40 | - | 3 | 2 |
| Klimczak et al. | 2023 | 230 | 0.0090 | 21.70 | 76.00 | 1 | 89.3% White, 1.3% Hispanic, 2.7% Asian, 1.3% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander | 6 | 74.00 | 40 | - | 3 | 2 |
| Wright et al. | 2022 | 40 | 0.8000 | 48.80 | 83.00 | 1 | 91.3% White British, 6.5% Asian British, 2.2% prefer not to say | 5 | 70.00 | 32 | - | 1 | 1 |
| Drysdale et al. | 2021 | 90 | 0.9520 | 17-23 | 36.70 | 1 | - | 5 | 68.60 | 24 | - | 1 | 3 |
| Drysdale et al. | 2021 | 90 | 0.3380 | 17-26 | 39.70 | 1 | - | 5 | 68.60 | 24 | - | 3 | 3 |
| Drysdale et al. | 2021 | 90 | 0.9340 | 17-27 | 40.70 | 1 | - | 5 | 68.60 | 24 | - | 3 | 3 |
| Pauksztat et al. | 2022 | 131 | 0.9780 | 20.32 | 67.90 | 1 | 34.1% from the Philippines, followed by Denmark, Germany and Sweden (7.4% each) | 4 | 100.00 | 8 | 8 | 3 | 1 |
| Tomasino et al. | 2017 | 47 | 0.9920 | 69.60 | 68.10 | 1 | 4.3% African American, 87.2% White, 6.4% more than 1 race, 2.1% declined to report | 4 | 83.00 | 2 | - | 1 | 3 |
| Tomasino et al. | 2017 | 47 | 0.3600 | 69.60 | 68.10 | 1 | 4.3% African American, 87.2% White, 6.4% more than 1 race, 2.1% declined to report | 4 | 83.00 | 2 | - | 3 | 3 |
| Tomasino et al. | 2017 | 47 | 0.3640 | 69.60 | 68.10 | 1 | 4.3% African American, 87.2% White, 6.4% more than 1 race, 2.1% declined to report | 4 | 83.00 | 2 | - | 3 | 3 |
| Schulz et al. | 2016 | 148 | 0.7480 | 35.38 | 53.00 | 1 | - | 4 | 53.00 | 12 | 24 | 1 | 4 |
| Schulz et al. | 2016 | 148 | 0.3880 | 35.38 | 53.00 | 1 | - | 4 | 53.00 | 12 | 24 | 3 | 4 |
| Schulz et al. | 2016 | 148 | 0.0080 | 35.38 | 53.00 | 1 | - | 4 | 53.00 | 12 | 24 | 3 | 4 |
| Hensel et al. | 2019 | 1455 | 0.4900 | 41.40 | 73.00 | 1 | 82% White, 17% non-white | 4 | 48.00 | 12 | - | 1 | 1 |
| Hensel et al. | 2019 | 1455 | 0.4090 | 41.40 | 73.00 | 1 | 82% White, 17% non-white | 4 | 48.00 | 12 | - | 3 | 1 |
| Nosek et al. | 2016 | 19 | 0.7400 | 43.21 | 100.00 | 1 | 52.6% Caucasian, 21.1% Hispanics, 21.1% African American, 5.3% others | 2 |  | 1 | - | 1 | 1 |
| Setoyama et al. | 2011 | 465 | 0.1020 | 43.71 |  | 2 | - | 4 | 54.00 | 4 | - | 3 | 1 |
| Lepore et al. | 2019 | 183 | 0.9180 | 29-65 | 100.00 | 1 | 95.6% White | 2 | 87.00 | 4 | - | 1 | 1 |
| Pretorius et al. | 2009 | 101 | 0.932 | 18.80 | 97.00 | 1 | - | 2 | 70.00 | 12 | 24 | 1 | 4 |
| McKay et al. | 2001 | 78 | 0.166 | 52.30 | 82.00 | 1 | - | 4 | 87.00 | 8 | - | 1 | 3 |
| McKay et al. | 2001 | 78 | 0.374 | 52.30 | 82.00 | 1 | - | 4 | 87.00 | 8 | - | 3 | 3 |
| Freeman et al. | 2008 | 238 | 0.408 | 21.00 | 70.00 | 1 | The largest ethnic group was White (71%), and the next largest was UK Asian (i.e., from the Indian subcontinent: 71, 10%). | 4 | - | 10 | - | 1 | 1 |
| Freeman et al | 2008 | 238 | 0.232 | 21.00 | 70.00 | 1 | The largest ethnic group was White (71%), and the next largest was UK Asian (i.e., from the Indian subcontinent: 71, 10%). | 4 | - | 10 | - | 3 | 1 |
| Wikerson et al | 2018 | 12 | 0.620 | 55,7 | 58.30 | 1 | 75% Caucasian, 25% African American | 3 | 38.30 | 6 | 24 | 1 | 1 |
| Houston et al. | 2002 | 103 | 0.548 | 18-over 45 | 81.00 | 1 | 18 participants were from Canada, Australia, or Europe | 2 | 69.00 | 2 | - | 3 | 1 |
