<u>Screens and Stress:</u> Understanding the Digital Impact on Children's Well-being

Montgomery Township School District &
Montgomery Rocky Hill Municipal
Alliance and Youth Services Commission

May 2, 2024

TONIGHT'S AGENDA

★ VISIT RESOURCE TABLES

★ WELCOME AND INTRO, CORY DELGADO & LORI HUFF

★ TEEN PERSPECTIVE ON SOCIAL MEDIA, YOUTH ACTION BOARD (YAB)

★ SCHOOL PERSPECTIVE ON SOCIAL MEDIA, SCOTT PACHUTA & MARK

  ACCARDI

★ SOLUTIONS, JEFF BROOKS

★ HOW TO UNPLUG AND DESTRESS, STEFANIE LACHENAUER

★ Q&A WITH PANEL, SURVEY

How much time do teens spend on screens per day?

THE EQUIVALENT OF A FULL TIME JOB!

Teens spend an average of <u>8½ hours on screens per day</u>, and tweens (ages 8 to 12) are not far behind, at 5½ hours daily.

Keep in mind those numbers are <u>only</u> for social media, gaming, and texting. They do not include the time that kids <u>used screens for schoolwork or homework</u>.
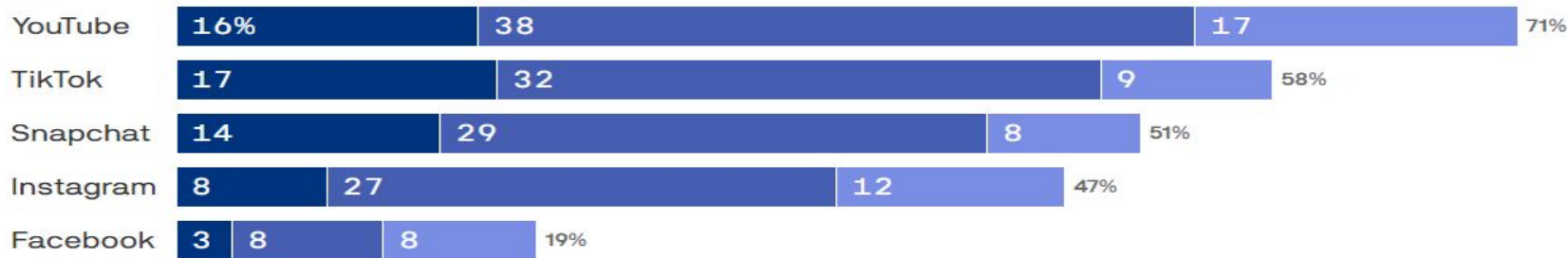
WHAT ARE TEENS DOING ONLINE?

Amount teens say they use apps and websites

Survey of 1,453 U.S. teens ages 13 to 17 conducted Sept. 26 to Oct. 23, 2023

■ Almost constantly ■ Several times a day ■ About once a day

	Almost constantly	Several times a day	About once a day	Total
YouTube	16%	38	17	71%
TikTok	17	32	9	58%
Snapchat	14	29	8	51%
Instagram	8	27	12	47%
Facebook	3	8	8	19%

Data: Pew; Chart: Axios Visuals

Nearly 1 in 5 teens say they're on YouTube or TikTok "almost constantly," according to a Pew Research Center report.

TEENS EXPERIENCING MAJOR DEPRESSION 2004-2020

Major Depression Among Teens

Girls
145% increase since 2010
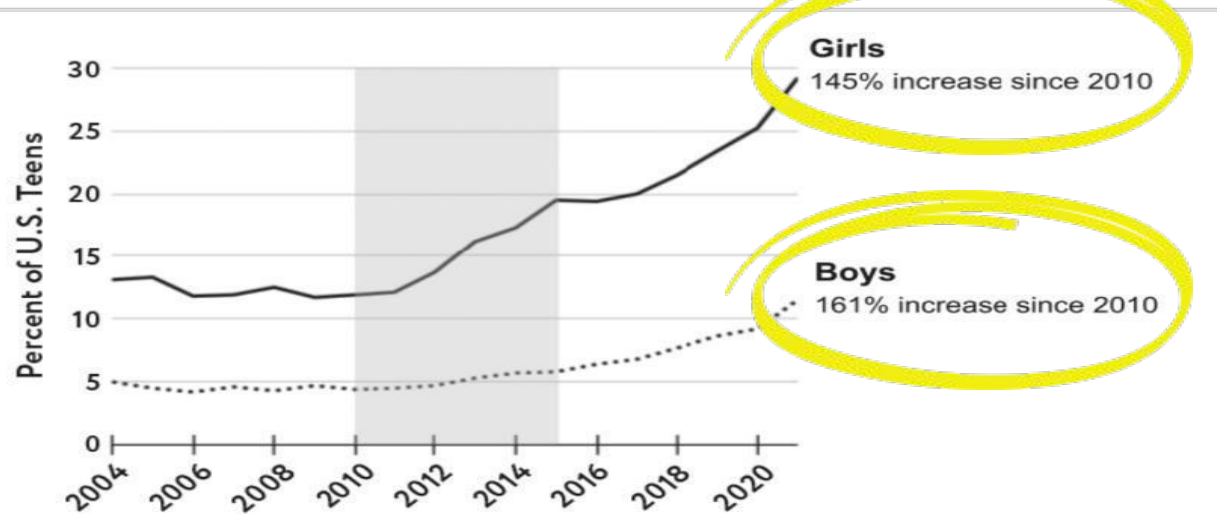
Boys
161% increase since 2010

