



# Adolescent Anxiety Posts on Reddit: A Content Analysis

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## Introduction

### Previous Research

- Adolescents use social networking sites to **seek mental health help**
- Previous literature has focused on teenagers seeking help for depression on social media
- It remains unknown how adolescents use **Reddit** to seek support for anxiety

### Purpose:

To understand which topics of posts about anxiety are most prevalent and have the most engagement under the **r/teenagers** subreddit



## Methods

### Design

- Content analysis of Reddit posts under *r/teenagers* when searching **"anxiety help"**

### Subjects

- The first 100 posts were analyzed (not including comments)
- Posts were sorted by relevance & posts from 1 year ago to present were included
- Exclusions: advertisements, parents reporting on behalf of teen, or posts not discussing anxiety

### Measures

#### Variables:

#### 1. Engagement

- number of upvotes and comments

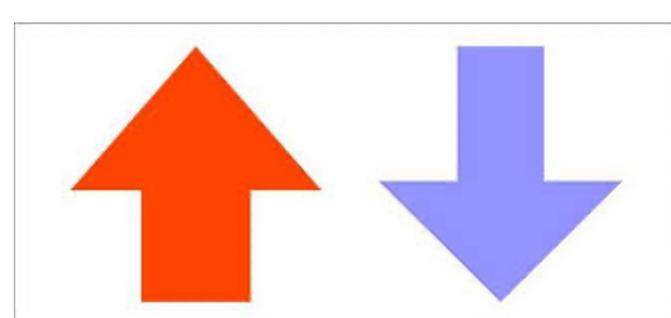
#### 2. Anxiety topic

- topics: school, family, social, phone, work, money, romantic relationships, health, and other

Post dates were also recorded.

### Analysis

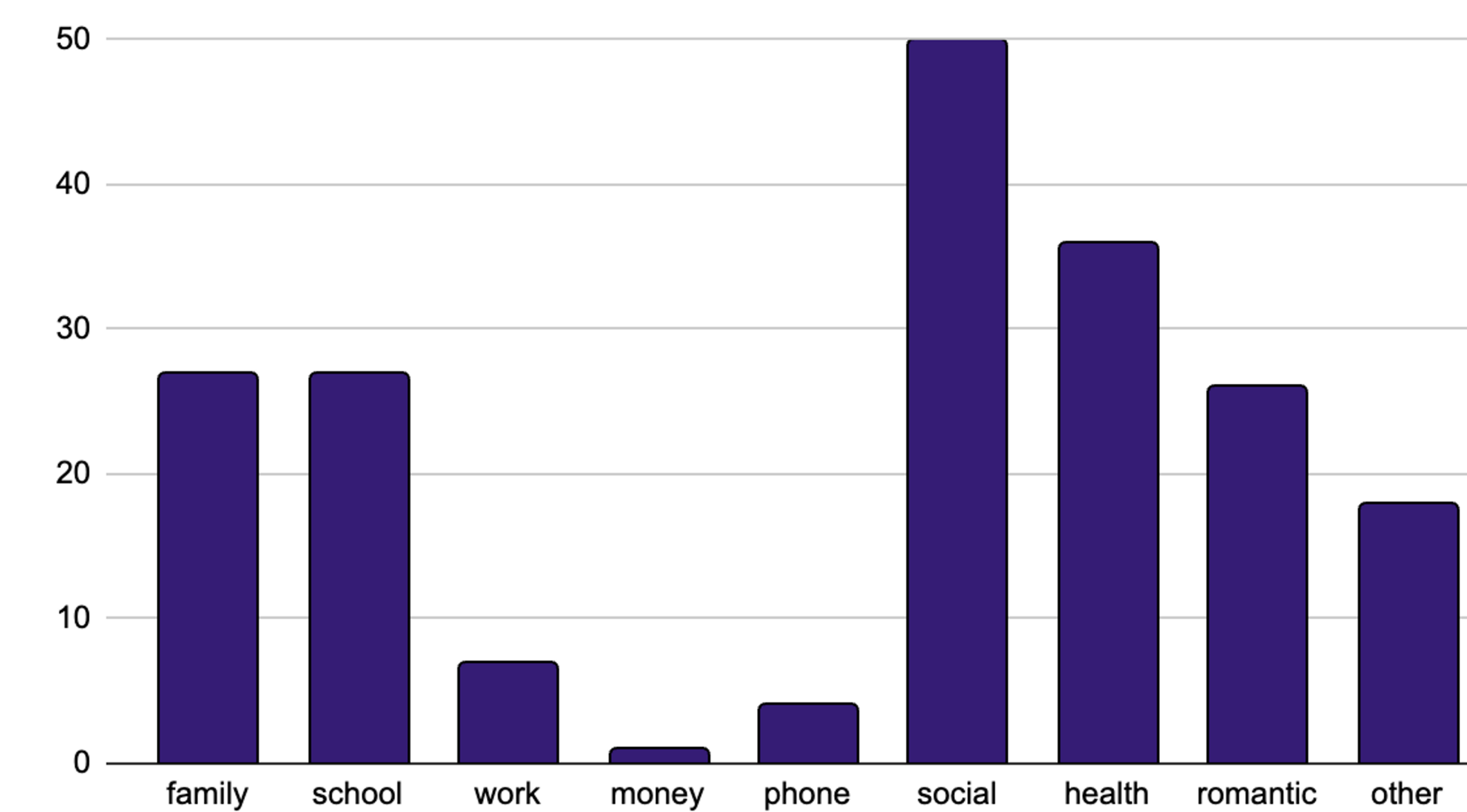
The number of posts per topic & average number of upvotes/comments were evaluated.



