

Social Media and Teens: *Handling this Wasp Nest*

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MINNESOTA ACADEMY OF
FAMILY PHYSICIANS
STRONG MEDICINE FOR MINNESOTA



- 
- A laboratory setting with a microscope and a person in a lab coat and gloves. The person is wearing blue gloves and a purple lab coat, and is using a pipette to transfer liquid into a test tube. The background is dark and out of focus, showing various laboratory equipment and a person's face in profile.
- ▶ Some medications discussed are not approved by the FDA for use in the population discussed/described.
 - ▶ Some medications discussed are not approved by the FDA for use in the manner discussed/described.
 - ▶ Western medical education
 - ▶ No financial or other conflicts of interest to report
 - ▶ Practice at PrairieCare
 - ▶ PAL

DISCLOSURE

Social Media

['sō-shəl 'mē-dē-ə]

A computer-based technology that facilitates the sharing of ideas, thoughts, and information through virtual networks and communities.



“The most common question parents ask me is, ‘is social media safe for my kids’. The answer is that we don't have enough evidence to say it's safe, and in fact, there is growing evidence that social media use is associated with harm to young people's mental health...”

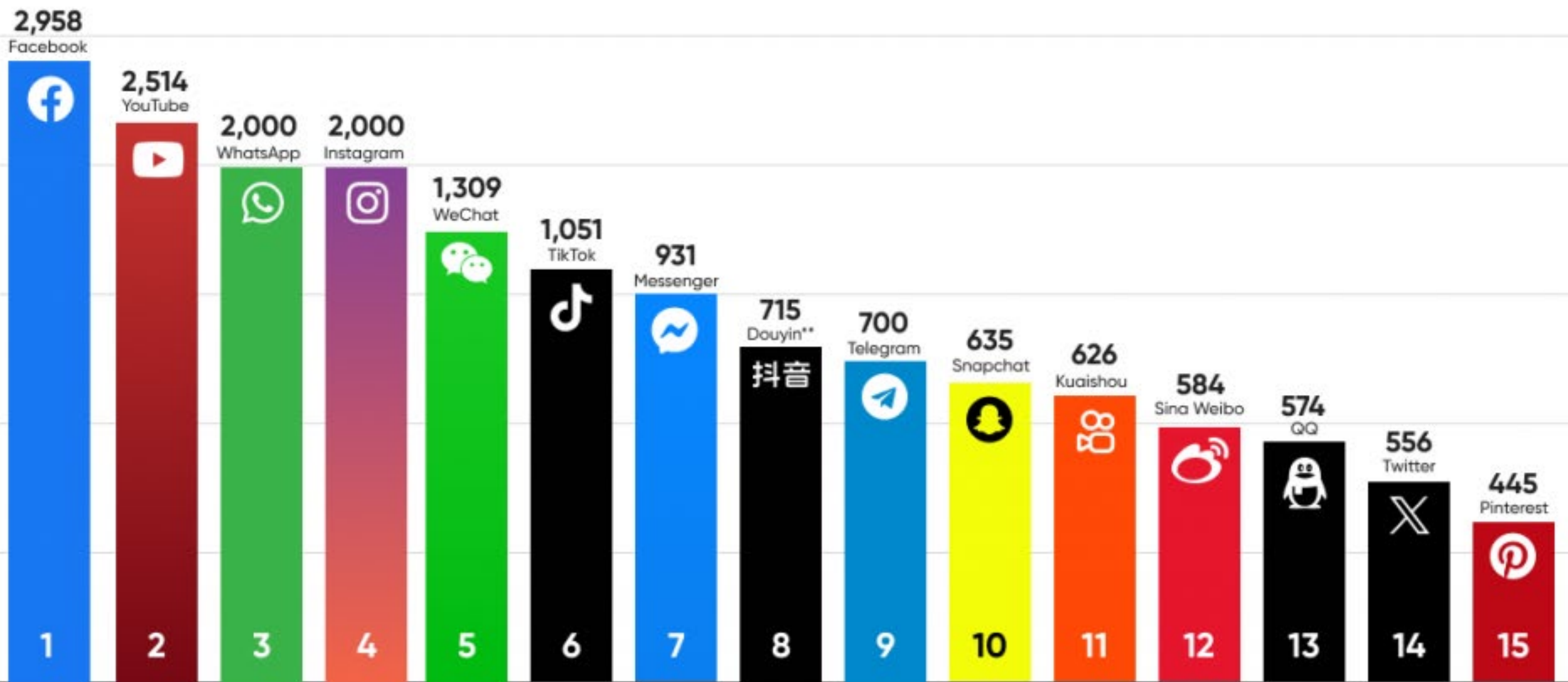
**U.S. SURGEON
GENERAL DR. VIVEK
MURTHY**