| Mouthan et al. | 2013 | 300 | 0.027 | 44.18 | 41.10 | 1 | 84.1% Dutch cultural background | 2 | 46.00 | 4 | 48 | 1 | 2 |
| Mouthan et al. | 2013 | 300 | 0.149 | 44.18 | 41.10 | 1 | 84.1% Dutch cultural background | 2 | 46.00 | 4 | 48 | 3 | 2 |
| Nelson et al. | 2014 | 19 | 0.299 | 50.47 | 0.00 | 1 | 68.4% Caucasians | 4 | 74.00 | 4 | 8 | 1 | 2 |
| Stevens et al. | 2022 | 302 | 0.475 | 16.70 | 79.10 | 1 | 82.5% White, 7.1% Asian, 6.4% Mixed, 4% Black | 4 | 48.00 | 4 | - | 1 | 4 |
| Stevens et al. | 2022 | 302 | 0.082 | 16.70 | 79.10 | 1 | 82.5% White, 7.1% Asian, 6.4% Mixed, 4% Black | 4 | 48.00 | 4 | - | 4 | 4 |
| Yeung et al. | 2021 | 253 | 0.209 | 37.50 | 95.20 | 2 | 100% Chinese | 5 | 72.00 | 8 | - | 1 | 3 |
| Houwen et al. | 2010 | 253 | 0.162 | 42.97 | 93.70 | 1 | - | 5 | 100.00 | 12 | 24 | 3 | 1 |
| Houwen et al. | 2010 | 253 | 0.156 | 42.97 | 93.70 | 1 | - | 2 | 100.00 | 12 | 24 | 3 | 1 |
| Bautista et al. | 2022 | 35 | 0.622 | 21.86 | 71.40 | 1 | 71.4%, European American, 11.4%, African American, 8.6% Hispanic 17.1% Asian American | 4 | 80.00 | 6 | - | 3 | 2 |
| Bautista et al. | 2022 | 35 | 0.426 | 21.86 | 71.40 | 1 | European American 71.4%, African American 11.4%, Hispanic 8.6%, Asian American 17.1% | 4 | 90.00 | 6 | - | 3 | 2 |
| Joyce et al. | 2018 | 29 | 0.288 | 43.70 | 3.00 | 2 | - | 4 | 38.00 | 1 | - | 1 | 2 |
| Linke | 2007 | 10000 | 0.778 | 37.40 | 51.10 | 1 | 81.9% White British, 9.1% White other, 5.3% White Irish, 1.4% Asian, 0.9% Mixed, 0.7% Black, 0.8% Other | 2 | 17.00 | 6 | - | 1 | 1 |
| Paulson & Casile | 2015 | 6 | 0.340 | 29-83 |  | 1 | - | 2 | 100.00 | 24 | - | 1 | 2 |
| Kramer et al. | 2015 | 270 | 0.187 | 42.90 | 87.20 | 1 | - | 4 | 87.00 | 48 | 48 | 1 | 1 |
| Ebert et al. | 2013 | 400 | 0.968 | 45.09 | 73.50 | 1 | - | 4 | 65.50 | 12 | 48 | 1 | 4 |
| Ebert et al. | 2013 | 400 | 0.000 | 45.09 | 73.50 | 1 | - | 4 | 65.50 | 12 | 48 | 3 | 4 |
| Owen et al. | 2016 | 299 | 0.005 | 53.80 | 77.70 | 1 | - | 2 |  | 12 | - | 1 | 1 |
| Niemiec et al. | 2018 | 37 | 0.400 | 58.20 | 0.91 | 3 | 2.7% US, 64.9% Mexico, 32.4% others | 1 | 92.50 | 16 | - | 1 | 2 |
| Niemiec et al. | 2018 | 37 | 0.545 | 58.20 | 0.91 | 3 | 2.7% US, 64.9% Mexico, 32.4% others | 1 | 92.50 | 16 | - | 1 | 2 |
| Goldberg et al. | 2015 | 2817 | 0.181 | 42.00 |  | 1 | - | 4 | 84.00 | 48 | - | 1 | 1 |
| Goldberg et al. | 2015 | 2817 | 0.039 | 42.00 |  | 1 | - | 4 | 84.00 | 96 | - | 1 | 1 |
| Imanaka et al. | 2013 | 193 | 0.698 | 50.00 | 13.40 | 2 | - | 4 | 89.70 | 12 | - | 4 | 4 |
| Zheng et al. | 2021 | 954 | 0.089 | 13.50 | 48.90 | 2 | - | 1 | 63.00 | 2 | - | 3 | 1 |
| Zheng et al. | 2021 | 954 | 0.112 | 13.50 | 48.90 | 2 | - | 1 | 63.00 | 2 | - | 3 | 1 |
| Kelly et al. | 2021 | 72 | 0.410 | 44.00 | 39.00 | 2 | 81% born in Australia Aboriginal, 6% Torres Strait, or both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent | 1 | 100.00 | 8 | - | 1 | 4 |
| Morriss et al. | 2021 | 790 | 0.220 | 37.60 | 81.00 | 1 | 93.4% White, 2% South Asian, 0.7% Black, 3.6% others | 4 | 92.00 | 24 | - | 4 | 1 |
