



SOCIAL MEDIA

[Myfishbites.com/assemblies-socialmedia.php](https://myfishbites.com/assemblies-socialmedia.php)

This is a detailed look at social media. It's like a summary of other articles and links online brought together to help present some of the good side of social media, the downside, some thoughts, safeguarding etc.



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SOCIAL MEDIA

Questions

How much time do you spend on social media?

Why do you go on social media?

How does it make you feel?

Ever thought about the effect it may have on you?



Social Media Facts & Figures

According to the [Royal Society for Public Health](#), 91% of 16-24 year-olds use social media in the UK.

Statista.com ([click here for link](#)) reported that in 2017, teenagers in Europe spent around 180 minutes per day on social media alone.

According to the same statistics website ([click here for link](#)) in 2018, American teenagers used Snapchat the most (45%), then Instagram (26%), Twitter (9%) and Facebook (8%). The use of Snapchat was beginning to drop slightly and the use of Instagram beginning to rise slightly. The use of Twitter and Facebook among young people has been going down since 2012-2013.

The 'most frequently used' social networks in the US (April 2018, according to this page) are:

1. YouTube (35%)
2. Snapchat (32%)
3. Instagram (15%)
4. Facebook (10%)

Why do young people use Social Media?

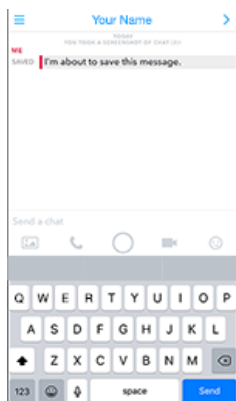
The Global Web Index report (published in January 2018) asked people for their top reasons for using social media.

These are the top 5 reasons on 11 January 2018:

1. To stay in touch with what my friends are doing
2. To stay up-to-date with news and current events
3. To fill up spare time
4. To find funny or entertaining content
5. General networking with other people



What issues are there with Social Media?



Social media has lots of benefits and can really help make friends, keep up to date with what's happening, find missing pets, get local news

updates, get stories that interest you, keep in contact with people when they're away - and even locate stolen goods!

But social media also has a dark side and can cause a negative effect on people in lots of different ways.

People have been bullied, trolled, had their accounts hacked, felt more lonely because people haven't responded to their posts, or felt gutted when they see what appears to be other people's perfect lives. Some people have got into things they shouldn't have through social media.

So it's good to think about both the upside and the downside so you can think about how you use social media

and think about the effect it could have on you and other people.

Body Image

A [YMCA survey called 'Be Real Campaign'](#) (PDF link) in July 2018 found the following:



The YMCA spoke to more than 1,000 young people aged 11 to 16 years-old about [body image expectations](#).

58% felt that celebrity culture was the most to blame for how they felt about body image.

"More than half of young people (52%) identified people on social media as setting the expectations and pressures on how they were supposed to look."

"The pressure to look 'perfect' especially increases among older young people, with 62% of 15 to 16 year-olds admitting pressure about their looks come from individuals on social media, compared to 43% of 11 to 12 year-olds."



Body Image...

One user said that Instagram use easily makes girls and women feel as if their bodies aren't good enough. (RSPH report, page 10)

“Literally you find them everywhere. Like, you could be on Facebook or something or Instagram and there’ll be like, an advert for clothes. You’re just constantly flooded with images.”

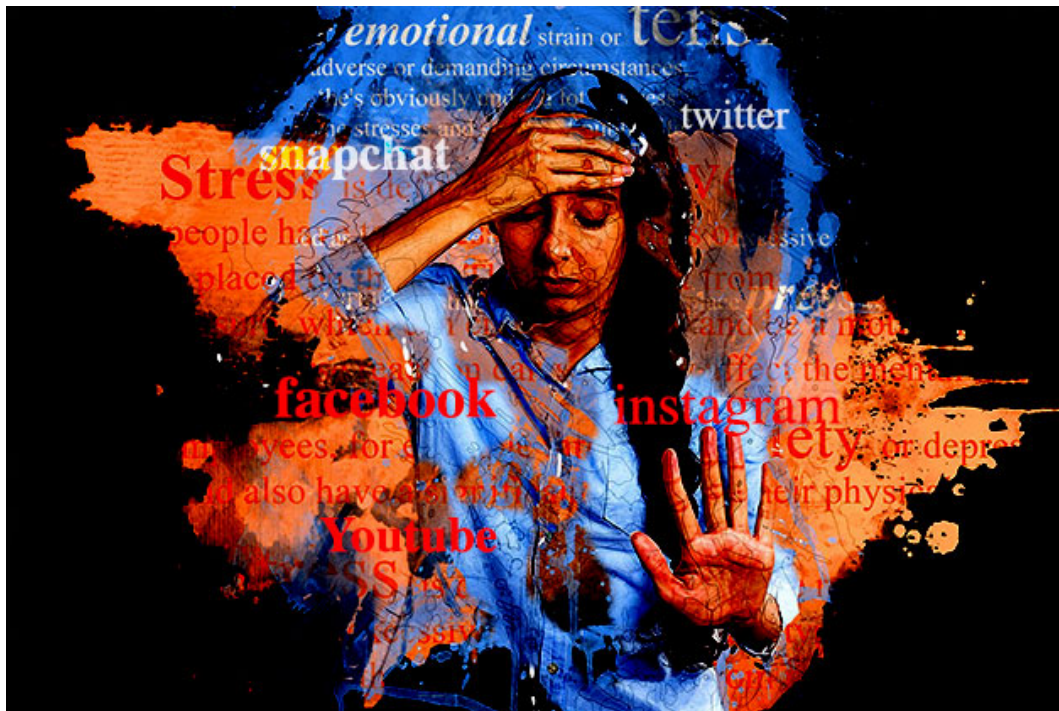
Dr Bernadka Dubicka, the chair of the child and adolescent faculty at the Royal College of Psychiatrists said in 2017 that social media such as Snapchat and Instagram “can be damaging and even destructive” to the mental wellbeing of girls.