Objectives

- Define why digital health should be part of every clinic visit
- Indications for care based on the 2023 Surgeon General's recommendations
- Help teens build upon their own awareness to care better for themselves
- Introduce resources for immediate implementation in practice

Social Media Platform Users in Millions





- Shine: Creativity, video editing, personal expression, “find your people.”
- Concerns: Eliminates delayed gratification, maintenance of attention
- Risk: Privacy concerns, potential for mistakes to last a lifetime
- Insidious: Loss of time, opportunities, doom-scrolling, self-esteem issues



- Shine: Privacy settings are easy to control. Maintains relationships. Creativity. Healthy communities. Deepen interests.
- Risks: Idealization, both in what is shared and editing techniques. FOMO. Bullying. Cruelty. Potential to go viral. “Like” based worth
- Shifts: “REELS” is just tik toks. Same concerns.
- Insidious: Normalization of unhealthy behaviors. Self esteem concerns. Doom scrolling. Risk of grooming.



- **Shine:** Allows exploration of shared interests, no matter how unique. Deep dives. ASD related deep interests can be celebrated.
- **Risk:** All user generated. High rate of inappropriate language and graphic images
- **Insidious:** Allows sharing directly of information. Potential to catfish.

- Shine: Education, humor, developmental content, dynamic research
- Risk: Often age inappropriate, limited corporate monitoring
- Shifts: “Shorts” is similar to tik tok and undermines attentions
- Insidious: Potential for groupthink, rabbit holes, radicalization



- Shine: Goal to present authentic self in real time. Risk: Potential dependence on one's phone. Stress to be unique. Shame can develop.
- Shifts: Now offering "brands" similar to influencers, advertising
- Risks: Mistakes made can be permanent
- Insidious: Potential to leak your location.

The logo for BeReal, featuring the text "BeReal." in a bold, white, sans-serif font centered within a black rounded square. The background of the slide has a soft, glowing green and blue gradient behind the logo.

BeReal.



- **Benefit:** Quick, easy wifi based connections
- **Risk:** Addiction, streaks, FOMO, not as private as kids may think
- **Insidious:** Built to share and disappear but can be captured.
- **Danger:** Potential for sharing intimate photos, child pornography concerns



- Shine: Connections, outreach, groups, information, social connection
- Risks: Maintenance of unnecessary connections; phishing; FOMO; online life etc.
- Shifts: “Stories” similar to tik tok
- Insidious: Cat-fishing, grooming, exposure
- But..... No teenagers here! Keep an eye on grandma!



Why is
there
concern?