Figure 1.1. Percent of U.S. teens (ages 12–17) who had at least one major depressive episode in the past year, by self-report based on a symptom checklist. This was figure 7.1 in *The Coddling of the American Mind*, now updated with data beyond 2016. (Source: U.S. National Survey on Drug Use and Health.)[3]

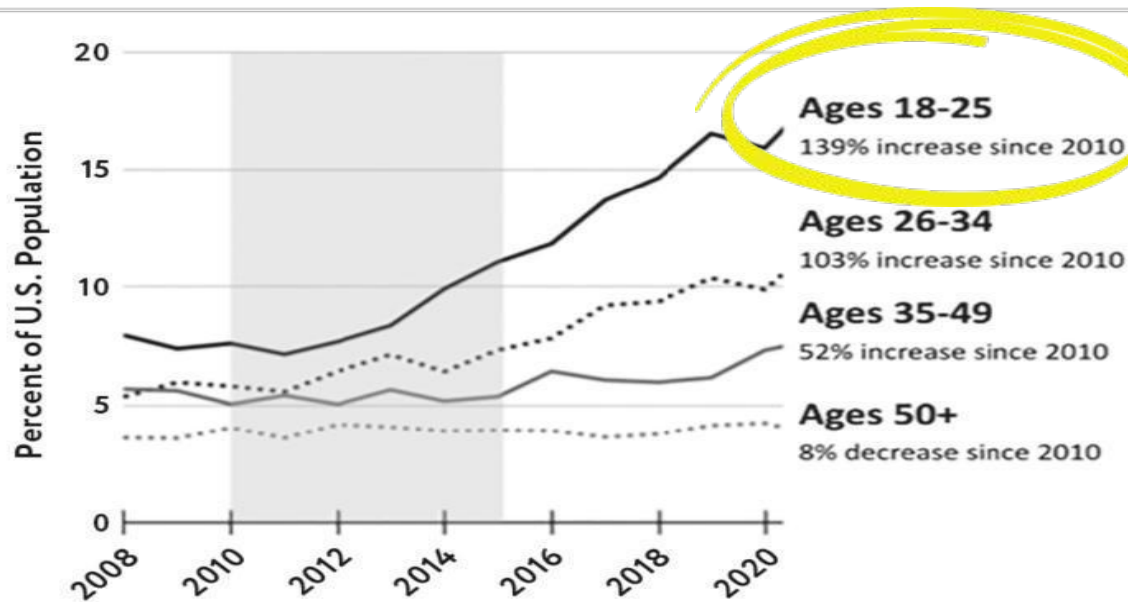# ANXIETY BY AGE

Anxiety Prevalence by Age

- **Ages 18-25** — 139% increase since 2010
- **Ages 26-34** — 103% increase since 2010
- **Ages 35-49** — 52% increase since 2010
- **Ages 50+** — 8% decrease since 2010

Figure 1.3. Percent of U.S. adults reporting high levels of anxiety by age group. (Source: U.S. National Survey on Drug Use and Health.)[11]

ER VISITS FOR SELF-HARM

Emergency Room Visits for Self-Harm

Girls
188% increase since 2010
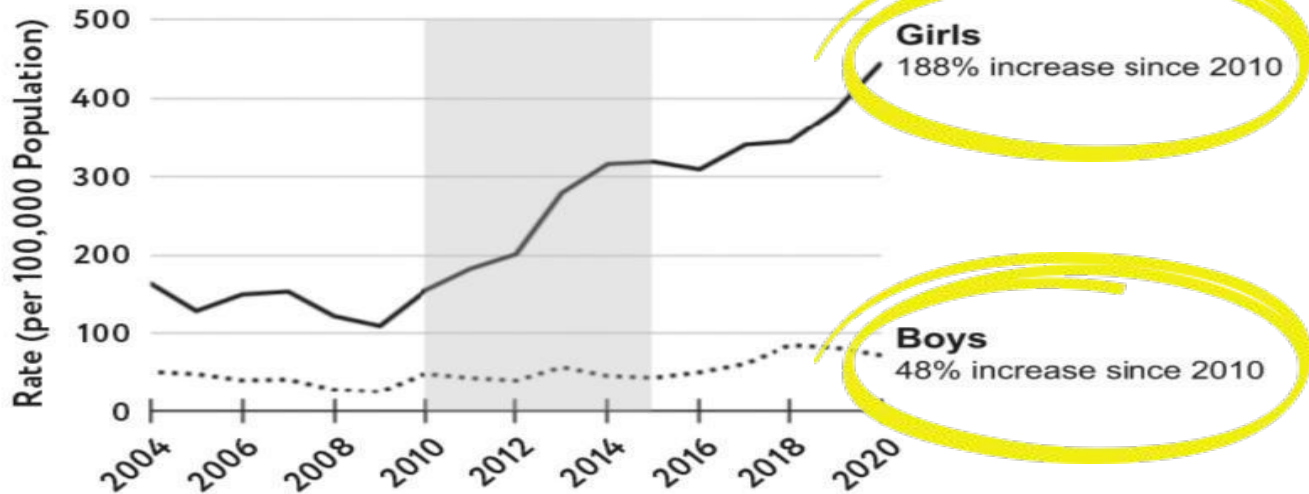
Boys
48% increase since 2010

Figure 1.4. The rate per 100,000 in the U.S. population at which adolescents (ages 10–14) are treated in hospital emergency rooms for nonfatal self-injury. (Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control.)[20]