| Smit et al. | 2022 | 301 | 0.440 | 50.20 | 66.10 | 1 | - | 2 | 24.60 | 12 | 24 | 1 | 1 |
| Shorey et al. | 2019 | 138 | 0.960 | 32.05 | 100.00 | 2 | - | 1 | 79.70 | 4 | 12 | 3 | 2 |
| Shorey et al. | 2019 | 138 | 0.824 | 32.05 | 100.00 | 2 | - | 1 | 79.70 | 12 | 12 | 3 | 2 |
| Bravata et al. | 2023 | 815 | 0.569 | 38.00 | 3.81 | 1 | 53.7% White, 16.3% Hispanics, 6.3% Black | 4 | 73.00 | 12 | - | 1 | 4 |
| Houston et al. | 2002 | 103 | 0.587 | 40.00 | 78.60 | 1 | - | 2 | 100.00 | 24 | 48 | 1 | 1 |
| Houston et al. | 2002 | 103 | 0.505 | 40.00 | 78.60 | 1 | - | 2 | 100.00 | 48 | 48 | 4 | 1 |
| Dennis et al. | 2009 | 701 | 0.129 | 20-35 | 100.00 | 1 | - | 6 | 82.80 | 12 | 24 | 3 | 2 |
| Dennis et al. | 2009 | 701 | 0.067 | 20-35 | 100.00 | 1 | - | 6 | 82.80 | 12 | 24 | 3 | 2 |
| Dennis et al | 2009 | 701 | 0.133 | 20-36 | 100.00 | 1 | - | 6 | 82.80 | 24 | 24 | 4 |  |
| Linke et al. | 2007 | 8933 | 0.597 | 37.40 | 0.51 | 3 | (83.9%) lived in the United Kingdom, and 9.3% reported living in other English-speaking countries (United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand). Over 100 countries of residence were given by the remaining 6.7% of users. 81.9%, White British, 9.1% White other, 5.3% White Irish, 0.9% Asian, 0.7% Mixed 1.4% Black,  0.8% other | 2 | 18.50 | 6 | - | 1 | 1 |
| Baustita et al. | 2022 | 35 | 0.082 | 21.86 | 71.40 | 1 | - | 4 | 100.00 | 6 | - | 3 | 2 |
| Baustita et al. | 2022 | 35 | 0.763 | 21.86 | 71.40 | 1 | - | 4 | 100.00 | 6 | - | 3 | 2 |
| Stevens et al. | 2022 | 302 | 0.410 | 16.70 | 79.10 | 1 | 82.5% White, 7.1% Asian, 6.4% mixed, 4% Black | 4 | 100.00 | 4 | - | 4 | 4 |
| Yeung et al. |  | 253 | 0.490 | 37.80 | 97.80 | 2 | - | 5 | 83.30 | 8 | - | 1 | 2 |
| Houwen et al. | 2010 | 253 | 0.164 | 42.97 | 93.70 | 1 | - | 2 | 87.00 | 1 | - | 3 | 1 |
| Kruzan et al. | 2022 | 131 | 0.479 | 20.32 | 67.90 | 1 | 62.6% North America, 18.3% European Union, 19.1% UK | 1 | 92.00 | 8 | 16 | 3 | 1 |
| Kruzan et al. | 2022 | 131 | 0.163 | 20.32 | 67.90 | 1 | 62.6% North America, 18.3% European Union, 19.1% UK | 1 | 92.00 | 16 | 16 | 3 | 1 |
| Gillard et al. | 2022 | 590 | 0.040 | 39.70 | 0.52 | 1 | 13% Asian British, 16% Black British, 11% mixed & other, 58% White | 6 | 87.60 | 16 | 48 | 3 | 3 |
| Gillard et al. | 2022 | 590 | 0.028 | 39.70 | 0.52 | 1 | 13% Asian British, 16% Black British, 11% mixed & other, 58% White | 6 | 97.60 | 48 | 48 | 3 | 3 |
| Klimczak et al. |  | 230 | 0.453 | 22.00 | 75.00 | 1 | 87% White, 2.6% Hispanic, 2.6% African American, 1.3% Pacific Islander 5.2% Multiracial, 1.3% prefer not to share | 6 | 76.00 | 10 | - | 1 | 2 |
| Klimczak et al. |  | 230 | 0.591 | 22.00 | 75.00 | 1 | 87% White, 2.6% Hispanic, 2.6% African American, 1.3% Pacific Islander 5.2% Multiracial, 1.3% prefer not to share | 6 | 76.00 | 10 | - | 3 | 2 |
| Klimczak et al. |  | 230 | 0.009 | 22.00 | 75.00 | 1 | 87% White, 2.6% Hispanic, 2.6% African American, 1.3% Pacific Islander 5.2% Multiracial, 1.3% prefer not to share | 6 | 76.00 | 10 | - | 4 | 2 |
| Birrel et al. | 2023 | 166 | 0.102 | 15.30 | 43.40 | 3 | 86% Australia, 14% other country | 1 | 77.30 | 48 | - | 3 | 1 |
