

Parents and Caregivers' Information Sheet

Grade 10 - 2024-25

SOCIAL MEDIA

SOCIAL MEDIA AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Below you will find some videos that explain the influence the media has had on our perceptions of different marginalized groups. These videos demonstrate to what extent the media (films, television shows, etc.) have been able to influence the perception that people have of certain marginalized groups over the years. These perceptions have real consequences on the esteem and self-perception of people who identify with these groups. It is important to be aware of these influences in order to understand how to properly consume the media.

- On the perception of the [Asian man](#)
- On the perception of the [transgender person](#)



YOUTH MEDIA USE STATISTICS:

According to the Adolescent Health Survey (2018):

- 72% of young people say they use their phone long after bedtime to check their social networks
- 14% of young people say they have been the victim of cyber-bullying (23% of them are non-binary young people)
- 17% of young people say they had an online interaction with a stranger that made them uncomfortable

THE POSITIVES AND NEGATIVES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

There is no point in trying to convince young people not to use social media because they will do it no matter what. Hence the importance of improving your understanding of what is going on in the media, both positive and negative points.

The positive points of social networks:

- Allows young people to develop their critical thinking
- Meet people
- Maintain relationships with friends
- Keep memories
- Learn more about various topics

The negative points of social networks:

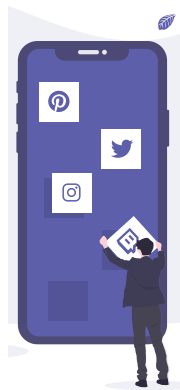
- Beauty standards (for all genders)
- The comparison (on appearance, economic status, lifestyle, etc.)
- Internet harassment
- Cyberdependence

As parents of a teenager, it should not surprise you to learn that over 92% of 13-17-year-olds are online daily, and about a quarter considers themselves online almost constantly. 66% of 16-year-olds in British Columbia say their parents or guardians do not know what they are doing online most or all of the time. While no parent has the capacity to monitor all of their child's cyber interactions, there is an opportunity for the conversation to flow about maintaining healthy relationships online. First, you can bring up this topic often and try to keep a dialogue open with your teenager about their online behaviour. Then, these conversations can help them identify unhealthy signs of certain behaviours of their friends online (for example, monitoring, humiliating, or excluding others).

HOW TO IDENTIFY UNHEALTHY BEHAVIOURS ONLINE AND PREVENT ABUSE?

Not all abusive relationships are physically violent. For example, scaring someone, making them feel bad or embarrassing them in front of their friends or family is also a form of abuse. Digital abuse can take many forms and is particularly harmful for several reasons:

- Due to online anonymity, it is difficult to know who is participating in this abuse, who our friends are, and who to trust.
- Online abuse is ongoing and can be seen by more than one person, which can amplify the abuse.
- Victims have no escape as they also use their phones for their positive interactions with friends and family, or for homework.



HOW CAN I ENCOURAGE MY TEEN TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA WITH A CLEAR CONSCIENCE?

Get in the habit of asking your teen about their online activities. Here are some suggested points to discuss:

- Adjust application privacy settings.
- The people who are their “friends” on social networks and how they got to know them.
- People they communicate with on chat or video platforms.
- What kind of information they may or may not disclose in their messages, posts, photos or videos.
- The fact that the internet is a public place and it is easy to lose control over messages, photos and videos transmitted through apps or posted on social media.
- Ask them if they have received any unusual requests or if they have ever felt uncomfortable in an online situation and how they responded.
- Ask if anyone they know has ever had a difficult internet experience and what they think about the situation.
- Encourage them to lead by example and never share compromising content on others if they receive it.

RESPECTING LIMITS ONLINE


As discussed in Workshop 3 we teach adolescents to respect the limits of others. It is also important to teach them to set their own limits and to teach them to recognize abusive behaviour. The following are examples of behaviours that may indicate your teen is experiencing abusive behaviour online:

- Someone forces them to share their passwords or confidential information.
- Someone encourages them to “remove friends” from their friends list.
- Someone is chatting about your teenager online.
- Someone forces them to send sexual images or receives sexual images without their consent.
- Someone is sharing their personal photos without their consent.
- Someone sends them messages that make them feel uncomfortable, threatened or scared.

CYBERBULLYING TIPS AND TRICKS

- Do not defend yourself. Although it can be tempting to respond to the cyberbully with nastiness, it is best not to retaliate or make the situation worse.
- Be assertive and say no to harassment. If it is safe for them to do so, the teen can tell the cyberbully that their actions are wrong by using neutral language that emphasizes the behaviour without attacking the person.
- To protect yourself: Always make copies of messages or posts before deleting them.
- To block: Most websites, apps and social networks allow you to block users whose behaviour is inappropriate or threatening.
- To report: If the posts are public, it is usually possible to report them to the site or app.
- To say it: It is important for victims of cyberbullying to talk about it with a trusted adult.

Resources

 **Important!** If you are concerned about your adolescent's health, ask a professional for help, or call the helplines mentioned below.

Do not hesitate to communicate with the school staff: the counselor, the teacher or the principal. Your family doctor can also help, as can the following resources:

- **Kids Help Phone:** to confide in somebody, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Anonymous and bilingual. Toll-free number: 1-800-668-6868. kidshelpphone.ca
- **Phobies-Zéro (French only):** support and self-help group for people with anxiety, panic disorders, phobias and agoraphobia. 514-276-3105 or toll-free 1-866-922-0002.



RESOURCES IN FRENCH

- [Être parent d'ado à l'ère numérique](#)
- [Utilisation des écrans à l'adolescence](#)
- [Cyber-dépendance ou usage excessif ?](#)
- [Parents CyberAvertis](#)



RESOURCES IN ENGLISH

- [Parenting teens in the digital world](#)
- [Recognizing unhealthy online relationships](#)
- [What parents can do about cyberbullying](#)

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