

Inspired by the U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory

SOCIAL MEDIA & YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH



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Developmental impact of social media on kids

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Positive aspects of social media

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Caution about social media use for our children & teens

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The disproportionate impact on females

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Sources of support for our children



FAMILY SUPPORT

Our kids' social media usage begins with us!

As parents and guardians, we provide them with these devices. We can also play an important role in supporting their online experiences. Let's do our best to:



Maintain non-judgmental & open communication.



Create a family plan to set expectations.



Model appropriate use.

Create a Family Media Plan

- Hold discussions to establish & maintain expectations.
- Discuss appropriate language & images.
- Designate tech-free times & spaces.
- Limit use. Balance screen time with human interaction.
- Set a media curfew.
- Examine privacy settings.
- Talk about when to “friend.”
- Charge devices outside the bedroom.
- Consider safety settings & apps.
- Utilize parent controls.
- Monitor usage.
- Have a plan to report when they encounter cyberbullying & inappropriate content.

SCHOOL SUPPORT

Nearly **70%** of parents feel that technology and social media have made parenting more difficult than 20 years ago.

Together schools and caregivers can work to support our children in this unprecedented era. Here are steps educators can take to create a positive school culture when it comes to social media.

Create a Positive Culture

- Explain healthy social media use versus risky behavior.
- Set expectations for school-wide digital citizenship.
- Monitor student media use on school devices.
- Designate tech-free times and spaces.
- Include reliable sources of media during instruction.
- Guide the use of credible online sources.
- Create a school-sanctioned Instagram account to share positive recognition and organize events.
- Develop a protocol to report cyberbullying.
- Share supportive resources.

MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

Adolescents may depend on friends, family, school staff, or another trusted adult for support when dealing with online conflicts or challenges. However, when these issues impact the child's ability to function, counseling or therapy may be considered. Here are some benefits:

Counseling and Therapy

- Creates a safe space for adolescents to discuss social media-related issues.
- Provides guidance and encourages healthy social media habits.
- Teaches coping skills to manage the negative effects of social media and cyberbullying, such as anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem.

POLICY MAKER SUPPORT

The US Surgeon General's Advisory cites several ways policymakers can help, including the following:

“Develop age-appropriate health and safety standards for technology platforms.”

“Require a higher standard of data privacy for children to protect them from potential harm.”

“Pursue policies that further limit access to social media for all children, including enforcing age minimums.”

“Support increased funding for future research.”

“Support the development, implementation, and evaluation of digital and media literacy curricula in schools and within academic standards.”

“Engage with international partners working to protect children and adolescents against online harm.”

THRIVE ALLIANCE GROUP

Social media is contributing to the current youth mental health crisis in America. Take action and offer our professional development presentation to staff & parents.

*Untangling the Web:
How Social Media Affects Mental Health*

For more information visit us at
thrivealliancegroup.com
or call (862) 701-5110.