| Birrel et al. | 2023 | 166 | 0.278 | 15.30 | 43.40 | 3 | 86% Australia, 14% other country | 1 | 77.30 | 48 | - | 3 | 1 |
| Birrel et al. | 2023 | 166 | 0.238 | 15.30 | 43.40 | 3 | 86% Australia, 14% other country | 1 | 77.30 | 48 | - | 3 | 1 |
| Summers et al. | 2021 | 347 | 0.577 | 49.60 | 59.30 | 1 | - | 1 | 79.00 | 12 | - | 1 | 1 |
| Kahl et al. | 2020 | 1982 | 0.325 | 19.40 | 83.60 | 1 | - | 4 | 81.00 | 12 | - | 1 | 4 |
| Hensel et al. | 2019 | 542 | 0.140 | 42.20 |  | 1 | 82.4% White, 17.6% non-White | 4 | 43.00 | 12 | - | 4 | 1 |
| Economides et al. | 2019 | 102 | 0.390 | 32.90 | 77.50 | 1 | 78.4%, Finland, 21.6% US | 1 | 100.00 | 8 | 48 | 1 | 3 |
| Economides et al. | 2019 | 102 | 0.495 | 32.90 | 77.50 | 1 | 78.4%, Finland, 21.6% US | 1 | 100.00 | 48 | - | 1 | 3 |
| Moir et al. | 2016 | 275 | 0.122 | 21.00 | 0.53 | 1 | - | 6 | 85.20 | 24 | - | 3 | 2 |
| Moir et al. | 2016 | 275 | 0.038 | 21.00 | 0.53 | 1 | - | 6 | 85.20 | 24 | - | 3 | 2 |
| Moir et al. | 2016 | 275 | 0.065 | 21.00 | 0.53 | 1 | - | 6 | 85.20 | 24 | - | 3 | 2 |

*Note*. SMD=Standardized mean difference; N = sample size; Gender = percentage of sample who are female; Country = sample’s cultural background (1 = Western; 2 = Eastern; 3 = A combination different cultural background); Platform = mode of peer support (1 = mobile apps; 2 = forums and discussion boards; 3 = social networking sites; 4 = websites; 5 = videoconference; 6 = email, texts messages, and phone calls); Duration = duration of intervention (in weeks); Follow-up = follow-up measurements since the first measurement (in weeks); Study design (1 = pre-post digital peer support comparison; 3 = digital peer support vs. control; 4 = digital peer support vs. alternative digital intervention); Source of digital peer support (1 = Informal naturally occurring; 2 = Formal unpaid and/or paid; 3 = Professional support; 4 = A mix of peer and professional support). Overall, these 73 studies randomized 52,703 participants to these conditions: informal naturally occurring peer support (n=28/73; 38.4%), formal unpaid/paid peer support (n=21/73; 28.8%), professional support (n=14/73; 19.2%), a mix of peer and professional support (n=9/73; 12.3%)[[1]](#footnote-1). The 73 studies originated from 14 countries, for instance, Australia, Canada, Germany, Italy, Singapore, Sweden, Taiwan, UK, US, and China. Most of the study participants were from the United States of America or countries in Europe and Australia (n = 63/73; 86.3%). The mean age of the sample for the examined studies ranged from 13.50 to 69, and the female proportion ranged from 0 to 100. The mean duration of intervention was 16.29 weeks (SD=15.90; range=1 to 96 weeks). 41 (56.2%) interventions examined pre-post digital peer support comparisons, 34 (46.6%) examined digital peer support vs. control, and 12 (16.4%) examined digital peer support vs. alternative digital interventions. Fifty-nine studies (80.8%) measured post-intervention effects without follow-up, and 14 (19.2%) studies included both post-intervention and long-term effects. The mean follow-up assessment was 26.4 weeks and the range was 3 weeks to 48 weeks.

