



It's Up to Us to Create a Healthy and Supportive San Diego

Shine a Light On: Social Media, Mental Health, and You

Social media plays a significant role in our daily routines, especially among young people who use it for activities like connecting with friends or staying updated on current events. In fact, most adolescents find that social media helps them feel more accepted and supported. The key to navigating this social media landscape is understanding its positive and negative effects on our mental well-being. With mindful usage and awareness, creating a positive online experience is possible.

Scroll to Feel Better: Tips for a Healthier Mind on Social Media

Find Your Community

- **Follow accounts that align with your values and interests:** A sense of belonging can boost your mental and physical health.
- **Don't limit your experience:** Social media is for everyone regardless of age, gender, sexuality, race, or ethnic background.

Express Yourself

- **Share your passion:** It's not just about following trendsetters and celebrities. Social media can also be an experience where you can make your mark through sharing your art, music, and creative passions.

Share Your Mental Health Story

- **Open up about your journey:** Many find it easier to give and receive mental health support over social media. It also helps to reduce mental health stigma and may encourage others to seek help.
- **Follow influencers or accounts that promote mental health awareness:** You can learn and be inspired to do positive things that may help improve your well-being.

Stay Connected

- **Keep in touch:** If friends and family live far away, maintaining your connection with them on social media can help your mental health.

Tips to Protect Your Mental Health on Social Media

While social media can be a fun place to connect and share, it can also affect our mental health. Whether comparing yourself to others, feeling alone, or dealing with online bullying, social media can sometimes make us feel like we aren't enough. Here are some tips for you and people you know to help protect your mental health on social media.



Limit Your Screen Time



Too much time on social media can lead to negative feelings and disrupt important daily activities like sleep, work, or school.



Seek Professional Help



If you or someone you know consistently feels down or anxious or finds it difficult to do regular activities, seek professional help. You can contact the Access and Crisis Line at 888-724-7240.



Protect the Kids



Most social media platforms require users to be at least 13 years old. Parents and guardians should always use their best judgment and monitor their child's access to social media.



Think Before Posting



Always pause to consider whether what you're about to post is something you'd say in person. This can prevent conflicts and promote a more respectful online environment.

 **Create Tech-Free Zones**



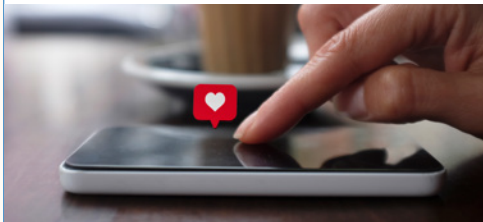
Establish areas or times when screens are off-limits, like during family dinners. This creates a balance between the digital and the real world.

 **Report Harmful Content**



If you see hurtful or worrying posts, report them. Take action to make the online space safer for everyone.

 **Pick Content That Lifts YOU**



Be conscious of what you watch and pay attention to. Don't hesitate to unfollow if something or someone online makes you feel bad.

Sources

- The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory: Social Media and Youth Mental Health (PDF) bit.ly/476G3xM
- National Alliance on Mental Illness: Social Media and Mental Health bit.ly/49q9BrV
- Pew Research Center: Social Media Use in 2021 bit.ly/49qyzaB
- National Alliance on Mental Illness: How Social Media Is Changing the Way We Think About Mental Illness bit.ly/3QOuGF8