SUICIDE RATES FOR CHILDREN 10-14

Suicide Rates for Younger Adolescents

Boys 91% increase since 2010
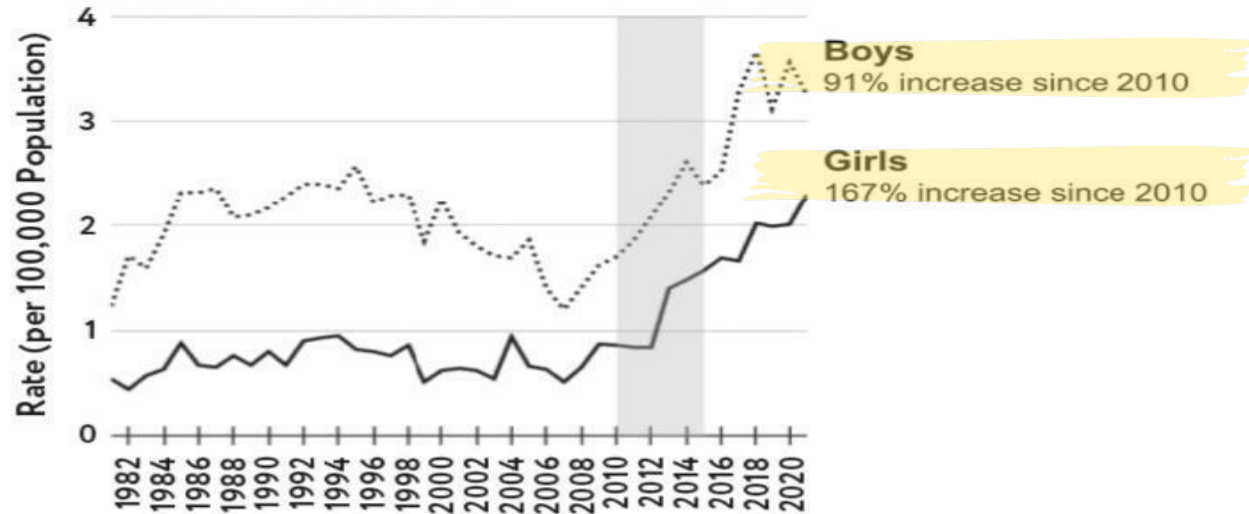
Girls 167% increase since 2010

Figure 1.5. Suicide rates for U.S. adolescents, ages 10–14. (Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control.)[22]

Boys- 81% increase since 2010, Girls- 167% increase since 2010

WHAT HAPPENED?

2010-2015 Great Rewiring of Childhood

"Social patterns, role models, emotions, physical activity, and even sleep patterns were fundamentally recast for adolescents over the course of just 5 years."

Jonathan Haidt

1990's-Cell phones arrive with limited function (no internet access)

2001- Most homes had personal computers and internet access

2007- Smartphones arrive with internet function

2010- iPhone 4 arrives with a front-facing camera (for selfies)

2**010**- Instagram was created, app that could only be used on a cellphone

2011- 77% of teens had a phone, but only 23% had a smartphone

2012- Facebook acquired Instagram and users grew from 10 million users in 2011 to 90 million by 2013

2016- 79% teens used a smartphone, as did 28% of children ages 8-12

FOUNDATIONAL HARMS OF PHONE-BASED CHILDHOOD

1 Social deprivation- When American adolescents moved onto smartphones, time with friends in face-to-face settings plummeted immediately, from 122 minutes per day in 2012 down to 67 minutes per day in 2019.

2 Sleep deprivation- As soon as adolescents moved from basic phones to smartphones, their sleep declined in both quantity and quality, around the developed world.

3 Attention fragmentation- Attention is the ability to stay on one mental road while many off-ramps beckon. Staying on a road, staying on a task, is a feature of maturity and a sign of good executive function. But smartphones are kryptonite for attention. Many adolescents get hundreds of notifications per day, meaning that they rarely have five or 10 minutes to think without an interruption.

4 Addiction- The behaviorists discovered that learning, for animals, is "the wearing smooth of a path in the brain." The developers of the most successful social media apps used advanced behaviorist techniques to "hook" children into becoming heavy users of their products.

From the book "The Anxious Generation" by Jonathan Haidt

THE POWER OF DOPAMINE

"Dopamine release is pleasurable, but it does not trigger a feeling of satisfaction. Rather, it makes you want more of whatever you did to trigger the release. The addiction researcher Anna Lembke says that the universal symptoms of withdrawal are

"anxiety, irritability, insomnia, and dysphoria."

She and other researchers find that many adolescents have developed behavioral addictions that are very much like the way that people develop addictions to slot machine gambling, with profound consequences for their well-being, their social development, and their families."

WHAT IS NEXT?

- We will hear the teen perspective on the pros and cons of social media.
- We will share details of the most popular platforms and the possible pitfalls.
- We will give you suggestions on how you can help your child develop a healthier relationship with technology.
- We will share recommendations on best practices.
- We will share strategies on how you can relax without screens.
- We will have a Q&A at the end to answer questions.
- We will send you home with additional resources including family discussion questions, tips for managing social media, and suggested videos to learn more about this topic.

Is Social Media Positive or Negative?
Hear what our YAB students have to say!
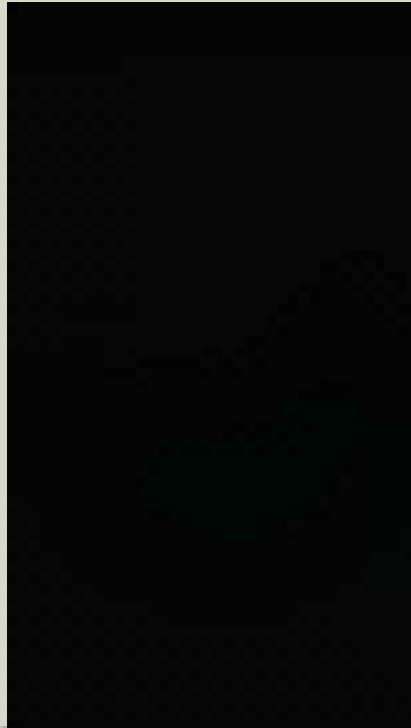
Q&A with the Montgomery Youth Action Board

