



The Ugly Truth

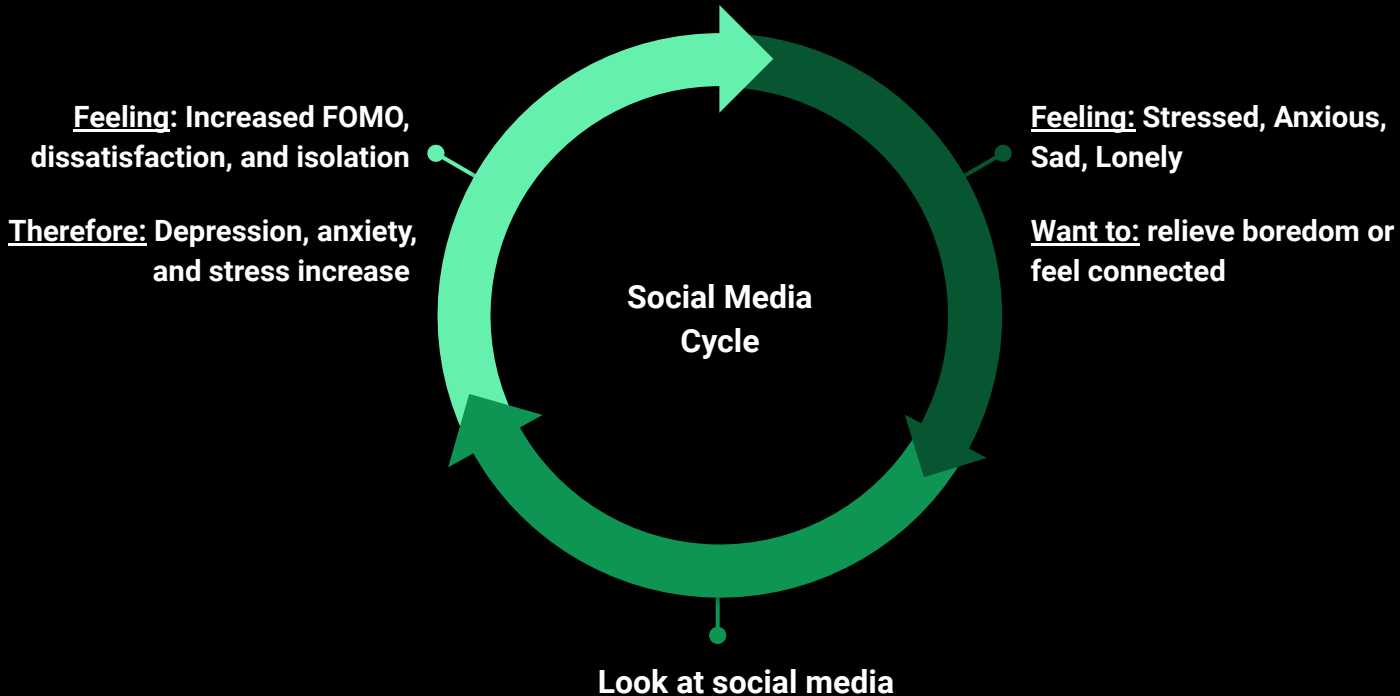
Social Media and Children

From the FMS Counseling Center

FACTS: Negative aspects of social media

- **Causes feelings of inadequacy about life and/or appearance**
- **Increases FOMO (Fear of missing out)**
- **Increases feelings of loneliness**
- **Increases depression and anxiety**
- **Creates unhealthy self-centeredness**
- **Cyberbullying**
- **Exposure to pornographic images/videos**
- **It is addicting**
- **Causes poor quality of sleep**
- **Increased obesity**
- **Sexting risks and predator exposures**

Excessive social media use can create a negative, self-perpetuating cycle:



What does American Academy of Pediatrics recommend?

“*AAP recommendations for screen time:*

- For children younger than 18 months, avoid use of screen media other than video-chatting. Parents of children 18 to 24 months of age who want to introduce digital media should choose high-quality programming, and watch it with their children to help them understand what they're seeing.
 - For children ages 2 to 5 years, limit screen use to 1 hour per day of high-quality programs. Parents should co-view media with children to help them understand what they are seeing and apply it to the world around them.
 - For children ages 6 and older, place consistent limits on the time spent using media, and the types of media, and make sure media does not take the place of adequate sleep, physical activity and other behaviors essential to health.
 - Designate media-free times together, such as dinner or driving, as well as media-free locations at home, such as bedrooms.
 - Have ongoing communication about online citizenship and safety, including treating others with respect online and offline.”
- Pathway Pediatrics

Information taken from <https://www.pathwayped.com/american-academy-of-pediatrics-announces-new-recommendations-for-childrens-media-use/>

Did you know that most major social media platforms have an age restriction of 13+. All of these sites collect or store personal information of their users. The US law called Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 that makes it illegal to collect or store information on children under the age of 13.

