West Windsor-Plainsboro
Regional School District

# Coping with COVID: The Impact of Social Media

*December 1, 2020*

# Agenda

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- Realities/Concerns
- Clinical Perspective
- What can Parents do?
- Questions For You
- Questions for Us

# Most Popular Social Media

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# Adolescent Social Media

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# Conversation

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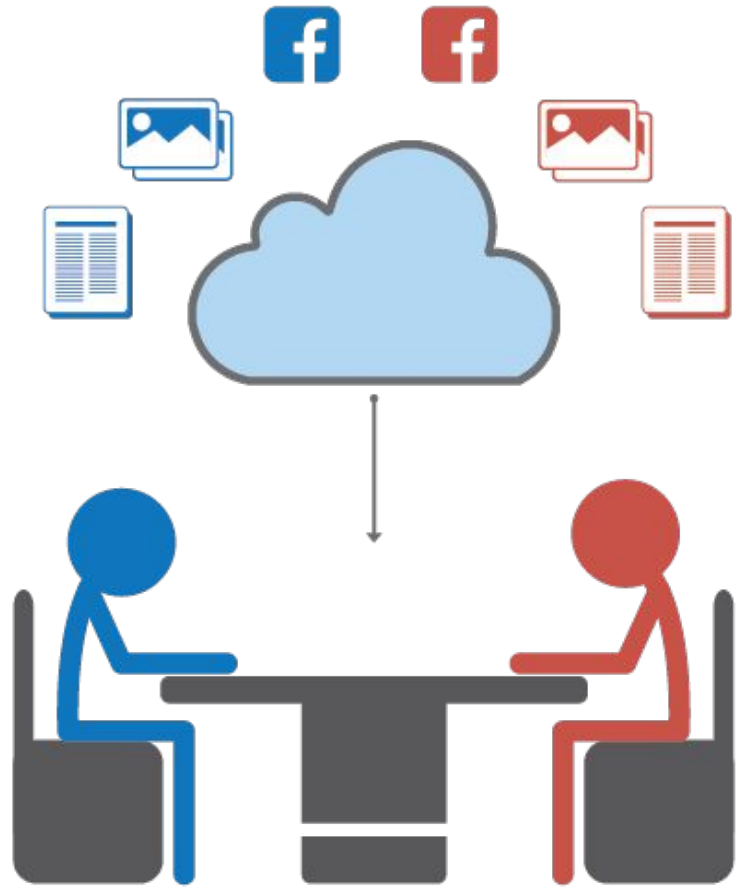
**What is it about social media that concerns you the most?**



# Realities/Concerns

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- **Privacy / Digital Footprint**
- **Cyberbullying / Trolling / Sexting**
- **Up-Down Comparisons**
- **Social Media Depression / Addiction**
- **Disconnect from Reality**
- **Anxiety, Self-Esteem, Self-Efficacy**
- **Body Image / Eating Disorders**
- **Sleep Patterns**
- **Social Skills**

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# Coping with COVID: The Impact of Social Media

## *Clinical Perspective*

# What The Research Says…

2019 Children's Mental Health Report | Social Media, Gaming and Mental Health

by Child's Mind Institute

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Social media, depression, and connectedness

- Smartphones were introduced in 2007 and by 2015 about 92% of teens and young adults owned a smartphone
- There is a correlation between the use of social media and depression
- Between the years of 2010 and 2015, reports of depressive symptoms by 8th-12th graders increased by 33%
- Research indicates that more than **3 hours of social media use a day** is linked to depression in adolescents aged 12 to 15

https://childmind.org/our-impact/childrens-mental-health-report/2019report/

# What The Research Says…

2019 Children's Mental Health Report | Social Media, Gaming and Mental Health

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- More Social = Less Sleep

-Teens who spend three hours a day on devices are more likely to get less than seven hours of sleep -»difficulty paying attention, lower grades, increased stress, interpersonal tension

-60% of adolescents are looking at their phones in the last hour before sleep

-36%  of teens wake up and check mobile devices at least once at night -» excessive text messaging interrupts sleep

-Research is still exploring effects of blue light exposure on our brains

# What The Research Says…

Social Media and Body Image/Eating disorders behaviors

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- Social media promotes the idea of having an ideal body
- Increased time on social media is associated with increased risk of reporting eating and body image concerns
- Online communities that promote disordered eating - The “Thin Ideal” - Ana and Mia
- Recent research indicates that there is a correlation between time spent scrolling through social media apps and negative body image feedback

# Social Media and Anxiety

- Increased use of social media platforms is associated with anxiety triggering symptoms
- Compare-and-despair factor
  Fear of personal failure ⇨
- Low number of “likes” is associated and leads to development of negative thoughts
- Fear of missing out (FOMO)