@MontyYAB

Natalie Chen
Stella Cunha
Sofia Ghani
Anusri Kandukuri
Esha Lobo
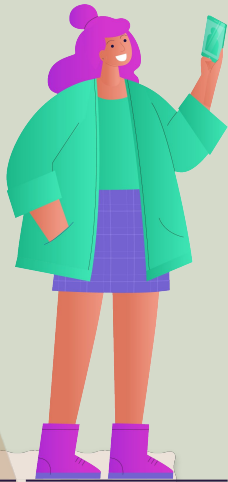Stephen Lu
Emma Matthews
Tanisha Mishra

Avantika Pittampally
Aparna Sariya
Auroni Sen
Jaimin Shah
Maya Shah
Molly Sisler
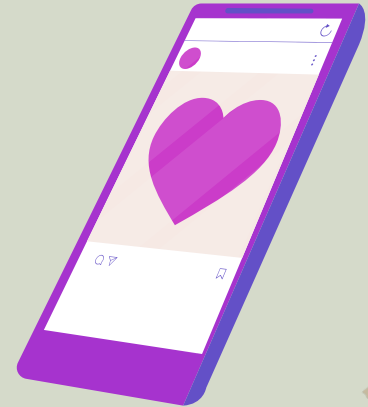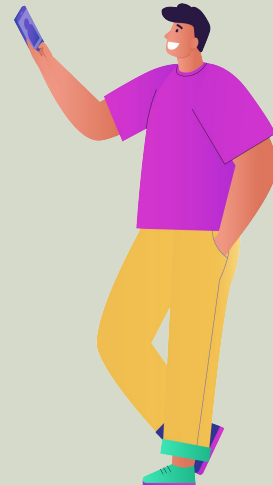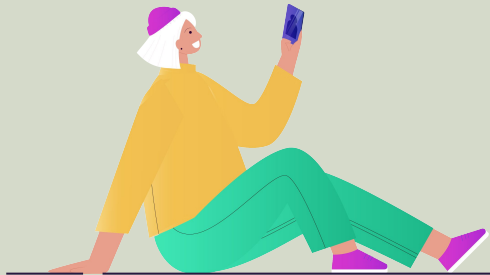Nethra Srimal
Hanshika Yaduguru

Stefanie Lachenauer- Advisor

YOUTH ACTION BOARD
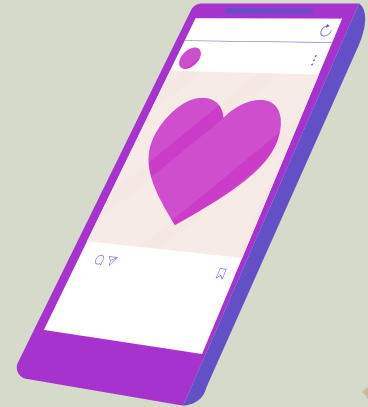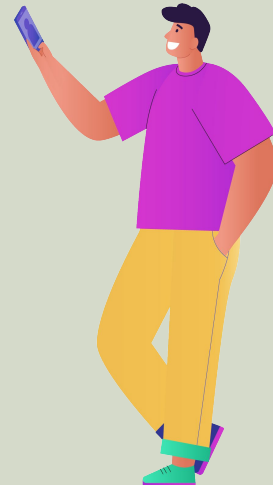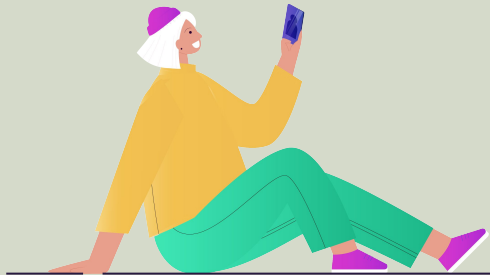MONTGOMERY
YOUR MIND DOES MATTER
@montyyab
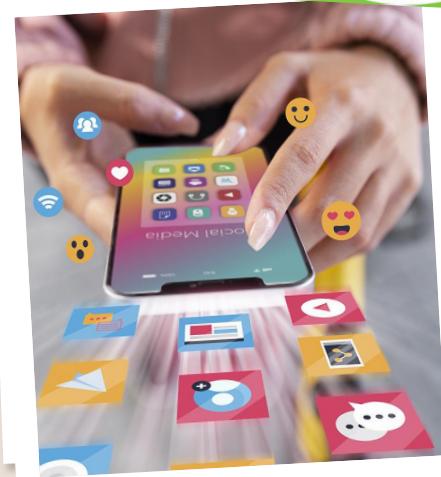
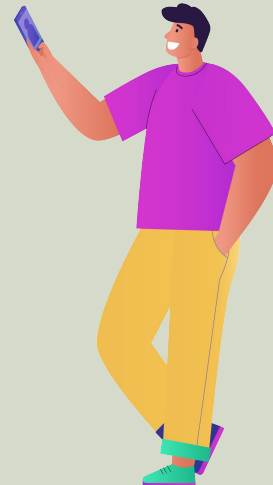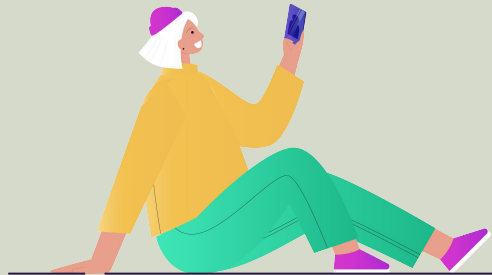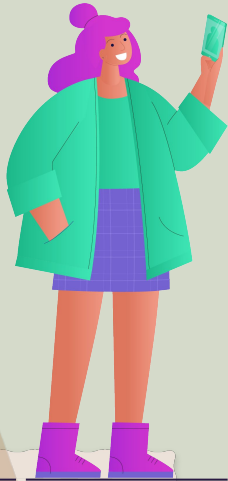# What are the some of the struggles that students face with social media?
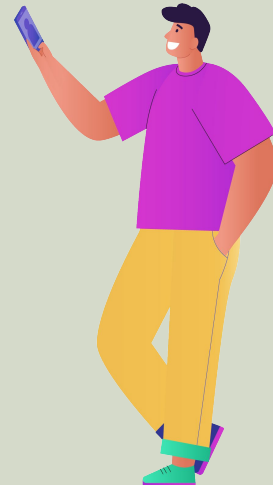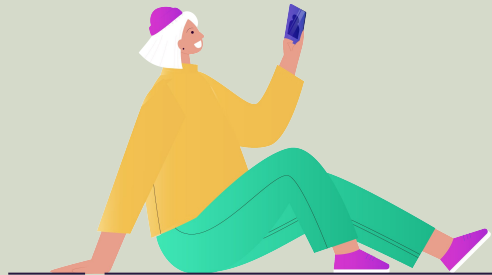
What do you wish parents knew about social media?
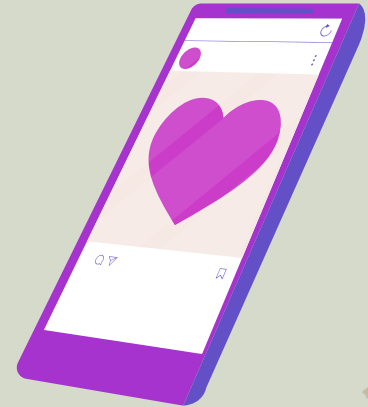
What are some of the benefits of social media?