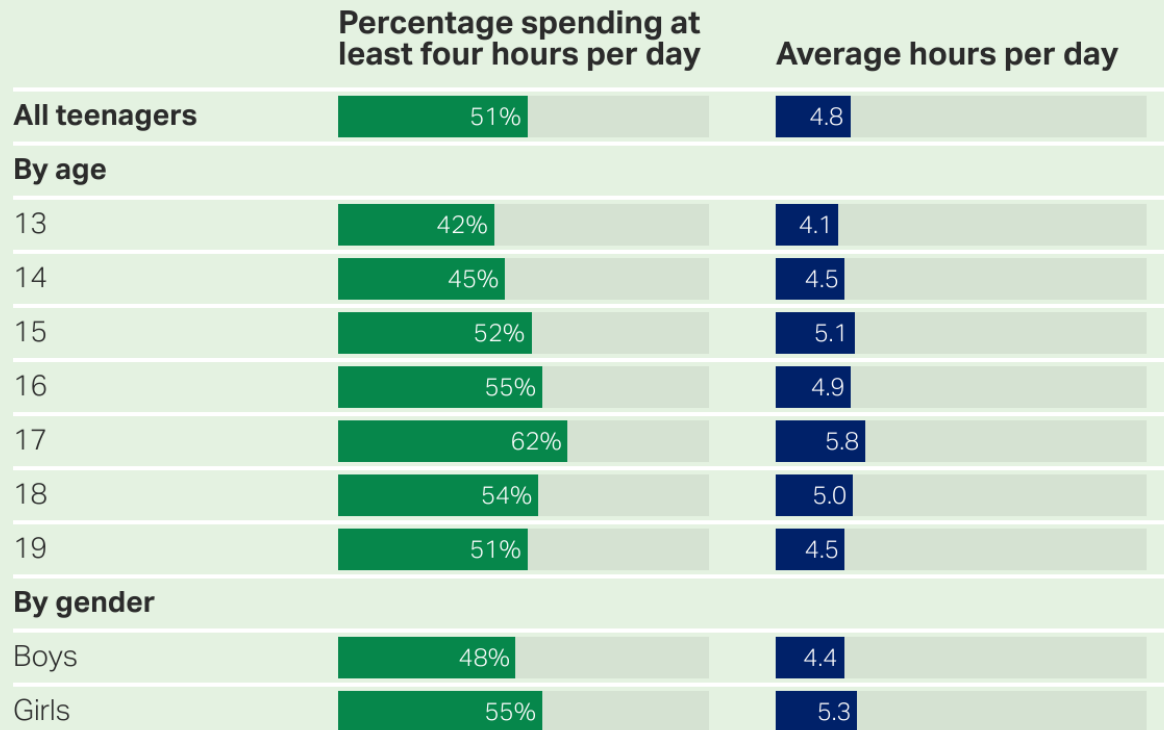


TEENS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- 2023 GALLUP POLL- 51% OF TEENAGERS SPEND AT LEAST 4 HOURS PER DAY
- PER PEW RESEARCH 4 IN 10 TEENS SAY THEY SPEND TOO MUCH TIME ON THEIR PHONES
- 16% NOTE THEY USE SOCIAL MEDIA “CONSTANTLY”

2023 Patterns

U.S. Average Adolescent Screen Time, by Subgroup



June 26-July 17, 2023

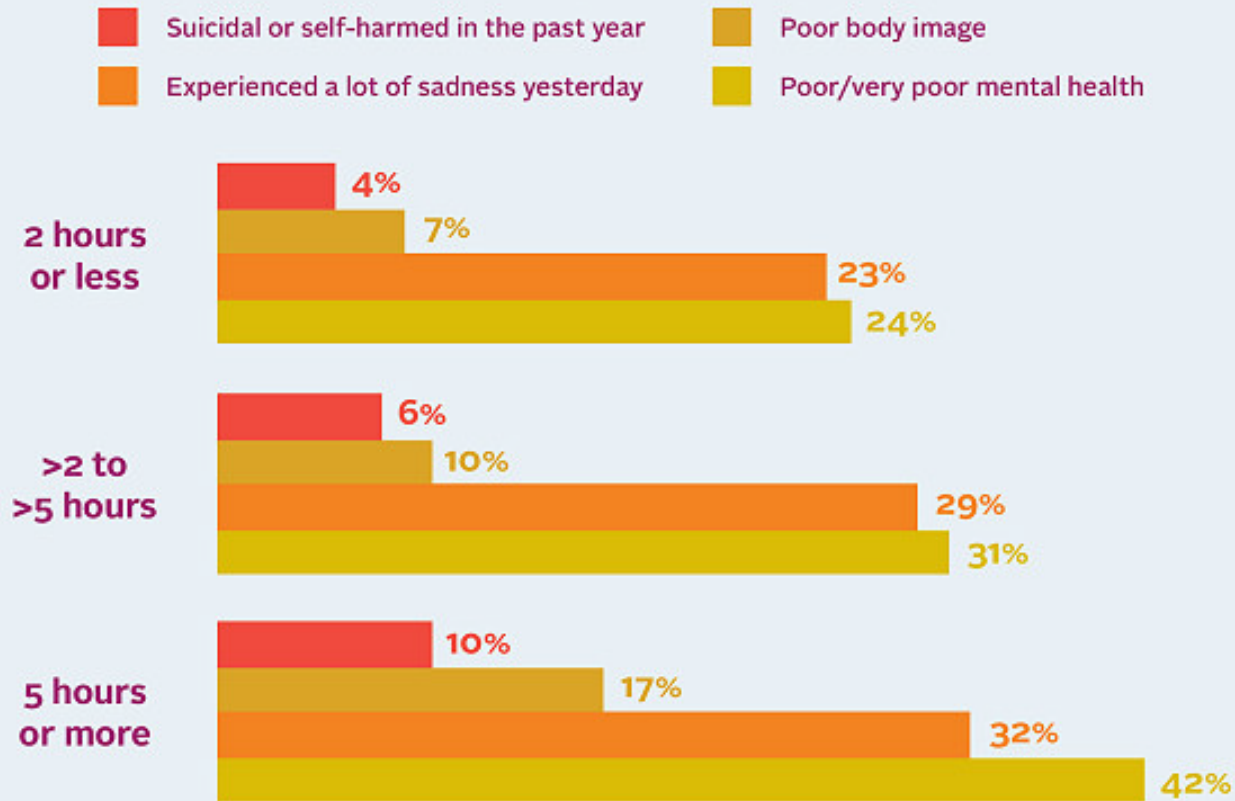
Based on responses from 1,567 U.S. adolescents

