Case Study: Embodied Therapy App

Background Information
Sarah is a 16-year old high school student struggling with anxiety and depression. Her school offers free counseling services, but the one counselor is always extremely busy. Sarah decides to sign up for VRtex, an AI chatbot that provides text-based therapy. The bot uses algorithms to have conversations, track Sarah's mood, and provide coping strategies.

Problem Analysis
While VRtex is convenient, it also poses risks. The app may fail to pick up on context clues and assess Sarah's condition accurately. Without human oversight, it can't involve parents/teachers if Sarah describes self-harm. The app also collects sensitive data with unclear privacy protections. And over-reliance on VRtex versus human connections could worsen Sarah's isolation.

Possible Solutions
Some argue VRtex should not be used for teens without any human supervision. Others think that with disclaimers on its limitations, VRtex can provide some initial mental health support if traditional services aren't available. Guidelines could also restrict unsafe content recommendations and require better data protections. In an ideal setting, VRtex would complement human counseling.

Conclusion
AI therapy apps hold promise but require safeguards. Students should discuss appropriate oversight, how to uphold safety and privacy, and the pros/cons of blended human and AI counseling.

Questions
- What is your current opinion about using AI chatbots like VRtex for mental health support in schools?
- Should AI be used only as a complement to human counseling, or do you believe there's a scenario where AI could effectively stand alone?