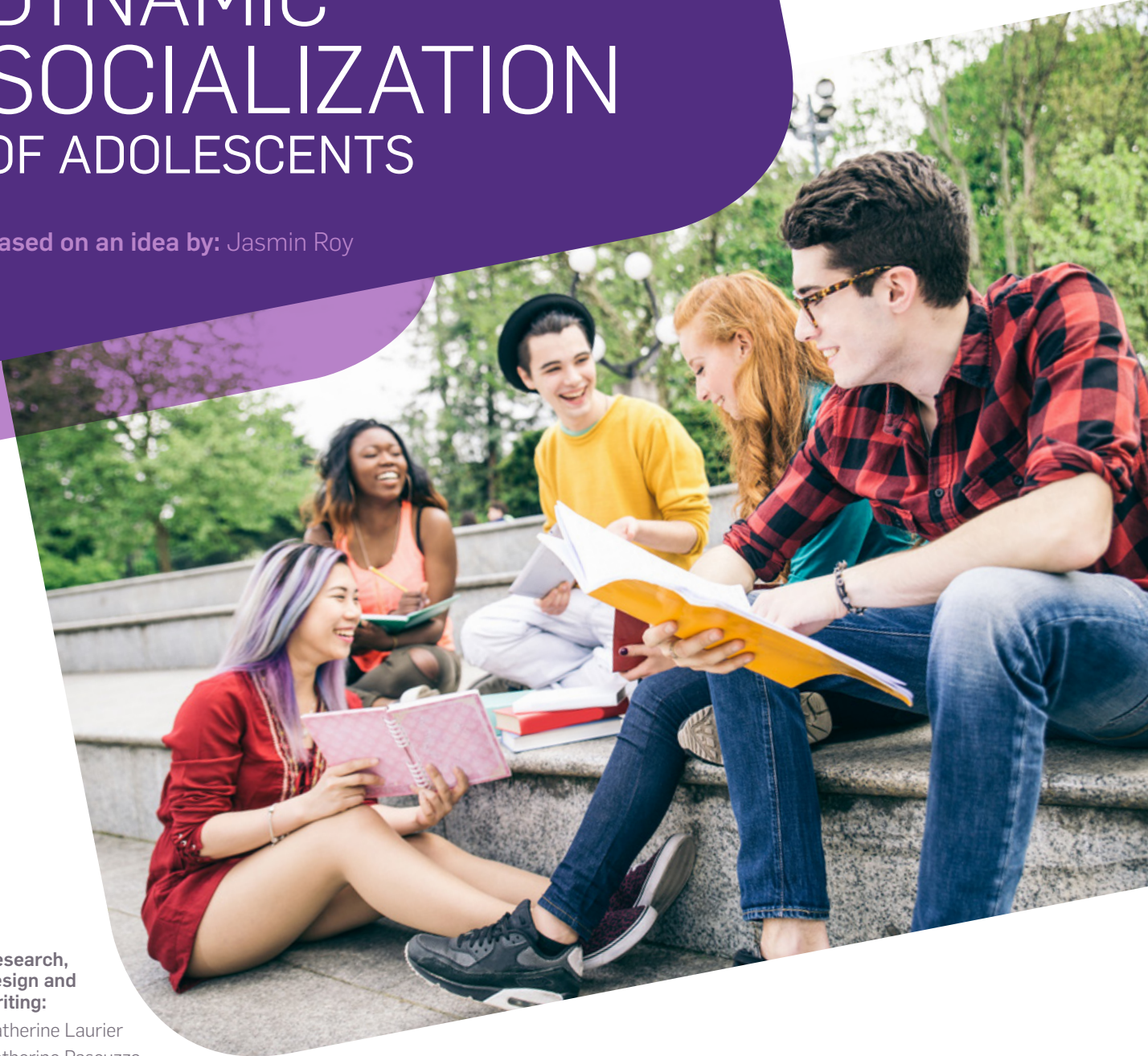


A GUIDE TO PROMOTE THE DYNAMIC SOCIALIZATION OF ADOLESCENTS

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SOCIAL CONNECTIONS WITH PEERS

The bonds that adolescents develop with their peers are vital to optimal development and healthy mental health (Pascuzzo et al., 2015). From a teenager's perspective, keeping in touch with friends, despite social distancing, is a way to better cope with the lockdown and pandemic-related social and health measures (Laurier and Pascuzzo, 2021). Since one of the key developmental tasks in adolescence is to develop close relationships with peers, it is essential to encourage the resumption of psychological, social and identity development among youth. To facilitate the resumption of healthy relationship development outside the family, whether friendships or romantic relationships, we should provide opportunities to develop social connections, while supporting young people with this process of returning to others.

Since socialization is one of the school's three main missions, it is an ideal environment to encourage a healthy return to others. To this end, various activities can be organized and carried out at school, for example, activities that emphasize collaboration in order to achieve a common goal (e.g., collaborative challenge, escape games, sports), thereby promoting the cognitive and socio-emotional skills needed for developing social connections. During these activities, adults play an important role and can facilitate socialization. By developing close connections with at least one adult in their environment, young people will be able to refer to them if necessary and this adult will be able to supervise, guide and act as a facilitator for their social relations.

The privileged position of adults also makes it possible to undertake initiatives or projects that could potentially result in the development of new relationships among these youth. In fact, certain factors outside the family contribute to their resilience, including positive relationships with other adults, interactions with prosocial organizations (e.g., community or sports organizations), and attendance at a quality school that fosters a safe and caring climate (Boyd and Bee, 2017).

Social support is thus found to be a protective factor for various mental health problems (e.g., anxiety, depression and stress; Cao et al., 2020; Magson et al., 2021; Roach, 2018).