What do you wish you could tell your younger self about social media?

Do you see a link between increased social media usage and a decline in mental health?
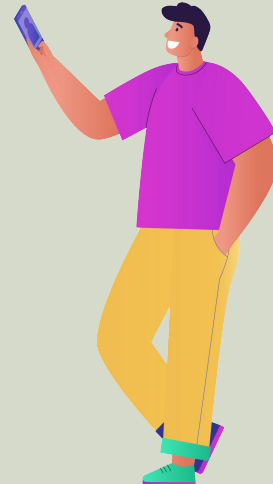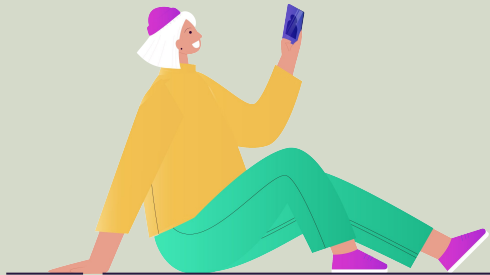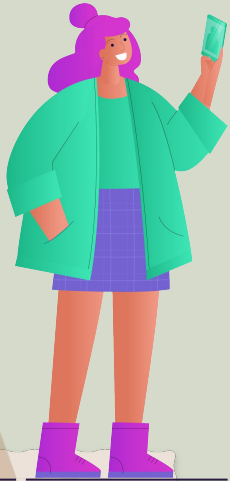
What are the types of social media that you see most students using?
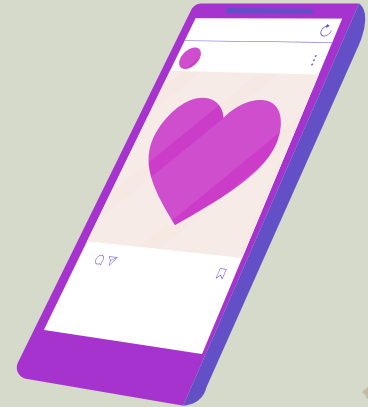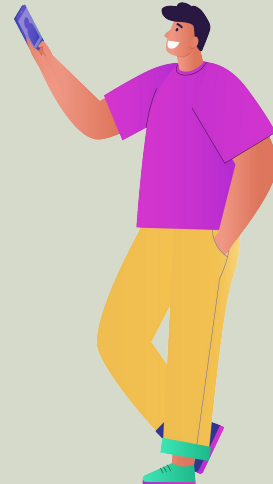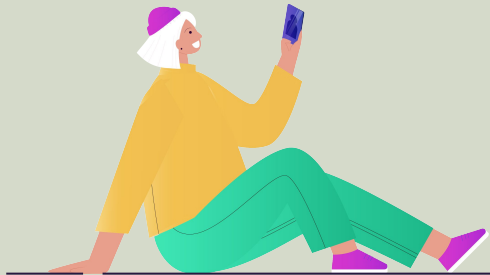
What are some suggestions for using social media safely and in a way that protects your mental health?
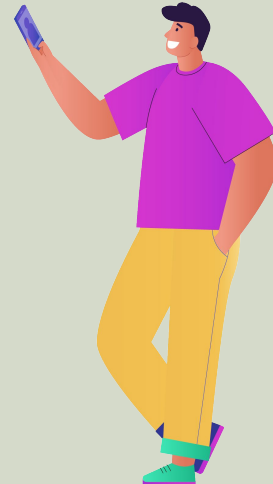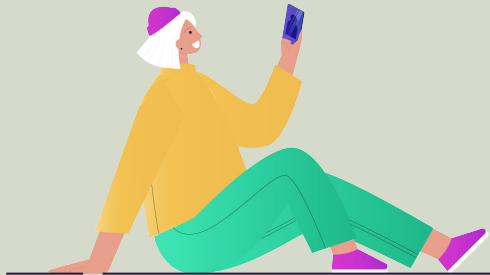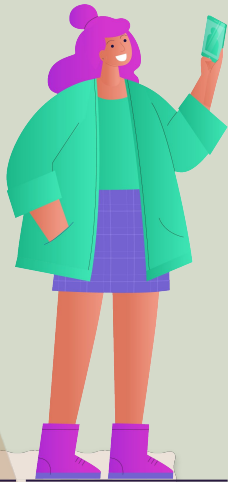
"Mini Computers" and the Impact on our Students
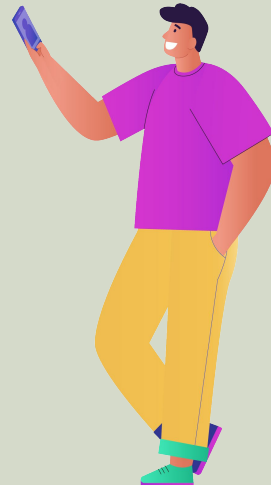
Adolescents and Social Media