GALLUP FAMILIAL AND ADOLESCENT HEALTH SURVEY

GALLUP

- USE INCREASES DURING ADOLESCENCE
- FEMALE USE SLIGHTLY GREATER THAN MALE
- 1.9 HOURS PER DAY ON YOUTUBE
- 1.5 HOURS ON TIKTOK
- 0.9 HOURS ON INSTAGRAM

Adolescent mental health problems by screen time use.



Source: Gallup Familial Adolescent Health Survey, fielded in June-July of 2023. Results are weighted to be nationally representative.

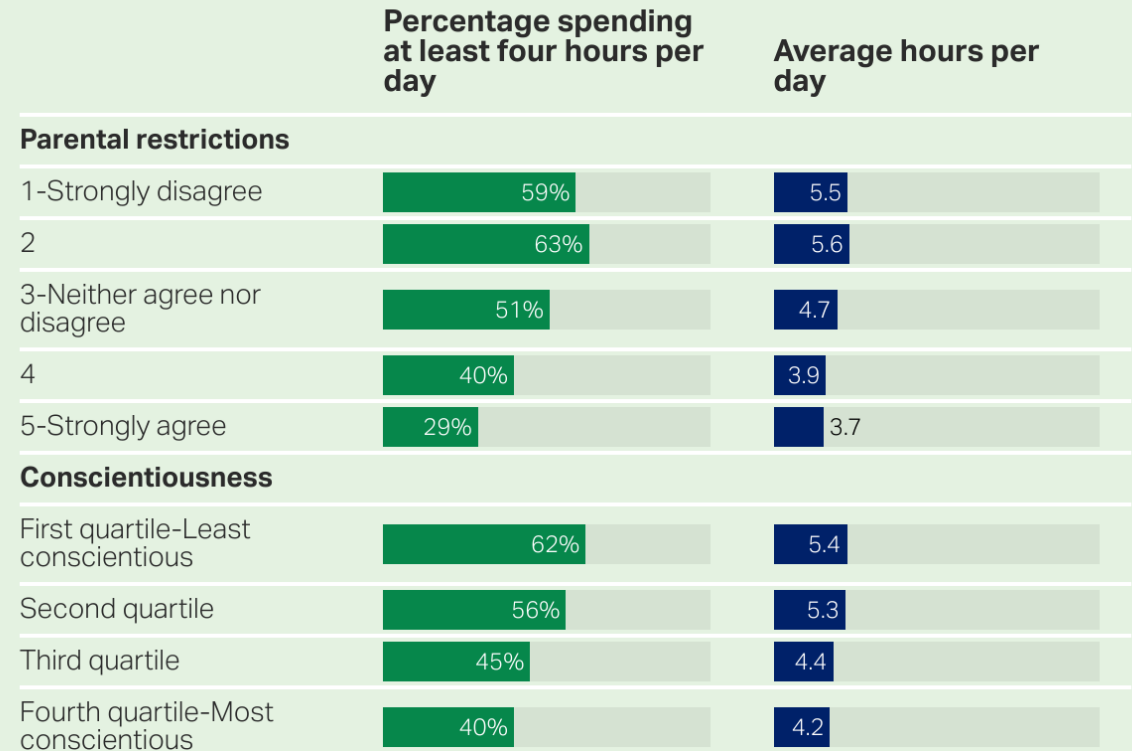
Screen time and mental health

- 5 HOURS A DAY OR MORE WERE 60% MORE LIKELY TO EXPRESS SI OR SELF HARM
- 2.8 X MORE LIKELY TO HAVE A NEGATIVE BODY VIEW
- 30% MORE LIKELY TO DESCRIBE “A LOT OF SADNESS”

Indication for parental monitoring

- CONSCIENTIOUSNESS IS AN INDICATOR OF EXCESSIVE USE
- 1.2 HOURS GREATER FOR THOSE THAT RANK LOW
- 1.8 HOURS LESS FOR PARENTS THAT STRONGLY AGREE TO RESTRICT SCREEN TIME

Parental Restrictions and Personality Traits Predict U.S. Teens' Social Media Use



June 26-July 17, 2023

Based on responses from 1,567 U.S. adolescents

Restrictions are based on parental agreement with the following: "I restrict screen time (such as TV, tablet or phone) to certain times of the day."
Conscientiousness is measured using four items.

14 YO MALE MOVED FROM MANKATO TO OSSEO. NEW FRESHMAN. STRUGGLING WITH CONNECTING WITH NEW PEER CONNECTIONS. EXCESS TIME MAINTAINING SNAP STREAKS AND CONNECTIONS. NOTES DEPRESSION, SADNESS AND DECLINE IN SCHOOL.



Case 1: FOMO

The Physicians Role

- HEADS-ED is a common screening tool for age 11 and up
- From 1980 it has been modified over the years
- Monitors for social causes of morbidity and mortality

HEADS-ED	0 No action needed	1 Needs action but not immediate	2 Needs immediate action
H ome <i>Example: How does your family get along with each other?</i>	○ Supportive	○ Conflicts	○ Chaotic / dysfunctional