Table A6

Characteristics of Digital Peer Support Interventions and Physical Health

| **Authors** | **Year** | **N** | **SMD** | **Mean**  **age** | **Gender** | **Country** | **Ethnic Composition** | **Plat form** | **Uptake (100%)** | **Duration** | **Follow up assessment** | **Study Design** | **Source of support** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| DeBar et al. | 2009 | 228 | 0.131 | 15.60 | 100.00 | 1 | 80.5% White | 2 | 100.00 | 96 | -- | 3 | 4 |
| Goldberg et al. | 2015 | 2817 | 0.219 | 42.00 |  | 1 | -- | 4 | 84.00 | 48 | 96 | 1 | 1 |
| Goldberg et al. | 2015 | 2817 | 0.250 | 42.00 |  | 1 | -- | 4 | 84.00 | 96 | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Mamede et al. | 2021 | 298 | 0.060 | 47.50 | 55.30 | 1 | 89.4% Dutch | 1 | 79.00 | 10 | 14 | 3 | 1 |
| Mamede et al. | 2021 | 298 | 0.043 | 47.50 | 55.30 | 1 | 89.4% Dutch | 1 | 79.00 | 14 | -- | 3 | 1 |
| Keyserling et al. | 2008 | 236 | 0.346 | 54.00 | 100.00 | 1 | 58% White, 41% African American | 6 | 65.00 | 24 | 48 | 4 | 2 |
| Keyseling et al. | 2008 | 236 | 0.555 | 54.00 | 100.00 | 1 | 58% White, 41% African American | 6 | 65.00 | 48 | -- | 4 | 2 |
| Lara et al. | 2016 | 75 | 0.079 | 60.90 | 76.00 | 1 | -- | 4 | 98.00 | 8 | -- | 3 | 1 |
| Lara et al. | 2016 | 75 | 0.238 | 60.90 | 76.00 | 1 | -- | 4 | 98.00 | 8 | -- | 3 | 1 |
| Moravcova et al. | 2022 | 100 | 0.333 | 43.00 | 0.71 | 1 | -- | 1 | 49.00 | 48 | 24 | 3 | 1 |
| Moravcova et al. | 2022 | 100 | 0.062 | 43.00 | 0.71 | 1 | -- | 1 | 49.00 | 24 | -- | 3 | 1 |
| Moravcova et al. | 2022 | 100 | 0.179 | 43.00 | 0.71 | 1 | -- | 1 | 49.00 | 48 | -- | 3 | 1 |
| Tsai & Liu | 2015 | 105 | 0.236 | 35.80 | 100.00 | 2 | -- | 2 | 91.30 | 12 | -- | 3 | 4 |
| Tsai & Liu | 2015 | 105 | 0.312 | 35.80 | 100.00 | 2 | -- | 2 | 91.30 | 12 | -- | 3 | 4 |
| Mi et al. | 2022 | 268 | 0.163 | 42.33 | 47.00 | 1 | 66% White, 24% African American, 6% others, 5% American Indian, 0.004% Asian | 1 | 78.00 | 24 | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Sharps et al. | 2019 | 20 | 0.417 | 19.00 | 0.95 | 1 | -- | 3 | 54.90 | 2 | -- | 3 | 2 |
| Sharps et al. | 2019 | 20 | 0.382 | 19.00 | 0.95 | 1 | -- | 3 | 54.90 | 2 | -- | 3 | 2 |
| West et al. | 2016 | 58 | 0.544 | 21.60 | 81.00 | 1 | -- | 3 | 90.00 | 9 | -- | 3 | 1 |
| West et al. | 2016 | 58 | 0.834 | 21.60 | 81.00 | 1 | -- | 3 | 90.00 | 9 | -- | 3 | 1 |
| Watanabe-Ito et al | 2020 | 42 | 0.364 | 20.10 | 100.00 | 2 | -- | 1 | 90.50 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| Watanabe-Ito et al | 2020 | 42 | 0.202 | 20.10 | 100.00 | 2 | -- | 1 | 90.50 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| Carlsen et al. | 2013 | 226 | 0.446 | 31.30 | 100.00 | 1 | -- | 6 | 97.20 | 24 | -- | 3 | 3 |
| Carlsen et al. | 2013 | 226 | 0.057 | 31.30 | 100.00 | 1 | -- | 6 | 97.20 | 24 | -- | 3 | 3 |
| Morgan et al. | 2011 | 65 | 0.051 | 35.90 | 0.00 | 1 | -- | 4 | 76.50 | 12 | 48 | 3 | 1 |
| Morgan et al. | 2011 | 65 | 0.159 | 35.90 | 0.00 | 1 | -- | 4 | 76.50 | 48 | -- | 3 |  |
| Leahey et al. | 2016 | 75 | 0.164 | 48.50 | 85.30 | 1 | 1.3% Hispanic, 97.3% not Hispanic | 4 | 100.00 | 40 | -- | 4 | 4 |
| Leahey et al. | 2016 | 75 | 0.730 | 48.50 | 85.30 | 1 | 1.3% Hispanic, 97.3% not Hispanic | 4 | 100.00 | 40 | -- | 3 | 4 |
| Tate et al. | 2006 | 192 | 0.825 | 49.20 | 0.84 | 1 | -- | 2 | 81.30 | 12 | 24 | 1 | 1 |
| Tate et al. | 2006 | 192 | 0.031 | 49.20 | 0.84 | 1 | -- | 2 | 81.30 | 24 | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Tate et al. | 2006 | 192 | 0.193 | 49.20 | 0.84 | 1 | -- | 2 | 81.30 | 12 | -- | 4 | 1 |
| Tate et al. | 2006 | 192 | 0.136 | 49.20 | 0.84 | 1 | -- | 2 | 81.30 | 12 | -- | 3 | 1 |
| Harvey-Berino et al. | 2004 | 255 | 0.170 | 45.80 | 0.82 | 1 | -- | 6 | 67.50 | 48 | -- | 4 | 4 |
