

## Beneficial Impact of Social Media on Adolescent Mental Health:

[Social media use can be positive for mental health and well-being](https://bura.brunel.ac.uk/handle/2438/27435)

<https://bura.brunel.ac.uk/handle/2438/27435>

(<https://bura.brunel.ac.uk/bitstream/2438/27435/1/FullText.pdf>)

[Online Social Networking and Mental Health - PMC](#)

From: [Here's How Social Media Affects Your Mental Health | McLean Hospital](#)

“The idea of a potential future reward keeps the machines in use. The same goes for social media sites. One does not know how many likes a picture will get, who will ‘like’ the picture, and when the picture will receive likes. The unknown outcome and the possibility of a desired outcome can keep users engaged with the sites.” [Jacqueline Sperling, PhD](#), a psychologist at McLean Hospital who works with youth who experience anxiety disorders, about Instagram’s recent restriction.

From: [Social media’s impact on our mental health and tips to use it safely](#)

### **Ways to Safely use Social Media**

A positive relationship with social media is personal to you. A great way to improve your relationship with social media and help decrease the negative effects is to decrease your daily screen time. Tips to decrease screen time include:

- Set time limits on social media apps within your phone settings
- Designate specific hours for social media usage
- Look through your friends and followers list and unfriend people whose accounts make you feel bad about yourself

From: [Digital Media Use and Adolescents' Mental Health During the Covid-19 Pandemic: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis](#)

“[N]ot all types of digital media use had adverse consequences on adolescents' mental health. In particular, one-to-one communication, self-disclosure in the context of mutual online friendship, as well as positive and funny online experiences mitigated feelings of loneliness and stress.”

“awareness of the detrimental effects of addictive digital media use should be raised: ...such as social comparison, fear of missing out, and exposure to negative contents...”

From: [How Social Media Affects Mental Health Positively](#)

## Connection and Support

- **Facilitating Social Connections:**
  - revolutionize connecting with friends and family -> reduce isolation/loneliness, + offer a lifeline for those struggling to engage in traditional social settings.
  - combat feelings of isolation and loneliness, ultimately improving mental health.
- **Virtual Support Networks:**
  - Virtual support networks for mental health, anxiety, depression, and other challenges provide a safe environment for users to share experiences, offer advice, and seek solace, reducing alienation and promoting a sense of belonging.
  - Allowing for more accurate representation of the self:
    - Ex: Expression of sexuality, gender, religion, or other views that may otherwise be not accepted by others in their physical community.

## Mental Health Awareness

- **Campaigns for Mental Health Awareness:**
  - Via organizations, influencers, and activists campaigns have been launched on various platforms to educate the public and share resources
  - Promotes understanding and empathy.
- **Reducing Stigma and Promoting Conversations:**
  - By allowing users to openly share their journeys and by highlighting that seeking support is a sign of strength, not weakness, social media has become a battleground to challenge the stigma surrounding mental health issues.
  - Fosters a culture of compassion and support.
  - Anonymity can make it easier for some individuals to share their struggles openly.
  - **Counterpoint:** Social media information may be inaccurate, causing misinformation and inappropriate advice, and relying on unqualified sources can be dangerous and worsen mental health issues. -> *How can users of social media find accurate information more easily?*

## Possible arguments against social media:

Comparison and Self-Esteem, Cyberbullying and Harassment, Sleep Disruptions, Correlation Between

Excessive Social Media Use and Anxiety, Eating Disorders, Body Dysmorphia, Depression. → (skill issue?)

- **Mindful Usage:** limit screen time and avoid emotional triggers that may arise from comparing oneself to others.
- **Diverse Content:** Curate social media feeds to include diverse and body-positive content. Unfollow accounts that promote unrealistic beauty standards or toxic diet culture.
- **Seek Support:** Reach out to friends, family, or mental health professionals if you notice any adverse effects of social media on your mental health. Don't hesitate to seek help and support.
- **Confidentiality and Privacy Concerns:** While anonymity can offer a degree of protection, it is essential to remember that anything shared on social media may not be entirely private. Users should exercise caution when revealing sensitive information online.

<https://bmcpyschology.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40359-023-01243-x>

“However, findings also suggest that the quality rather than the quantity of social media use can determine whether the experience will enhance or deteriorate the user's mental health [4].”

Against:

### **Sources**

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### Political Extremism

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### Misinfo

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### Regulation

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