Girls

- Body Image
- Cyberbullying (ganging up)
- Social Comparison
- Objectification
- Materialistic Comparisons
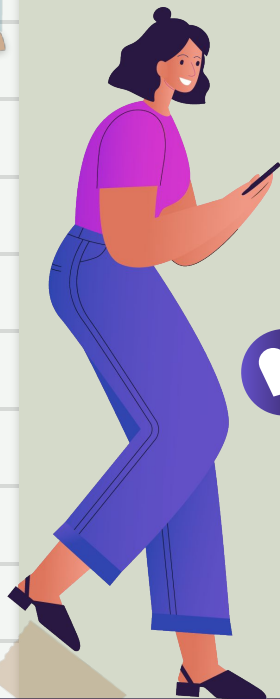
Boys

- Risk Taking Behaviors
- Role Models and "Influencers"
- Prank Humor
- Addiction and Distraction
- Explicit Content

Inclusive vs. Exclusive

- Smartphones and Social Media have pros and cons when it comes to peer relationships.
- Students may feel left out while they do not have a phone or have limits - work together as a parent community
- Social media apps may cause students to feel included while others will feel so left out

THE BIG FIVE!

1) Snapchat
2) Instagram
3) TikTok
4) YouTube
5) Discord

Snapchat

- You snap a picture and chat with your friends.
- Lenses, filters, text overlays, drawing tools, emojis, bitmojis, and stickers make each "snap" more awesome than a standard image or video

Good Ways Students Use Snapchat:

- Posting accomplishments that will disappear after 24 hours
- Subscribing to role models that they otherwise might not meet
- Posting snaps using "stickers" that raise awareness for things they are passionate about
- Remaining close with long-distance friends or family
- Creating a group chat with friends to talk about a group project

Snapchat

Where students are tripping up:

- Snapstreak🔥 / Views
- Sharing their password
- Number of views
- Staying up late
- Snapchat map or geo-filters
- Not always private
- My AI

Parents need to know:

- Addictive Features
- False accounts
- Discover Page
- Group Chats
- Video Chats
- Screenshots
- NO PARENTAL CONTROLS

Instagram

- the opportunity to stay connected with friends and loved ones, share photos and videos they enjoy, and follow influencers who make them feel inspired
- From Reels to Stories to Notes, students have an endless amount of options when it comes to connecting with others on Instagram.

Good Ways Students Use Instagram:

- <u>Staying in touch</u> through likes, comments, and direct messages (DMs)
- Following <u>positive role models</u>, Discovering <u>new places</u> to eat and explore 🍽️
- Raising <u>awareness</u> for causes
- Enjoying <u>entertaining </u>reels
- Using the <u>offensive comment</u> filter for a positive experience
- Pursuing interests and hobbies by following and <u>learning from experts</u>

Instagram

Where students are tripping up:

- Living by comparison
- Making their account public
- Creating fake accounts
- Image-altering features
- Forgetting about screenshots
- Endless scrolling

Parents need to know:

- Offers Parental Controls
- Info on profile bio
- Stories/Highlights
- Explore page
- "Close Friends"

YouTube

- YouTube is the most used video sharing site in the world, beating TV and other popular streaming services like Netflix.

- YouTube allows users from all around the world to post videos and explore the variety of content available for free.

Good Ways Students Use YouTube:

- Subscribing to <u>positive role models</u> who align with their values and interests
- Commenting with <u>positive feedback,</u> like compliments or suggestions, on videos
- <u>Gaining advice or solving problems</u> on YouTube
- Pursuing their <u>passions</u>
- <u>Sharing videos</u> that made them laugh or smile with their friends

YouTube

Where students are tripping up:

- Negative influencers
- "YouTube Wormhole"
- Getting lost in YouTube Star Drama
- Discovering Unsuitable content
- Hateful comments

Parents need to know:

- Less parental control
- False information sharing
- Accounts luring their followers
- Autoplay

TikTok
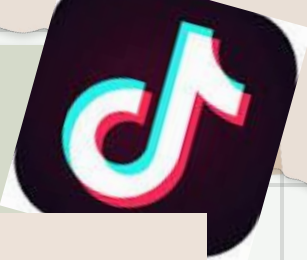
- creating, sharing, and watching short 15-second to 10-minute videos.
- Users can upload videos of themselves
- The app often has multiple video trends happening that encourage users to create content to fit the trend.