## Results

- A total of **100** Reddit posts were analyzed
- The average number of **upvotes** was 2.49
- The average number of **comments** was 9.48

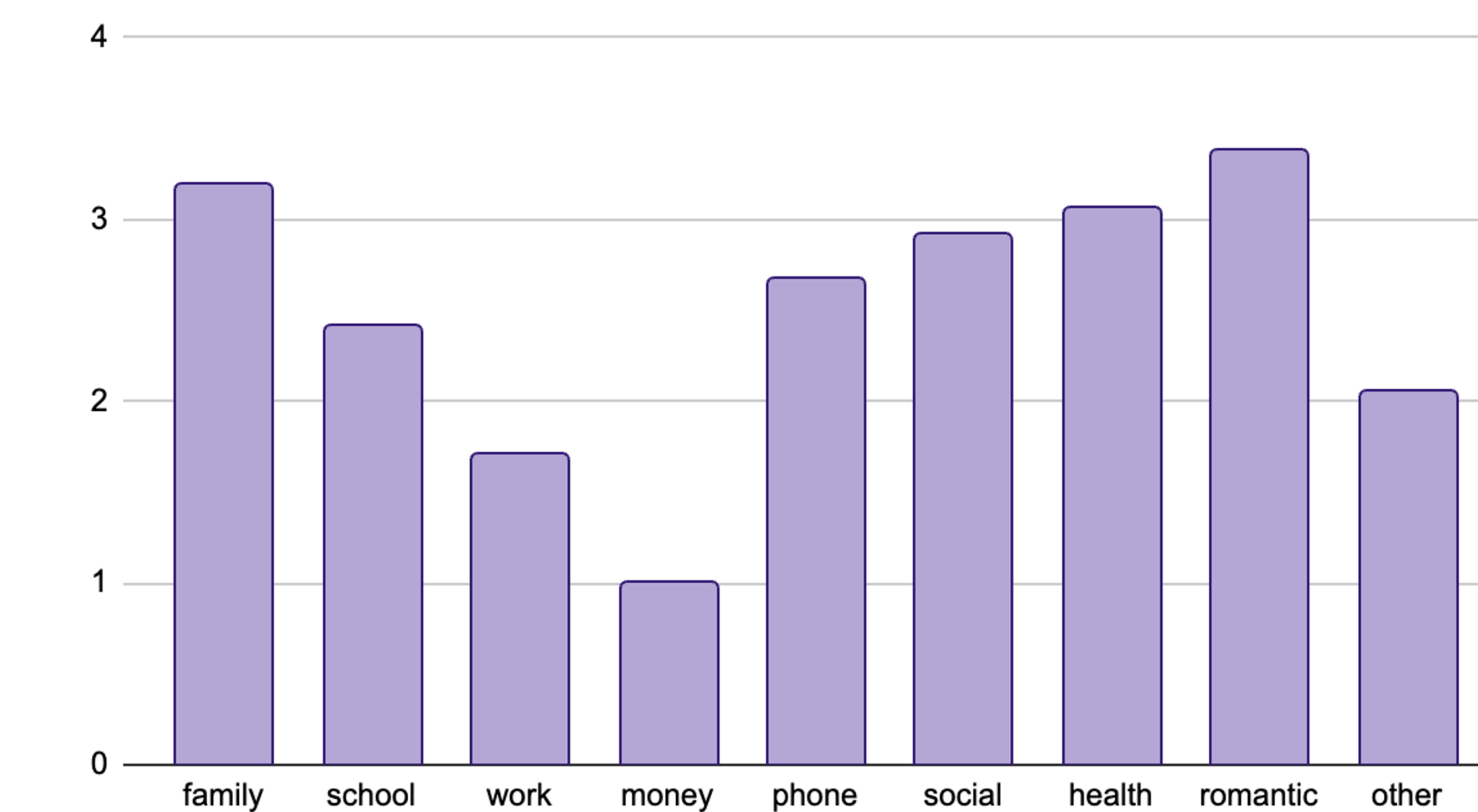
Number of Posts Per Topic



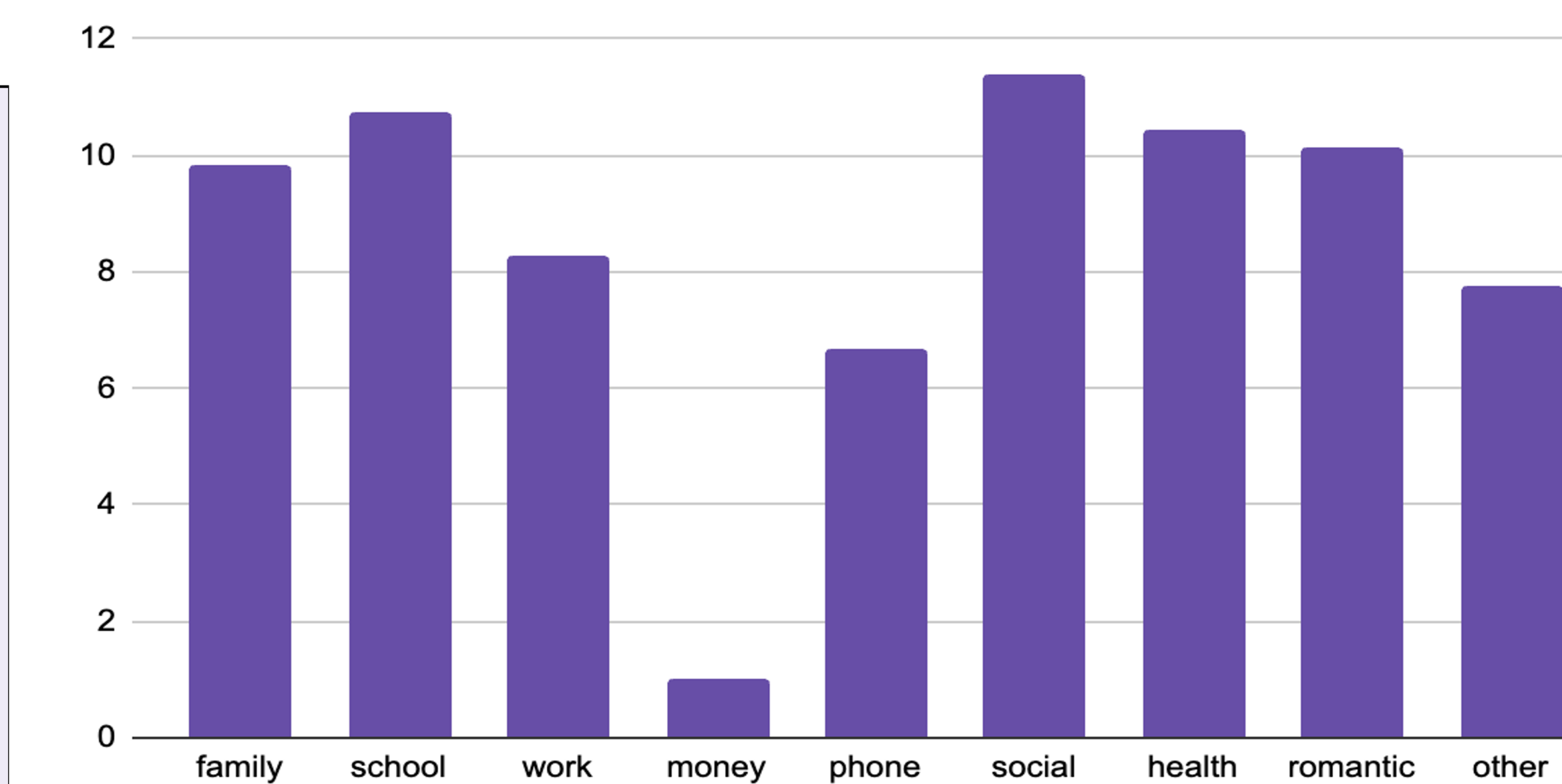
### Example post that fit into family, health, and phone topics:

"So pretty much every year i go to camp for a week, there we have many activities and just a lot of people my age. The problem is they take away our **phones** there. Now i don't have a problem with not being on my phone all the time. The problem is I can't contact my **parents** and I get really worried and stressed about their **well being** and I simply can't have any fun at camp..."

Average Number of Upvotes By Topic



Average Number of Comments By Topic



The most prevalent topic was **social**, with 50 posts.

The topic with the most comments on average was **social**, with 11.4 comments.

The topic with the most upvotes on average was **romantic relationships**, with 3.385 upvotes.

## Conclusions

### Findings

Many adolescents experience anxiety in **social settings**, or engage with posts about this topic. This is possibly a result of social isolation during the **pandemic**.

**Money** was the least prevalent and had the smallest number of comments & upvotes, suggesting that this is not a frequent point of discussion among anxious teenagers.

### Limitations

Without additional context, it is difficult to understand the **full extent** of the users' anxiety.

### Future Research

Why are adolescents experiencing so much anxiety around socialization, and how can we **help**?

### Implications

These results may be beneficial for **high school teachers**, who can try to implement activities in their classrooms to foster **community** and overcome social isolation that may have been lost during the pandemic.

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