



# **Social Media and Mental Health**

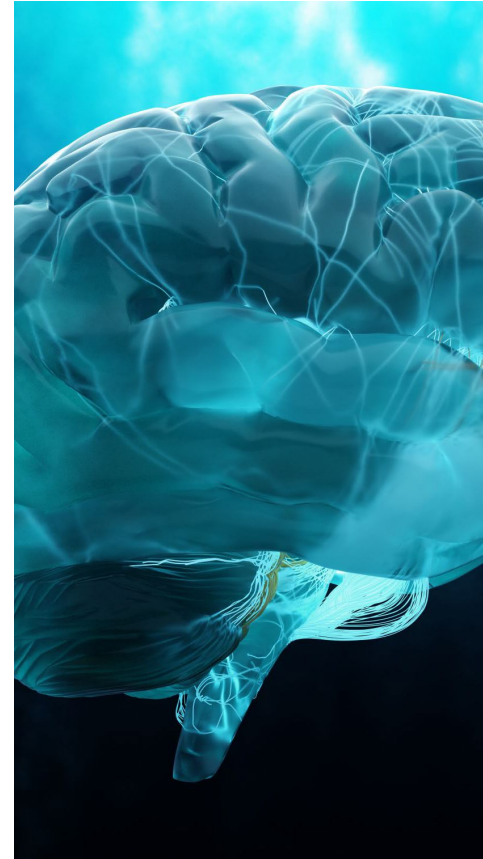
Jessica Macklin, MEd, PsyD

# Poll

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeQTkOVjXf\\_Ewi5r-Sk5Q9tMv6\\_8vB\\_G2Oh\\_ZisJ1E8S-0knw/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeQTkOVjXf_Ewi5r-Sk5Q9tMv6_8vB_G2Oh_ZisJ1E8S-0knw/viewform?usp=sf_link)

# Introduction

- Adolescent brain development generally starts around 10 and continues to develop through adulthood.
- In early adolescence, brain regions associated with a desire for attention from peers become increasingly sensitive and therefore social rewards feel more satisfying.
- The teenage pre-frontal cortex is still developing. This is the area that is responsible for:
  - Decision making
  - Social Behavior
  - Personality
  - Complex cognitive behavior



Potential  
Negative  
Effects of  
Social Media

Comparisons to others


Pressure and addiction

Functioning and performance

Drama



# COMPARISON



Pay no attention to the man behind  
the curtain...

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v  
=YWyCCJ6B2WE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YWyCCJ6B2WE)

# Comparison

---

What children see on social media impacts how they view themselves and where/what they think they should be. It becomes their personal ruler that they measure up against.

---

Altered images and creating the perfect image

---

Focus on superficial

---

Exposure to sexual content

---

Comparing likes = worth compared to others

---

# Effects of Comparisons

Everyone else has it better than me —-----> I should be better

Everyone else has it together —-----> Why can't I get it together?

Everyone else has things that I want —-----> It's not fair

Everyone else is better looking, cooler, more likeable —-----> I don't measure up

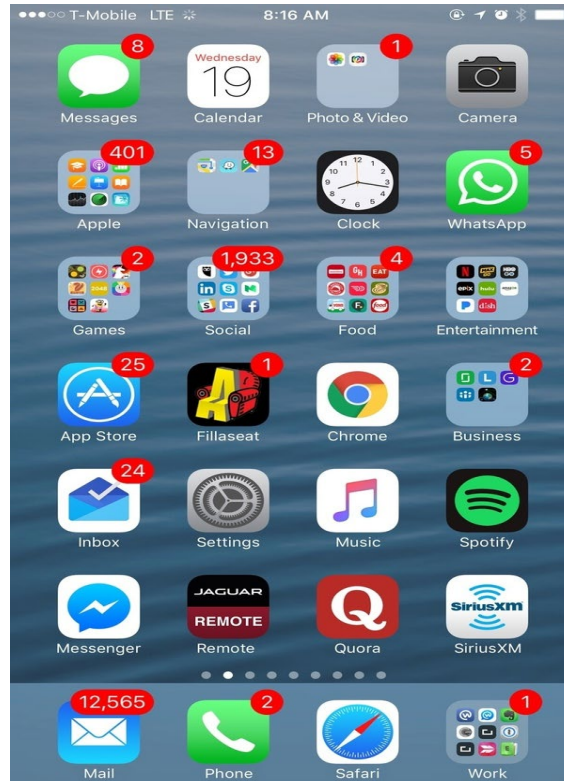
Everyone else has more friends than me —-----> I'm not cool