Good Ways Students Use TikTok:

- Creating educational content to help others learn something new
- Connecting with like-minded individuals and forming supportive communities
- Promoting charity and social causes to raise awareness
- Sharing artistic talents and gaining recognition for their skills
- Participating in challenges that encourage creativity and self-expression
- Enabling TikTok's Digital Wellbeing feature to manage their screen time
- Controlling who can message them and comment on their videos through their settings

TikTok

Where students are tripping up:

- Excessive scrolling
- Following the wrong "influencers"
- Choosing the wrong challenges/trends
- Mental Health Advice/ Self-Diagnosing
- Revealing too much personal information
- Sharing Fake News
- Cyberbullying

Parents need to know:

- Family Pairing!
- Dangerous trends/challenges
- False information sharing
- Accounts luring their followers

Discord
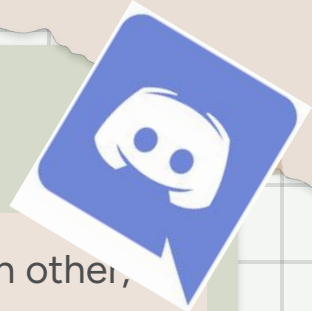
- a private chat room where people of similar interests can join to talk with each other, play games, host streaming parties, and so much more.
- This platform is #6 in social networking and was first created to be a video and text chatting platform for gamers and is now used by many other groups

Good Ways Students Use Discord:

- <u>Staying in touch</u> with different groups of people and friends.
- <u>Sharing pictures, articles, videos</u>, etc. about things they are passionate about
- Building <u>networks with people</u> who share similar interests.
- Starting a <u>book club or study group</u> to help understand and learn from each other.

Discord

Where students are tripping up:

- Lying about their age to access mature content
- Pretending to be someone they are not
- Creating group chats targeted towards another
- Making rude comments behind a username
- Spending too much time lost in chat rooms

Parents need to know:

- No algorithms!
- Offers NO Parental Controls
- Increased opportunities for bullying
- No accountability
- Hard to identity individuals
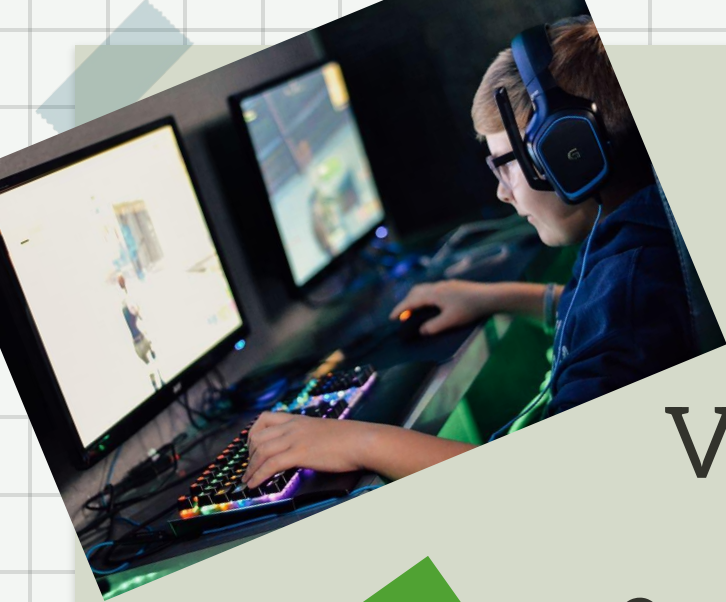
Video Games

Gaming Chat
Content
Insults and "Trash Talk"

Solutions

- What is happening in schools
- What you can do at home
- Tips and Strategies
- Resources

Schoolwide and Classroom Lessons

Common Sense Media
- Online resource that provides information for schools and families
- Content from Common Sense Media is infused in our Technology Education Cycles and other various courses

The Social Institute (aka WinAtSocial)
- Research based platform that present gamified lessons around Technology and Social Media, empowering students by understanding students
- Targeted to the middle school student and their trends
- Provides endless resources for families to understand more about social media and current events that are impacting our students
- As a member of our community, you have free access to these resources
  - Handout has QR code and Access code

Restorative Consequences

- Every incident becomes a learning opportunity
- Time for students to research and understand the impact of technology and social media
- Counseling and in school supports
- Project-Based Actions to support growth and understanding
  - Student peer groups
  - Student created presentations
  - Student create contracts

Supporting at home

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILD HAS A PROBLEM WITH SOCIAL MEDIA?

- **Spending more time on social media than with real world friends. Using social media has become a substitute for a lot of your offline social interaction. Even if you're out with friends, you still feel the need to constantly check SM.**

- **Comparing yourself unfavorably with others on social media. You have low self-esteem or negative body image. You may even have patterns of disordered eating.**

- **Experiencing cyberbullying. Or you worry that you have no control over the things people post about you.**

- **Being distracted at school or work. You feel pressure to post regular content about yourself, get comments or likes on your posts, or respond quickly and enthusiastically to friends' posts.**

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILD HAS A PROBLEM WITH SOCIAL MEDIA?

- **Having no time for self-reflection. Every spare moment is filled by engaging with social media, leaving you little or no time for reflecting on who you are, what you think, or why you act the way that you do—the things that allow you to grow as a person.**

- **Engaging in risky behavior in order to gain likes, shares, or positive reactions on social media. You play dangerous pranks, post embarrassing material, cyberbully others, or access your phone while driving or in other unsafe situations.**

- **Suffering from sleep problems. Do you check social media last thing at night, first thing in the morning, or even when you wake up in the night? The light from phones and other devices can disrupt your sleep, which in turn can have a serious impact on your mental health.**

- **Worsening symptoms of anxiety or depression. Rather than helping to alleviate negative feelings and boost your mood, you feel more anxious, depressed, or lonely after using social media.** https://www.helpguide.org/articles/mental-health/social-media-and-mental-health.htm

HOW TO HELP

Modify social media use to improve mental health:

Step 1: Reduce time online-A 2018 University of Pennsylvania study found that reducing social media use to 30 minutes a day resulted in a significant reduction in levels of anxiety, depression, loneliness, sleep problems, and FOMO.