| Lim et al. | 2020 | 108 | 0.373 | 46.80 | 42.00 | 2 | 70.4% Chinese 10.2% Malay, 6.5% Indian, 5.6% others | 4 | 90.00 | 24 | -- | 3 | 1 |
| Ross et al. | 2022 | 3623 | 0.602 | 57.80 | 50.00 | 1 | 16% Asian, 5% Black, 3% mixed, 0.4% others, 68% White | 1 |  | 48 | -- | 4 | 1 |
| Fiks et al. | 2017 | 87 | 0.450 | 26.50 | 100.00 | 1 | 5% Hispanic, 84% African American, 7% White, 7% Others | 3 | 88.40 | 24 | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Tate et al. | 2001 | 91 | 0.400 |  | 0.89 | 1 | -- | 6 | 78.00 | 24 | -- | 3 | 3 |
| Pretlow et al. | 2015 | 43 | 0.700 | 16.00 | 0.65 | 1 | 84% Caucasian, 9.3% African American, 4.7% Latino 2.3% Asian | 1 | 62.80 | 20 | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Webber et al. | 2008 | 66 | 0.055 | 50.00 | 100.00 | 1 | 86% Caucasian | 4 | 100.00 | 16 | -- | 4 | 4 |
| Webber et al. | 2008 | 66 | 0.102 | 50.00 | 100.00 | 1 | 86% Caucasian | 4 | 100.00 | 16 | -- | 4 | 4 |
| Pappa et al. | 2017 | 107886 | 0.830 |  | 92.90 | 3 | -- | 3 | 100.00 | 4 | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Anderson | 2022 | 80 | 0.110 | 22.20 | 80.00 | 1 | 66.3% White, 17.5 % Black, 6.3% Asian, 6.3% Biracial, 3.8% Latino | 3 | 89.00 | 12 | -- | 3 | 1 |
| Anderson | 2022 | 80 | 0.117 | 22.20 | 80.00 | 1 | 66.3% White, 17.5 % Black, 6.3% Asian, 6.3% Biracial, 3.8% Latino | 3 | 89.00 | 12 | -- | 3 | 2 |
| Anderson | 2022 | 80 | 0.049 | 22.20 | 80.00 | 1 | 66.3% White, 17.5 % Black, 6.3% Asian, 6.3% Biracial, 3.8% Latino | 3 | 89.00 | 12 | -- | 4 | 3 |
| Johnson & Wardle | 2011 | 3621 | 0.043 | 35.50 | 82.00 | 1 | -- | 4 | 100.00 | 20 | -- | 3 | 1 |
| Turner-McGrievy et al. | 2013 | 47 | 0.480 | 42.60 | 77.00 | 1 | 25% non-White, 75% White | 3 | 100.00 | 24 | -- | 4 | 4 |
| Lee et al. | 2018 | 22 | 0.384 | 50.90 | 100.00 | 1 | -- | 6 | 77.00 | 20 | -- | 1 | 2 |
| Dennison et al. | 2014 | 786 | 0.086 | 44.00 | 79.70 | 1 | -- | 4 | 100.00 | 8 | -- | 3 | 1 |
| Dennison et al. | 2014 | 786 | 0.020 | 44.00 | 79.70 | 1 | -- | 4 | 100.00 | 8 | -- | 4 | 2 |
| Hageman et al. | 2017 | 301 | 0.092 | 53.90 | 100.00 | 1 | 98% White, 1% Hispanic, 1% other | 2 | 67.00 | 120 | -- | 3 | 1 |
| Hageman et al. | 2017 | 301 | 0.069 | 53.90 | 100.00 | 1 | 98% White, 1% Hispanic, 1% other | 2 | 67.00 | 121 | -- | 4 | 1 |
| Richardson et al. | 2010 | 324 | 0.388 | 52.00 | 65.00 | 1 | 86% White, 6% Black, 3% American Indian, 1% others | 2 | 79.10 | 16 | -- | 3 | 1 |
| An et al. | 2013 | 1698 | 0.051 | 24.07 | 72.00 | 1 | 73.91% White, 10.36% African American, 8.6% other, 7.13% multiple | 2 | 76.10 | 6 | 12 | 1 | 2 |
| Rosas et al. | 2022 | 200 | 0.438 | 47.30 | 0.00 | 1 | -- | 5 | 100.00 | 12 | 32 | 1 | 1 |
| Li et al. | 2021 | 353 | 0.386 |  | 57.79 | 2 | -- | 4 | 100.00 |  | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Imanaka et al. | 2013 | 193 | 0.282 | 50.00 | 13.40 | 2 | -- | 4 | 89.70 | 12 | -- | 4 | 4 |
| Sepah et al. | 2017 | 220 | 0.691 | 43.60 | 82.70 | 1 | 49.1% White, 28.6% Black, 10.5% Hispanic, 9.5% others, 2.3% undisclosed | 3 | 46.40 | 12 | 144 | 1 | 4 |
| Sepah et al. | 2017 | 220 | 0.290 | 43.60 | 82.70 | 1 | 49.1% White, 28.6% Black, 10.5% Hispanic, 9.5% others, 2.3% undisclosed | 3 | 46.40 | 144 | -- | 1 | 4 |
| Ali et al. | 2021 | 79 | 0.887 | 61.50 |  | 1 | -- | 5 | 84.00 | 10 | -- | 1 | 4 |
| Ali et al. | 2021 | 79 | 0.536 | 62.50 |  | 2 | -- | 5 | 84.00 | 10 | -- | 1 | 4 |
| Travis et al. | 2010 | 54 | 0.375 | 52.40 | 37.00 | 1 | -- | 5 | 59.30 | 12 | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Travis et al. | 2010 | 54 | 0.258 | 52.40 | 37.00 | 1 | -- | 5 | 59.30 | 12 | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Hensel et al. | 2019 | 812 | 0.182 | 41.50 | 73.00 | 1 | 82% White, 17% non-White | 4 | 46.00 | 12 | -- | 3 | 1 |