E ducation <i>Example: How is your school attendance? How are your grades?</i>	○ On track	○ Grades dropping / absenteeism	○ Failing / not attending school
A ctivities <i>Example: What are your relationships like with your friends?</i>	○ No change	○ Reduced / peer conflicts	○ Fully withdrawn / significant peer conflicts
D rugs & alcohol <i>Example: How often are you using drugs or alcohol?</i>	○ None or infrequent	○ Occasional	○ Frequent / daily
S uicidality <i>Example: Do you have any thoughts of wanting to kill yourself?</i>	○ No thoughts	○ Ideation	○ Plan or gesture
E motions, behaviours, thought disturbance <i>Example: How have you been feeling lately?</i>	○ Mildly anxious / sad / acting out	○ Moderately anxious / sad / acting out	○ Significantly distressed / unable to function / out of control / bizarre thoughts
D ischarge resources <i>Example: Do you have any help or are you waiting to receive help (counselling etc)?</i>	○ Ongoing / well connected	○ Some / not meeting needs	○ None / on waitlist / non-compliant

CONSIDER THE ADDITION OF ANOTHER S...SOCIAL MEDIA

- 2018
- ALAIN JAFFE MD
- MONITORS SOCIAL MEDIA GIVEN THE MULTITUDE OF POTENTIAL NEGATIVE HEALTH EFFECTS
- 5 QUESTIONS WERE SUGGESTED

1. Which social media sites/apps do you use on a regular basis?

2. On a typical day, how much time do you spend on social media sites/apps?

3. Do you think you use social media too much?

4. Does viewing social media increase or decrease your self-confidence?

5. Have you experienced cyberbullying, sexting, or someone online asking you to have sex with them?

While HEADS-ED is common to the medical model, its effort to honor the social precipitants to decline in adolescents can be translated elsewhere easily.