Step 2: Change your focus- Many of us access social media purely out of habit or to mindlessly kill moments of downtime. But by focusing on your motivation for logging on, you can not only reduce the time you spend on social media, you can also improve your experience and avoid many of the negative aspects.

Step 3: Spend more time with offline friends- We all need the face-to-face company of others to be happy and healthy. At its best, social media is a great tool for facilitating real-life connections.

Step 4: Express gratitude- Feeling and expressing gratitude about the important things in your life can be a welcome relief to the resentment, animosity, and discontent sometimes generated by social media.

Practice
GRATITUDE

WAYS TO REDUCE TIME ONLINE
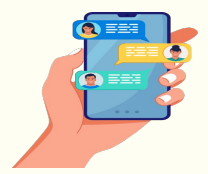
- **Use an app to track how much time you spend on social media each day.** Then set a goal for how much you want to reduce it by.

- **Turn off your phone at certain times of the day,** such as when you're driving, in a meeting, at the gym, having dinner, spending time with offline friends, or playing with your friends/kids. Don't take your phone with you to the bathroom.

- **Don't bring your phone or tablet to bed.** Turn devices off and leave them in another room overnight to charge.

- **Disable social media notifications.** It's hard to resist the constant buzzing, beeping, and dinging of your phone alerting you to new messages. Turning off notifications can help you regain control of your time and focus.

- **Limit checks.** If you compulsively check your phone every few minutes, wean yourself off by limiting your checks to once every 15 minutes. Then once every 30 minutes, then once an hour. There are apps that can automatically limit when you're able to access your phone.

- **Try removing social media apps from your phone** so you can only check Facebook, Twitter and the like from your tablet or computer. If this sounds like too drastic a step, try removing one social media app at a time to see how much you really miss it.

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES TO OVERCOME A PHONE-BASED CHILDHOOD

- **Parents should "Get Curious, Not Furious"!** Find out how your children feel about each platform and seek to understand the appeal.

- **No Smartphones before high school.** Instead, choose a phone with limited apps and no internet browser.

- **No social media before age 16.** During adolescent development, brain regions associated with the desire for attention, feedback, and reinforcement from peers become more sensitive. Meanwhile, the brain regions involved in self-control have not fully matured. That can be a recipe for disaster. [(APA)](APA)

- **Phone-free schools.** Start by not sending your child to school with a phone or have them only use it for afterschool communication.

- **More independence, free play, and responsibility in childhood.**

- **Join forces with other parents** to change social norms concerning phones. It is easier to do this as a group!

From the book "The Anxious Generation" by Jonathan Haidt

Coping With What Triggers You

- Avoid social media when mood is low
- Follow positive social media accounts
- Unfollow negative social media accounts
- Avoid the comparison game and (FoMO) Fear of Missing Out
- Check in on your emotions while browsing
- Know when to take a break (short term or long term)

You are not alone if you find social media triggering!

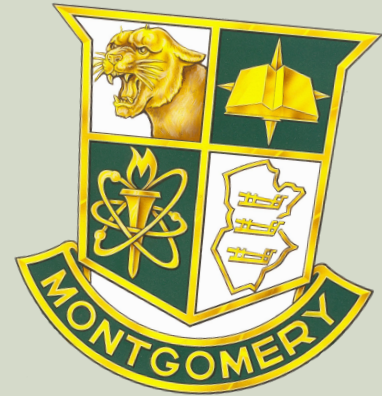# How are your feeling!?
Let's Check In!
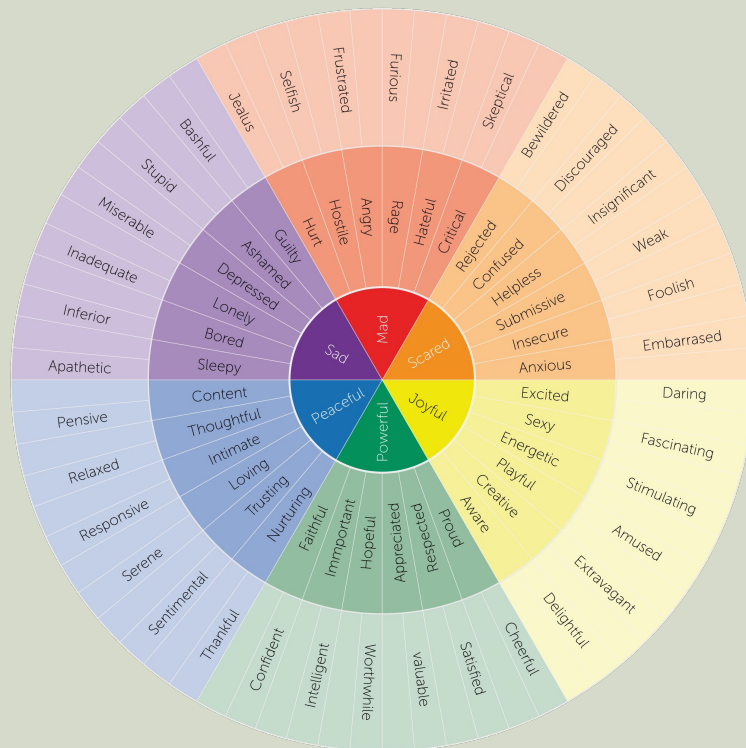
Glitter Jar Analogy

Mindfulness Anchors

Please scan the QR Code to provide feedback.

Q&A
We would like to provide time for you to present questions to our panel.