| Hensel et al. | 2019 | 812 | 0.125 | 41.50 | 73.00 | 1 | 82% White, 17% non-White | 4 | 46.00 | 12 | -- | 3 | 1 |
| Dennis et al. | 2009 | 701 | 0.165 |  | 100.00 | 1 | -- | 6 | 82.80 | 12 | 24 | 3 | 2 |
| Dennis et al. | 2009 | 701 | 0.019 |  | 100.00 | 1 | -- | 6 | 82.80 | 12 | 24 | 3 | 2 |
| Dennis et al. | 2009 | 701 | 0.562 |  | 100.00 | 1 | -- | 6 | 82.80 | 24 | 24 | 4 |  |
| Linke et al. | 2007 | 8933 | 0.634 | 37.40 | 0.51 | 3 | (83.9%) lived in the United Kingdom, and 9.3% reported living in other English-speaking countries (United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand). Over 100 countries of residence were given by the remaining 6.7% of users. 81.9% White British, 9.1% White other, 5.3% White Irish, 1.4% Asian, 0.9% Mixed, 0.7% Black, 0.8% other | 2 | 18.50 | 6 | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Oween et al. | 2016 | 299 | 0.496 | 53.80 | 77.70 | 1 | -- | 3 | 100.00 | 12 | -- | 3 | 1 |
| Stevens et al. | 2022 | 302 | 0.769 | 16.70 | 79.10 | 1 | 82.5% White, 7.1% Asian, 6.4% mixed, 4% Black | 4 | 100.00 | 4 | -- | 4 | 4 |
| Paulson et al. | 2015 | 6 | 0.341 |  |  | 1 | -- | 2 | 100.00 | 24 | -- | 1 | 4 |
| Freeman et al. | 2008 | 238 | 0.408 | 21.00 | 70.00 | 1 | US, the largest ethnic group was White (71%), and the next largest was UK Asian (i.e., from the Indian subcontinent: 10%) | 2 | 100.00 | 10 | -- | 4 | 1 |
| Freeman et al. | 2008 | 238 | 0.232 | 21.00 | 70.00 | 1 | US, the largest ethnic group was White (71%), and the next largest was UK Asian (i.e., from the Indian subcontinent: 10%) | 2 | 100.00 | 10 | -- | 4 | 1 |
| Mckeon et al. | 2021 | 24 | 0.496 | 48.10 | 0.17 | 1 | -- | 3 | 88.00 | 10 | -- | 1 | 3 |
| Gould et al. | 2021 | 54 | 0.177 | 57.06 | 0.60 | 1 | 6% Hispanic , 16% Asian, 10% Black, 58% White, 8% other | 1 | 83.33 | 12 | -- | 1 | 4 |
| Suffoleto et al. | 2021 | 52 | 0.238 | 18.70 | 79.00 | 1 | 97% White, 3% Black, 6% Hispanics | 6 | 91.2 | 12 | 12 | 3 | 3 |
| Suffoleto et al. | 2021 | 52 | 0.355 | 18.70 | 79.00 | 1 | 97% White, 3% Black, 6% Hispanics | 6 | 91.2 | 12 | 12 | 3 | 3 |

*Note*. SMD=Standardized mean difference; N = sample size; Gender = percentage of sample who are female; Country = sample’s cultural background (1 = Western; 2 = Eastern; 3 = A combination different cultural background); Platform = mode of peer support (1 = mobile apps; 2 = forums and discussion boards; 3 = social networking sites; 4 = websites; 5 = videoconference; 6 = email, texts messages, and phone calls); Duration = duration of intervention (in weeks); Follow-up = follow-up measurements since the first measurement (in weeks); Study design (1 = pre-post digital peer support comparison; 3 = digital peer support vs. control; 4 = digital peer support vs. alternative digital intervention); Source of digital peer support (1 = Informal naturally occurring; 2 = Formal unpaid and/or paid; 3 = Professional support; 4 = A mix of peer and professional support). Overall, these 47 studies randomized 145,326 participants to these conditions: informal naturally occurring peer support (n=26/47; 55.3 %), formal unpaid/paid peer support (n=7/46; 15.2%), professional support (n=5/47; 10.6%), a mix of peer and professional support (n=12/47; 25.5%)[[2]](#footnote-2). The 47 studies originated from 14 countries, for instance, Australia, Canada, Britain, Czech Republic, Netherlands, Singapore, Japan, Taiwan, UK, US, and China. Most of the study participants were from the United States of America or countries in Europe and Australia (n = 38/47; 80.9%). The mean age of the sample for the examined studies ranged from 15.60 to 62.5, and the female proportion ranged from 0 to 100. The mean duration of intervention was 24.08 weeks (SD=27.86; range=1 to 144 weeks). 18 (38.3%) interventions examined pre-post digital peer support comparisons, 20 (42.6%) examined digital peer support vs. control, and 14 (29.8%) examined digital peer support vs. alternative digital interventions. Thirty-seven studies (78.7%) measured post-intervention effects without follow-up, and 10 (21.3%) studies included both post-intervention and long-term effects. The mean follow-up assessment was 34.1 weeks and the range was 4 weeks to 144 weeks.