Letting your child lie about their age to access these sites sends a dangerous and risky message that they can write their own rules online.

How to know if your child is ready for social media use.

Questions to consider before allowing social media:

- Is your child resilient enough to handle negative online experiences like cyberbullying and drama?
- Does s/he understand the importance of privacy and how to protect it online?
- Does s/he understand how to share safely?
- Does s/he know how to report abuse behavior online?
- Is s/he happy for you to establish rules and boundaries and to monitor use?
- Have you talked to him/her about online pornography?
- Have you talked to him/her about racism and other forms of hate speech online?
- Have you provided good mentoring and role modeling for social media use specifically and device use generally?

What should you do as a parent...

Monitor, Restrict, Manage

- **Monitor:**
 - Use apps to help monitor what is being said/done on device
 - Do random phone/tablet checks
- **Restrict:** *(Be prepared for a conflict. Kids are already addicted and will fight you on this.)*
 - Use app to track how much time spent on Social Media
 - Set up restrictions on phone/tablet to limit time on phone
 - Turn on restrictions for non-age appropriate sites/apps
- **Manage:**
 - Turn off their phone at certain times of the day
 - Don't let them bring their phone or tablet to the bedroom or bathroom
 - Disable social media notifications
 - Remove social media apps from phone
 - Continue to have family discussions over use

Tips:

- You may need to return the phone to factory settings and start over.
- IF you are getting them a phone, purchase minimum data phones. Less Data=Less Apps or Access to Apps
- There are built in features to apple and android phones to help monitor and restrict. Use your free resources!
 - Best to use icloud to download the data (need to log into the apple site- don't just use the app version)
 - Use the apple interface- you can see all phones and can log onto their accounts
 - When setting up restrictions through apple require a parent passcode to download apps. This way they won't be able to download or delete any apps on their phone without you knowing.
- Have the same passcode or know your child's passcode! Always have the ability to have access to their phone.
- Use family sharing for all apps. This will make the app download on all devices. (You can delete the app later if you don't want it after you have become familiar with it.)
- Get familiar with ALL apps your child is using or wants to use.
- Good option: AT&T Secure Family app- This can track/pause internet/list who they can call/restrict phone usage/etc. Cost: \$7.99/mo. Great cost for features.

Helpful Apps for Monitoring:

- AT&T Secure Family app (Officer Ayala recommends)- This can track/pause internet/list who they can call/restrict phone usage/etc. Cost: \$7.99/mo. Great cost for features.
- Net Nanny- (web filtering, location tracking, app management (Android & IOS)) \$54.99/yr
- Moment (screen time tracker) \$7.99 after free trial
- Bark (great for social media monitoring) \$14/mo
- Kaspersky Safe Kids (web filtering, location tracking, app management) \$14.99
- Parental Options on Apple Products (content and app management, screen time restrictions) Free
- MMGuardian (scans and analyzes messages and pictures to alert parents) Free with options to purchase
- Norton Family (web filtering, location tracking, app management) \$49.99/yr
- Life 360 (tracking app)- please note: students have found many ways to work around this. Need to still be diligent in checking. Great for new drivers- monitors speeds and can alert if a crash.

Legal Concerns:

The following actions on social media can result in legal action for your child and/or you:

- Creating and using a fake account with the intention to harm, defraud, intimidate, or threaten another person.
- Posting or sharing/sending nude photos of a minor.
- Bribing, harassing, or intimidating another person with damaging photos or information about that person
- Cyberbullying another student where the victim commits suicide or causes serious bodily injury to themselves.

Please note: Most of these incidents are occurring on Snap Chat, Tik Tok, and Instagram.

MANY STUDENTS ARE MAKING FAKE ACCOUNTS. EVEN IF YOU FOLLOW ONE ACCOUNT, THEY LIKELY HAVE ANOTHER ONE THEY DON'T WANT YOU TO SEE!

Kids' brains are still developing and are sensitive to the effects of social media. They are still learning how to have self control and struggle creating boundaries. It is crucial for parents to monitor, restrict, and manage what their children are exposed to in order to protect them from addiction, predators, and other hurts caused by social media use.



**It is not about violating privacy.
It's about protecting and educating for healthy use.**