Resource: Anxiety.org

# Use of Social Media during Pandemic

- Maintaining communication with friends and family
- Reducing isolation and boredom
- Reducing psychological distress associated with anxiety related to pandemic
- Quick distribution and easy access to important information

  about safety protocols, treatment, personal protection equipment, and

  necessary home supplies
- High probability for the information to be false, inaccurate,

  and exaggerated
- Increase in fear, stress, depression, and anxiety

# Use of Social Media during Pandemic

- Overall increase in daily screen time due to virtual learning
- 63% of teens are using social media more than they did pre-pandemic
  (only 25% said they use it less, and 12% say it's about the same)
- Most concerns about using Instagram and SnapChat
- 68% of parents believe social media affects their teen's ability to socialize normally
- 56% believe their teen has an unhealthy desire for attention/approval via social media
- Parents attempt to enforce rules for smartphone and social media use including how much, when, where their phone can be used and censor their teens' social media posts because parents felt it inappropriate.
- 80 % of parents relaxed rules about social media temporarily
- 46% reported they are more appreciative of social media's role in their teen's life, during quarantine

# Impact of Social Media

## Positive Aspects

- Connectedness, entertainment, creative use
- Possibility to work from home and to engage in virtual learning
- Different motivations for social media use
- More research is needed to explore possible positive outcomes:
  - increase in self esteem
  - perceived social support
  - safe identity exploration

# Impact of Social Media

**Negative impacts**

- **Decreased sleep**
- **Less  physical activity**
- **Less time for schoolwork**
- Reduced attention
- Less face-to-face interaction
- Affects healthy brain development

**Exposure to :**

- An unhealthy need for approval or attention
- becoming sexualized too soon
- not enough personal privacy
- Oversharing
- sexual predators
- hate speech
- an inability to focus
- being bullied and bullying others

# The Takeaway

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- Too much of anything can come with adverse consequences
- Social media helps students feel more connected, however, in excess students can feel more isolated
- Development of compulsive behaviors
- Online habits are problematic when they become compulsive or habitual, motivated by desire for mood alteration, related to offline interpersonal problems

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## *What Can Parents Do?*

# Question

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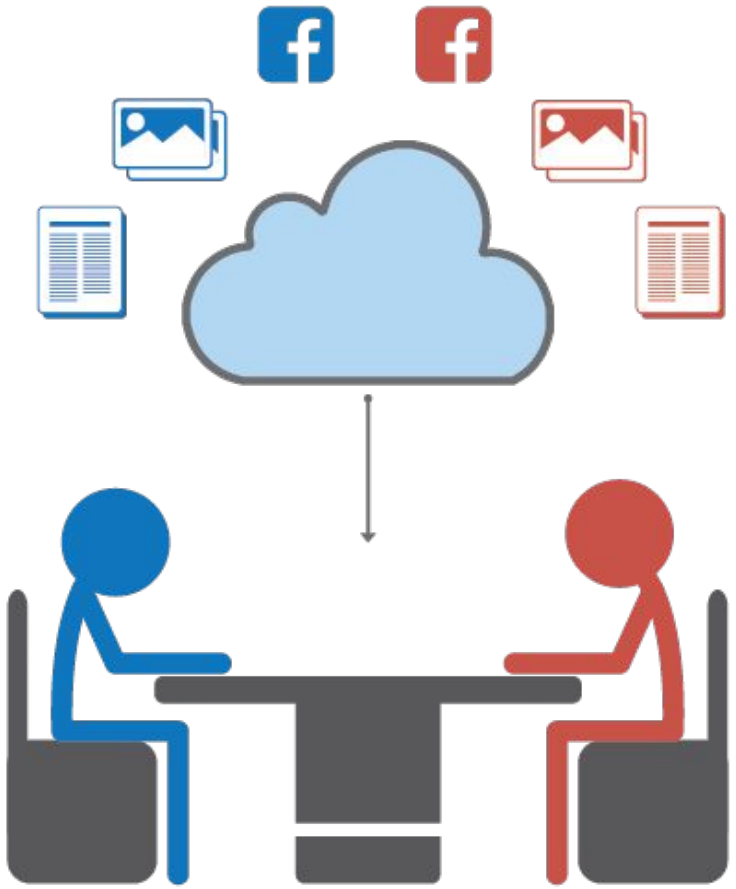
**What social media platforms do you use?**