Multiple effect sizes

First, for both physical and mental health, cases examining more than one source of digital support, the different effect sizes were used to conduct analyses separately: (a) informal naturally occurring support, (b) formal unpaid and/or paid support peer support, and (c) professional support. Second, some studies included multiple indicators of physical and mental health. Thus, there were several effect sizes from the same study. For such cases, we computed the average effect size across all measures of the same physical and mental health outcome within a study. Hence, each study contributed only one effect size for the analyses involving each source of digital peer support with physical and mental health. Third, a few studies reported multiple effect sizes because they investigated different countries, especially concerning representatives of Western and Eastern cultural contexts. Because cultural contexts were examined as moderators in our meta-analyses, a single effect size estimate that aggregated the multiple correlation coefficients was not favoured and we reported effect size estimates separately (Hunter & Schmidt, 2014). For such cases, more than one set of data was collected from the same study, forcing consideration of issues of statistical dependency that stem from the multiple dependent effect sizes (Hunter & Schmidt, 2004). We used the robust variance estimation to account for non-independent effect sizes, which can also be adjusted to deal with smaller meta-analyses (n < 40; Tipton, 2015).

Risk of bias (quality) assessment

Studies were independently evaluated for quality by two reviewers with differences discussed and resolved using the Cochrane Collaboration’s risk of bias tool, with seven domains of bias: random sequence generation, allocation concealment, blinding of participants and personnel, blinding of outcome assessment, incomplete outcome data, selective reporting, and other bias. Of the 149 interventions, only 17 (11.4%) had low risk of bias ratings across the seven categories. 136 studies (91.3%) used random sequence generation, 95 (63.8%) had allocation concealment, blinding of participants and personnel, blinding of outcome assessment, incomplete outcome data, selective reporting, and other bias. Only 9 (6%) blinded both participants and personnel to the condition allocation (performance bias), 57 (38.3%) blinded outcome assessment, 32 (21.5%) demonstrated low reporting bias by preregistering or making their study protocol available and by reporting all the primary outcomes. Approximately one-fourth of all ratings (25%, 145 out of 580; 580 = total number of ratings conducted) were unclear or characterized as having high risk of bias.

A11

Full list of included articles

Physical health

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1. Some studies examined more than one source of support and study design (i.e., pre vs. post, digital peer support vs. control, and digital peer support vs. alternative interventions) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Some studies examined more than one source of support and study design (i.e., pre vs. post, digital peer support vs. control, and digital peer support vs. alternative interventions) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)