Other thoughts: It's not okay to have flaws, others won't like me because of my flaws, I'm not good enough

# What we can do

Discuss	Discuss the impact of social media with your children in a supportive way rather than lecturing
Ask	Ask questions: “What are your thoughts about social media” “Does it ever affect how you feel about yourself”
Validate	Validate their feelings around social media - “Its really hard to feel like others have it better”
Pull back	Pull back the curtain - help them see that what we see is only one piece of the puzzle, we choose the best pictures, they may be filtered
Emphasize	Emphasize growth mindset
Share	Share influencers/celebrities who “keep it real”

# Pressure, Addiction, and Compulsion



# Pressure, Addiction, and Compulsion

- Constant communication - ACCESS TO EVERYTHING
- FOMO
- Designed to keep using them - likes, red notification, constantly updating feeds
- Need to respond right away - are we sending a message
- Can be an extension of friendship - when someone likes your post what does that mean (snapstreak, multiplayer games)
- Social currency - likes, shares, comments

There are 2 kinds of people in this world:



Mail



Mail

## Effects of Pressure, Addiction, and Competition

If I don't know what is going on, I may feel left out

I have to know - immediate gratification - difficulty tolerating unknown

If I don't know, I may miss out or be replaced

I need that dopamine rush to make me feel good

I can't focus on my work because I just want to check my phone

---

# What we can do



AGAIN, VALIDATE AND  
ASK QUESTIONS



SET LIMITS ON  
CHECKING PHONE -  
DELAYED  
GRATIFICATION



FIND ALTERNATIVES TO  
REPLACE THAT  
DOPAMINE  
RUSH/FEELING OF  
GRATIFICATION



TAKE BREAKS



BE MINDFUL OF YOUR  
OWN PHONE USAGE

# Functioning and Performance

Switching between two tasks rapidly is known to decrease performance.

Mindfulness - being present in the moment

Relationships with strangers

Secrecy

Isolation - takes time away from friends, family, and activities

Online feels better than offline - Easier to make friends

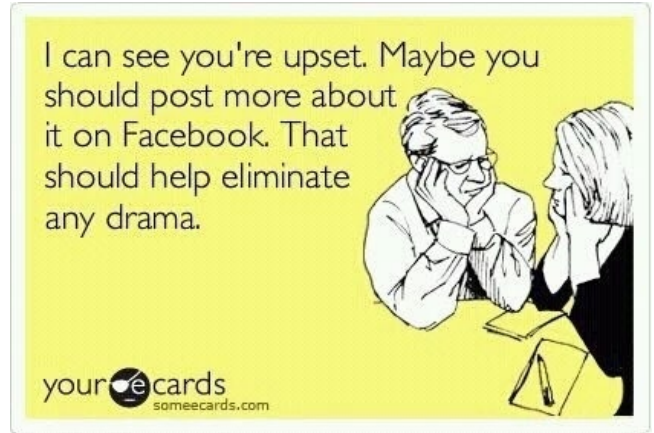
Social media as an escape

## What can we do

- Switch off/take breaks
  - Use social media as a timed reward
  - No phone Tuesday
  - Monitor child's performance and use social media as a reinforcement
  - Notice if child is isolating
  - May need to gain access to social media accounts
  - Educate about online predators
-

# Drama

- Feeling left out of group chats/plans
- Cyberbullying
  - Harassment (insults or threats)
  - Spreading Rumors
  - Impersonation
  - Trickery (gaining trust then sharing secrets)
  - Exclusion
- Stalking/ Checking up on others
- Sexting



# Cyberbullying Risk Factors

## Risk Factors of being Victim

- Females more likely to be victims of cyberbullying than males
- Adolescents with MH problems are more likely to be victims
- Those who spend more time online are more likely victims
- Some studies have proven the relationship between cyberbullying victims and parental abuse, parental neglect, family dysfunction, inadequate monitoring, and parents' inconsistency in mediation, as well as communication issues

## Risk Factors of being Perpetrator

- Older teenagers (over 15 )
- Those who experienced prior cyberbullying or bullying
- Parenting factors: over-control and authoritarian parenting styles, as well as inharmonious teacher-student relationships are perceived to lead to cyberbullying behaviors.

