

What are the effects of social media?

Social media is increasingly popular and widely used by many people, especially young people. It can have a significant effect on our wellbeing, both positive and negative.

Benefits

- Feeling connected to others
- Staying in touch with friends/family
- Expressing yourself
- Sharing ideas and inspiration
- Getting and sharing information
- Shared interests/hobbies

Risks

- Online dangers + internet safety risks
- Cyber-bullying
- Negative self-image and low self-esteem
- Loss of time
- Fake news and incorrect information
- Addictive behaviour

What can help?

Stay safe

- Do not share your personal information, such as your full name, location or address.
- Never agree to meet someone you met online
- Never share inappropriate images of yourself. If you're under 16, this is illegal.
- Never accept friend requests from people you don't know
- Make your accounts private so only your friends can contact you and see your posts.

Block / Unfollow

You have the power to control who can contact you and what content you see

- Block and unfriend anyone who bullies you or sends inappropriate messages
- Unfollow accounts if you notice they make you feel bad about yourself and/or your life

Spend less time

Monitor the time you spend on social media. Think about how much of your day you are using up.

- Limit your screen time for each app
- Leave your device out of reach when you don't need it
- Set alarms to remind you to stop scrolling

Don't believe everything you see

Remember that pictures on social media are only snapshots of a person's life

- Remember images and photos can be edited and may not be true to real life
- Many influencers are paid to produce and share their content, it is their job to look and appear the way they do

Ask yourself

When you notice yourself scrolling social media, think about what the activity is giving you. How does it make you feel? What makes you pick up your phone? Are you bored, avoiding something, lonely? What else could you do?