Title: Social features in game technologies for alcohol prevention in adolescents: a systematic review

Abstract

Objective:
Alcohol consumption among adolescents is a mainly public health issue. To prevent alcohol consumption onset during adolescence, school-based programs are needed. A key element of program success is to encourage active participation of the students, which is achieved through group dynamics with peer interactions within the class. However, these methods require trained adults to be delivered in traditional programs. Game technologies can offer new promising approaches in the development of preventive programs promoting peer interactions. The current systematic review aims to identify online interventions with peer interactions features designed to address alcohol use among adolescents, and evaluate the effectiveness of these interventions.

Method:
Web of Science and Scopus were electronically searched for all articles published between January, 2011 and June, 2018. Articles reporting on school-based, web-based interventions for teenagers to prevent alcohol that encouraged any kind of interaction within users were eligible for inclusion. A total of 1067 studies were identified, of which 88 were thoroughly analyzed according to our review protocol.

Results:
Five studies met inclusion criteria. Four of them showed positive results on outcome variables, although it is not possible to determine if social interaction among students contributed to their success in three of them. One protocol paper of a randomized trial currently underway was also identified.

Conclusions:
We conclude that game technologies that contain social interaction elements seem to present benefits to adolescent health within alcohol consumption prevention programs but more research is needed on this.