

The value of social media 2

.A Read the text and then answer the questions

1. How do digital natives and digital migrants see the world today?
2. What does keeping up with friends require nowadays??
3. Who dominates the use of social networks in the UK?
4. In what social media activity do adults come before younger users?
5. What do you think of the criticism levelled at those who overuse social media?

Social media are computer-mediated technologies that allow people to create, share or exchange information, ideas and pictures, videos in virtual communities and networks. Social media is defined as "a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundation of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content."

For digital natives who never knew life before social media, the world seems like it has always been the same but for digital migrants, the present looks nothing like the past. If you were born in the late 1990s onwards, just try to imagine what your life would be like without Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. Does it look appealing to you? Probably not. Your social interaction depends so much on social media and keeping up with friends requires you to be online most, if not all, of the time. This is why your parents and friends probably keep urging you to get away from your computer or put your smart phone down and spend more time with them.

The use of social media has boomed in recent years and statistics show that nowadays, there are more than three billion social network users in the world. Social media is an ever-changing and ever-evolving -web-based platform, most of its users are teenagers and young adults. This obsession with social media is well reflected in statistics. According to Statista, a website specializing in statistics, 51% of worldwide Facebook users who make new friends at least once a week are between 18 and 33 years of age. However, when it comes to younger users between 13 and 17 years of age, 72% of them make at least one new friend per week. This percentage gains more significance when we learn from Facebook that its monthly active users worldwide as of the second quarter of 2020 reached some 2.7 billion. This number barely reached 750 million monthly active users in the second quarter of 2015. In the same period of 2011, this number was roughly 750 million. As you see, these numbers speak for themselves but the more information we learn about the use of social media, the more interesting it gets.

In the UK, for instance, the use of social networks is dominated by the 90% of young people between 16 and 24 years old who are on social media and the 75% of those between the ages of 25 and 44 who use Facebook. Add to this the fact that, in 2017, Facebook and YouTube were the top social media sites accessed by 8–15-year-olds in Great Britain. What do young users spend their time doing on social media? There are a number of things but the top activities are finding out what friends are doing, sending them messages and knowing what they are watching or listening to. This is for 16–24-year-olds, followed in second place by 25–34-year-olds, who come first in keeping in touch with relatives.

In the midst of this entire buzz about social media, alarming voices warning of the dangers of such a situation can be heard. Some people argue that young people's overuse of social media represents an addiction that threatens their real-life communication skills. Moreover, this addiction can distract them from their studies and affect their concentration, especially given the many cases of use of social media during class that have been reported. Meanwhile, overuse of social networks by adults can harm their relationships. Other disadvantages include wasting time, identity theft, cyber bullying and crimes against children.

Now, where do you stand in all this? Are you a social media addict? Do you think social networking is worth all the importance people give to it?

B Find words or expressions from the text with the following meanings

- a. attractive
- b. staying in touch with
- c. trying persistently to persuade someone to do something
- d. grown or developed rapidly
- e. hardly
- f. approximately
- g. excited interest or talk about something

... .. h. get someone's attention and prevent them from concentrating on something