

# Social Media Sites - Both Positive and Negative

**Ninety-three percent of teens aged 12 – 17 use the Internet. About 73% use social networking sites. Roughly 22% of teens visit their favorite social media site more than 10 times a day. It is a medium teens use to connect with others – 24/7. They use these sites to express their identity in photos, artwork, games and words.**

Social media sites - Facebook, Tumblr, Pinterest and Twitter - have many positives. These sites promote creating and sharing. Teens find people with similar interests and passions. They:

- see photos from far away countries.
- view artwork from museums around the world, and
- share feelings, ideas and dreams.

In the past, teens shared their thoughts, passions and creations with friends and family. Today, they share them with the world.

Doctors warn parents of the negative side of social media sites. Many young adults who use these sites show signs of mental disorders. Some display anti-social behaviors. Peer-pressure — at school or online — can affect susceptible

teens. An impulsive posting or comment can cause hurt for a lifetime. Also, their technical computer skills enable them to find sites that may not be age-appropriate.

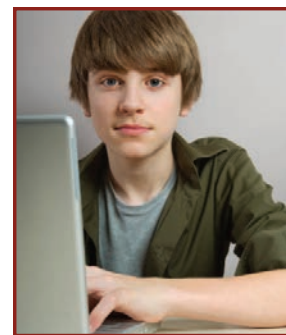
The Internet is a world without fences. Parents have no control over what their teen sees and shares. Teens access sites where people share similar feelings and emotions. People at these sites may not share your values. Your teen may find content that could influence him to engage in risky behaviors.

Research suggests that daily overuse of social media can also have negative effects. It can cause anxiety, depression and other mental health disorders. Some teens develop an addiction to a social media site. They fear disconnecting because they might miss something.

## Parents can help.

- Observe your teen. Discuss his ideas, feelings and values. Does he show signs of social or mental health problems?
- Monitor your teen's social media use. What are her favorite sites? Visit those sites. Know what she sees and reads.
- Set online rules. Discuss safety and values. Remind him that everyone will have access to his posts. Discuss time limits.

It is part of a parent's job of keeping his child safe to know the technology his child uses.



*Brought to you by Parent Help Line at HSHS St. John's Children's Hospital to help keep kids safe, healthy and happy.*



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