# Protective Factors

---

High emotional intelligence

---

Ability for emotional self control and empathy

---

Intimate parent-child relationships

---

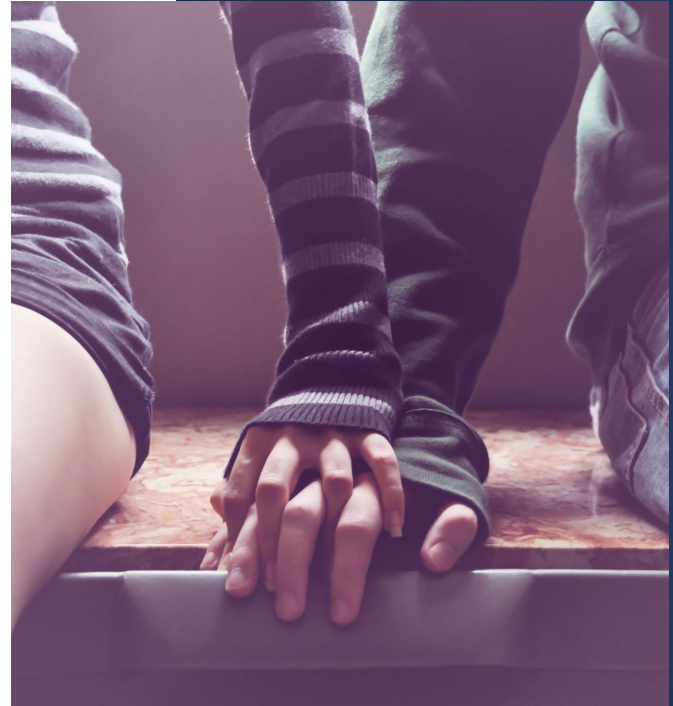
Open & active communication with parents

---

Parental monitoring needs to be balanced between openness and control

# Effects of Drama

- Impact on self worth
- Impacts identity
- Avoidance/Isolation → I don't want to see these people
- I don't know who I can trust.
- I have to send this picture or they won't like me.



# What can we do



1

Again validate and empathize

2

Increase mindfulness and thoughtfulness around posts

- Ask "How would you feel?"

3

Monitor social media activity and remove negative relationships

4

Take screenshots, block, involve school, authority when needed

5

Help with problem solving and conflict resolution

# PIU and Psychopathology Study

**Objective** Here, we leveraged the ongoing, large-scale Child Mind Institute Healthy Brain Network, a transdiagnostic self-referred, community sample of children and adolescents (ages 5-21), to examine the associations between Problematic Internet Use (PIU) and psychopathology, general impairment, physical health and sleep disturbances.

**Methods** A total sample of 564 (190 female) participants between the ages of 7-15 (mean = 10.80, SD = 2.16), along with their parents/guardians, completed diagnostic interviews with clinicians, answered a myriad of self-report questionnaires, and underwent physical testing as part of the Healthy Brain Network protocol. PIU was measured by the 20 question Internet Addiction Test (IAT).

**Results** After adjustment for age, sex, SES, site, single caregiver, race and all other diagnoses of interest, there were significant positive associations between PIU and depressive disorders, regardless of reporter (SR: aOR = 2.43, CI: 1.22–4.74,  $p = .01$ ; PR: aOR = 2.56, CI: 1.31–5.05,  $p = .01$ ). Additional significant positive associations were found between: 1) self-reported PIU and the combined subtype of ADHD (SR: aOR = 1.91, CI: 1.14–3.22,  $p = .01$ ; PR: n.s.) and, 2) parent-reported PIU and ASD (SR: n.s.; PR: aOR = 2.24, CI: 1.34–3.73,  $p < .001$ ). PIU was associated with increased sleep disturbances. PIU was not consistently negatively correlated with physical fitness, though some results trended towards significance.