“There’s a pressure for young people to be involved 24/7 and keep up with their peer group or they will be left out and socially excluded.” ([reported in The Guardian, 23 July 2018](#)).

The truth is that you are not defined by social media use or peer pressure or by what the media or celebrities do and say. All these things are temporary. You are more than what others say.

You are the person you were made to be and are valuable and unique and incredible just the way you are.

As a Christian, I believe that God has made you, shaped you, created you and made you beautiful and powerful. You are worth it. You were purposed and have a purpose. You are valuable and valued, lovable and loved. You are not an accident!



Anxiety and Lower Self Esteem

A report by the RSPH - [Royal Society for Public Health](#) - found that use of social media among teenagers led to increased rates of depression, anxiety, poor body image and loneliness.

Social media has been described as more addictive than alcohol.

Young people in the survey by RSPH said that only YouTube has a positive effect on them.

Young people who spend more than 2 hours a day on social media are more likely to experience anxiety. This is supported by evidence from Anxiety UK – [click here](#).

Seeing friends enjoying themselves on social media makes young people feel like they are missing out... so-called "compare and despair."

7 in 10 young people have experienced cyber-bullying. Communication online means you can't see how people react to something and therefore it's become much more common for people to be more cruel and more abusive.

Many suffer from Fear of Missing Out (FoMo) if they don't connect with social media.

Social media also affects self-esteem because there is the danger of people not knowing how to relate to others as they would have without social media. So relationships can become more scary.

Social Media: staying happy

[BBC Future Video – link here](#)





Social Media

Social Media

Positive Side

There is a positive side to social media. Many young people use social media for emotional and mental health support. They also use it as a form of support if facing health issues. 7 in 10 teenagers use social media during challenging and tough times in life.

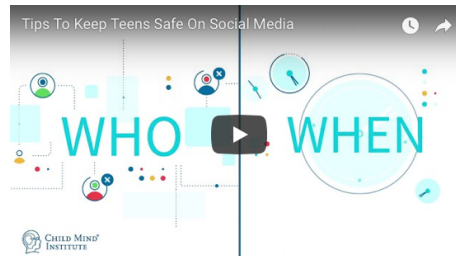
One person said that when they went to University, staying in touch with old friends via Facebook was more valuable than words could express. (RSPH report, page 16)

Social media can also create a community for groups who feel vulnerable across society through various groups that also give people a feeling of belonging with like-minded people.

Social media also gives young people a way of expressing themselves and personalising so that they can explore themselves and life, to be creative and see who they are.

Social media can also help build and maintain relationships - adding to existing relationships. Someone said: "Social media has made me able to stay in touch with family and friends whom I would not speak to otherwise." (RSPH report, page 16)

Video: Keeping Safe



[From the Child Mind Institute - link here](#)

YouTube Direct Link –

https://youtu.be/yk9ynrO_GMg

There's More To Life

It's also important to remember that social media friendships can't beat real world friendships and interactions. People need people and if we retreat away from people, we can become very lonely and not really get to experience life and find out what life is all about.

Making friends, keeping friends, knowing how to talk to people face to face and pick up their facial expressions, learning how to disagree with people well, hearing other perspectives and understanding different people and different opinions can't come through social media.

There's More...

So we need human interaction.

Dr. Steiner-Adair (quoted here) says that: "Self-esteem comes from consolidating who you are." In a world where you can have lots of identities online, it can cause problems for finding who you are in real life. In the real world you can't really fake your identity. In the real world you have to be more 'honest'. And that is a good thing!

We also live in a world where social media, gaming, internet use is massive. And yet the health of young people is steadily declining with increasing rates of diabetes through poor eating and young people becoming overweight. Getting outdoors, doing exercise actually improves our mental health and makes us happier. So we need to encourage young people to do this more. And life is also about giving to others, sharing new experiences, going new places and growing as a person.



What God Thinks...



What does God think about social media?

Well, as a Christian I believe that God cares about how we feel about ourselves. He cares about how we are treated and how we treat others. He doesn't want us to feel depressed, lonely or fearful.

God wants to do good for you - although it's not always the good that we think we need, it's always better. God cares about you personally and cares about what you care about. God also wants to show you his plan for your life and reveal his love for you. God is a good Father and wants to steer us away from what is harmful and towards what is good for us and other people.

We enjoy social media and our smartphones (as a Christian, I believe that technology is a gift from God). We also listen to all kinds of voices on social media. But these voices aren't always positive and often, the people telling us things are more messed up than we think we are!

God wants you to know that at any time, in any place, in any situation he is there for you and you can just say 'God help' or 'God, what do you think?' or 'God show me your love' and he will answer.