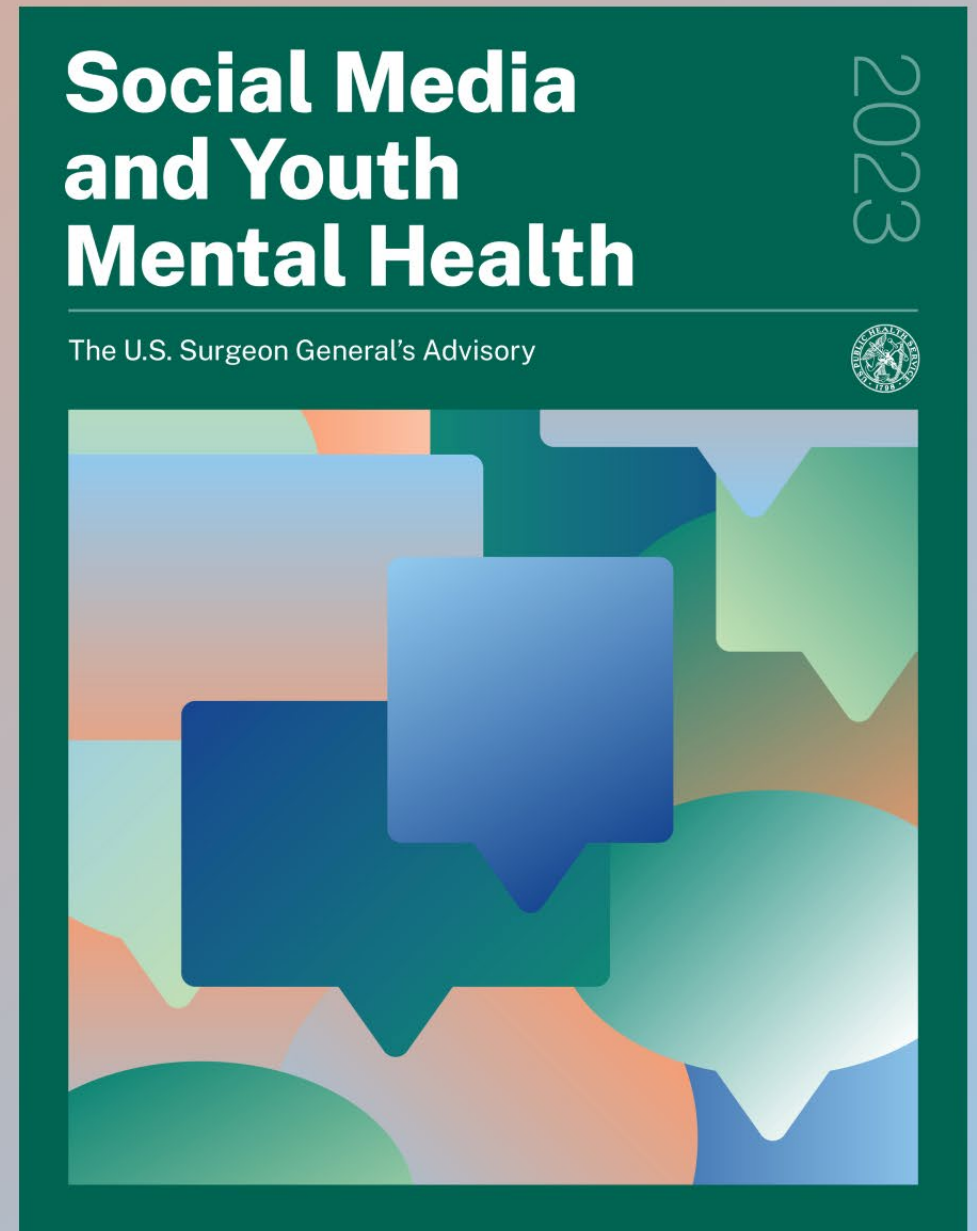
Whether a coach, youth minister or counselor, HEADS-ED can be considered a method to support the holistic nature of youth health.

Social media use by youth is nearly universal, and while some uses are beneficial, there is a meaningful risk of harm to children.