<https://www.iitk.ac.in/counsel/resources/IATManual.pdf>



# Potential Positive Effects of Social Media

---

Connections to others

Creativity and Engagement

Learning

# Connections to Others

---

- Connection to peers - may decrease loneliness
- Feel more accepted
- Can practice social skills
- Find others with similar interests



# Creativity and Engagement



Be creative - share your creativity with others



Get ideas and share ideas



Be engaged and active in important causes - fundraising, social movements



Feel as though you have a voice



# Learning

---

- Can make learning fun
- Creates active learning (versus passive learning)
- Can access information from a wide range of sources
- Hear different perspectives
- Virtual access to the world
- Gain feedback from others on writings, stories, art, etc.
- Learn new hobbies, skills, or crafts

# Questions To Ask Your Kids

---

Focus less on time limit and more on how they're using it

- Why do you use social media?
- Has anything you've seen made you upset or annoyed?
- What social media apps do you use?
- What do you like most about social media?
- Do you know how to protect your privacy on social media?
- Who do you talk to online? Anyone you haven't met in person?
- If something bad happened to you online, would you tell me about it?

# When to be concerned:



It interferes with their daily routines and commitments, such as school, work, friendships, and extracurricular activities.

They often choose social media over in-person social interactions.

It prevents them from getting at least 8 hours of quality sleep each night.

It prevents them from engaging in regular physical activity.

They keep using social media even when they express a desire to stop.

They experience strong cravings to check social media.

They lie or use deceptive behavior to spend time online.

# Regaining Control

- Start young
- Monitor, monitor, monitor
- Find people, places, and accounts that are healthy and positive for children to follow.
- Follow parks, libraries, museums, educational resources.
- Weekly dialogue about social media and its impact - try to listen, understand and validate
- Model healthy social media use - discuss how and why you use it, how posts, likes, etc. make you feel.
- Teach children that social media is often filled with misinformation and inaccurate information in order to mislead people. <https://spotthetroll.org/start>

# Mindfulness

How did that  
facebook post  
make me feel?

Why am I  
responding this  
way to this post?

How many times  
do I check likes?

How do I feel  
when I see a  
notification?

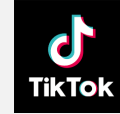
What am I looking  
for by opening  
this app?

THEN think, how  
can I get that  
elsewhere?

# Family Friendly and Educational Accounts



@soulpancake  
@iamkidpresident  
@lego  
@animalplanet  
@ireadya  
@amypoehlersmartgirls  
@onecampaign  
@cbckidsnews  
@emmawatson  
@dudeperfect  
@psimadethis



@mrslukeslab  
@onlinekyne  
@katzil  
@jiffpom  
@slime  
@birdoftheweek  
@nasablueberry1  
@mrs.b.tv  
@jayprehistoricpets  
@iammoshow  
@mythical  
@daniel.labelle

# Final Notes



[HTTPS://WWW.COMMONSENSEMEDIA.ORG/ARTICLES/  
PARENTS-ULTIMATE-GUIDE-TO-TIKTOK](https://www.common SenseMedia.org/articles/parents-ultimate-guide-to-tiktok)



PRIUSS RATING SCALE - WHEN SHOULD WE BE  
CONCERNED -  
[HTTPS://MEDIAD.PUBLICBROADCASTING.NET/P/KPLU/  
ILES/201502/PRIUSS SCALE AND GUIDELINES.PDF](https://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/kplu/files/201502/PRIUSS_SCALE_AND_GUIDELINES.PDF)

# Parent Support Groups

- [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeVCfI9JtHrP4ruQ724i43tyr3MCq1Sp7ib1HxBGMDDKsdTMw/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeVCfI9JtHrP4ruQ724i43tyr3MCq1Sp7ib1HxBGMDDKsdTMw/viewform?usp=sf_link)

# (June 6<sup>th</sup>) Talk on Smartphones, Tech and Social Media

&