# Social Media (2019)

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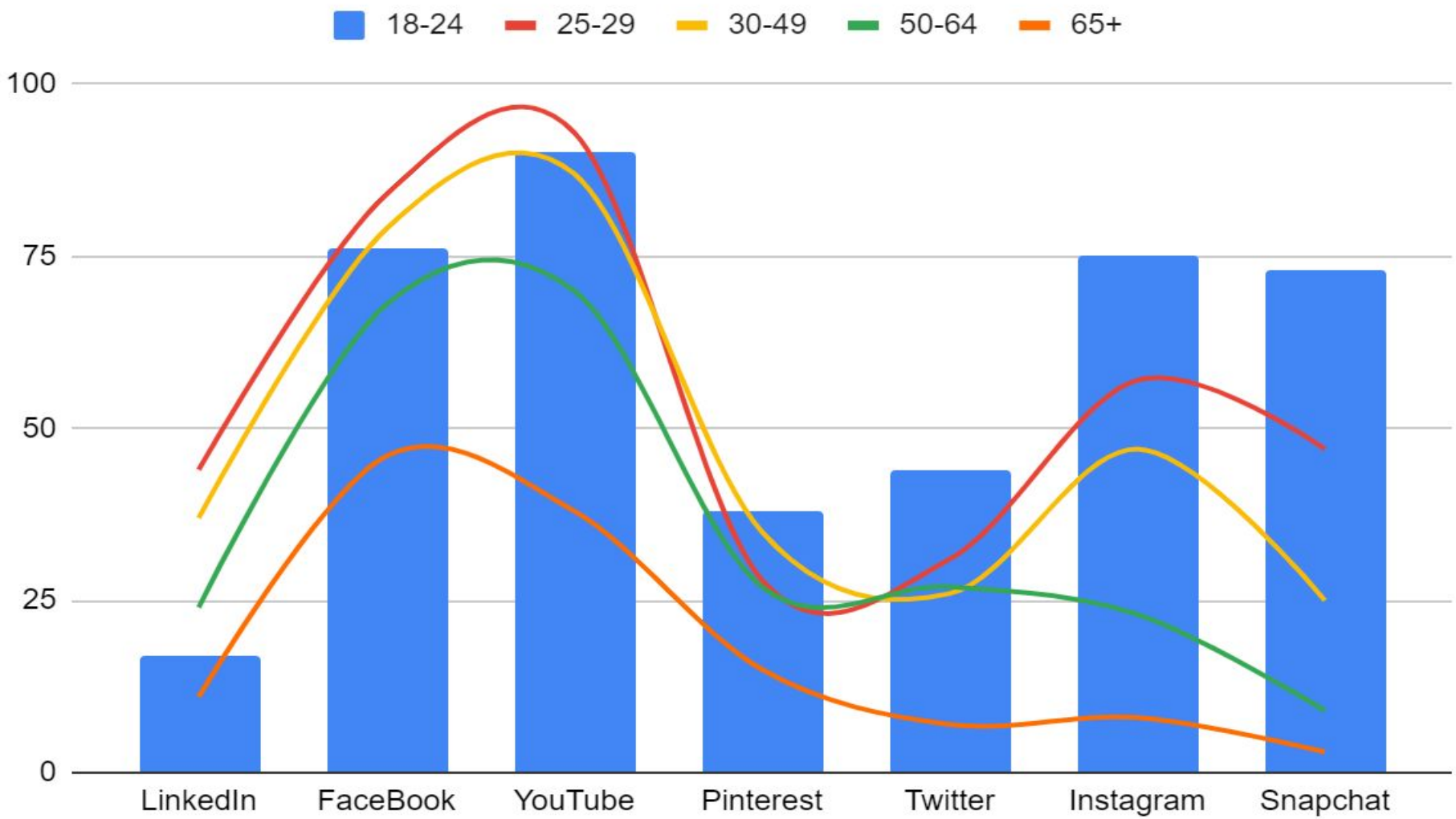


Pew Research Center

# Social Media (2020)

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# Social Media

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# What Can Parents Do?

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## Role Model - Learn Together

# Conversation Guide

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## All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten

- **Play fair**
- **Don't hit people**
- **Put things back where you found them**
- **Clean up your own mess**
- **Don't take things that aren't yours**
- **Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody**

**Robert Fulghum**

**What are we teaching our children?**

# Controls

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- **Password Protected**
- **Website Access Filtering**
- **Limit Access During Specific Times**
- **Monitor Chat Sessions**
- **Personal Information Monitoring**
- **Establish a Charging Location**

# Resources

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## Common Sense Media

https://www.commonsensemedia.org/

## Cell Phone Monitoring APPS

https://www.pcmag.com/roundup/342731/the-best-parental-control-apps-for-your-phone

## FIOS

https://www.verizon.com/support/residential/internet/security/parental-controls

## Xfinity (Comcast)

https://www.xfinity.com/support/internet/set-up-parental-controls-with-comcast-networking/

# Student Perspective

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## Self-Expression vs Self-Destruction

- Discovering one's self is crucial, it's a large part of adolescent life
- Proper instruction and guidance can help identify the positive aspects of social media
- Increased communication *can* be useful; helps foster relationships, convey information faster, etc
- Solving issues requires work from both parties (students *and* parents/teachers)

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## *Questions to Think About Before Talking to Your Kids*

# Questions

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What is an appropriate age for your child to have a cell phone and how have you prepared them for the responsibility of use?

What is an appropriate age for your child to have a social media presence and how have you prepared them for the responsible use?

How is teaching these items of responsibility similar to all other lessons you teach your child?

# Questions

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What do you think should be included in guidelines for cell phone use?

What do you think should be included in guidelines for social media use?

How can you develop guidelines with your child?

# Questions

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