Read the advisory and learn more at:
surgeongeneral.gov/y mh-social-media

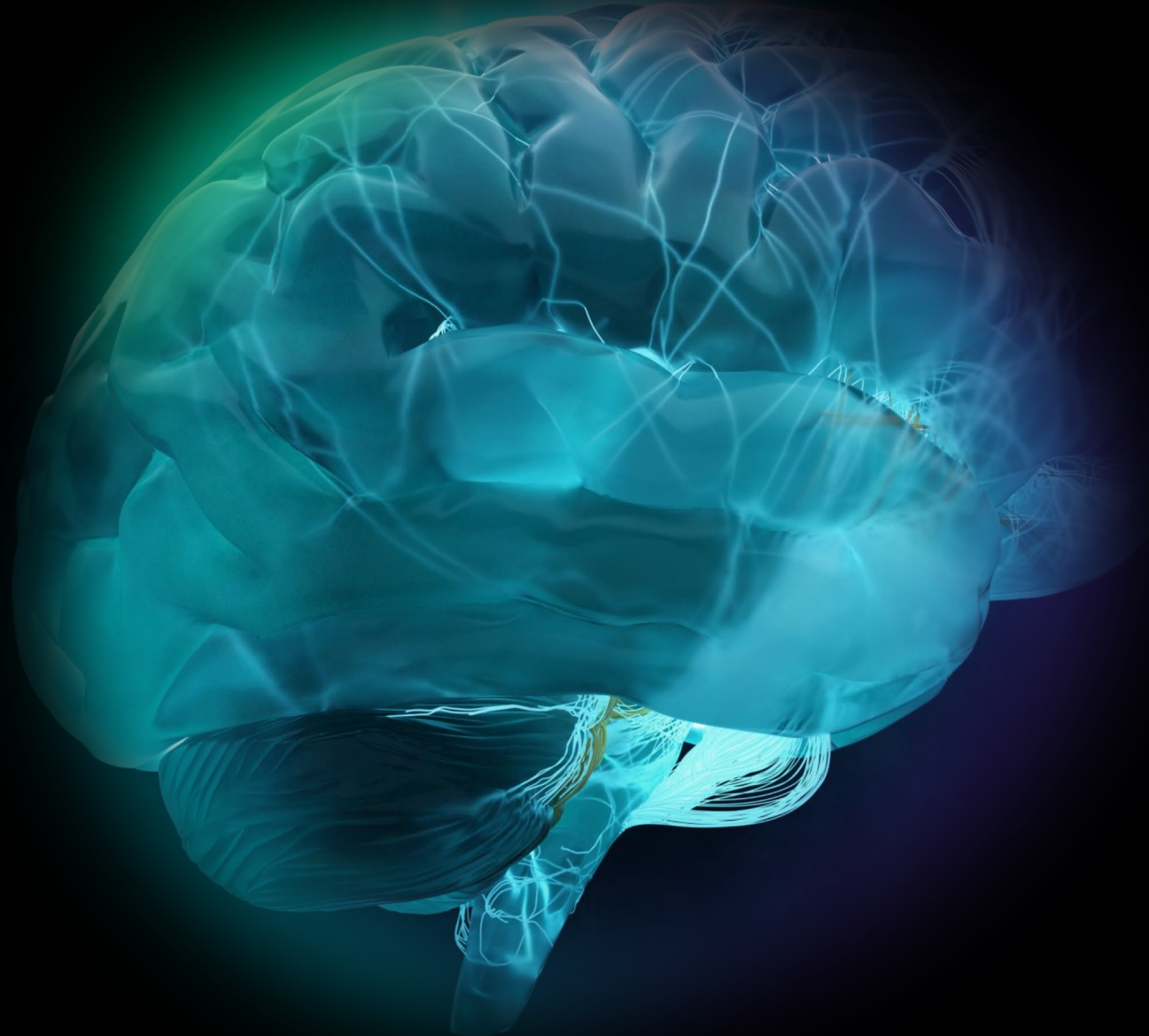


Office of the
U.S. Surgeon General



Factors that led to investigation

- Adolescent brain development
 - Elevated risk-taking behaviors
 - Period of rapid mood shifts
- Time period where mental health concerns arise
- Identity formation
- Sensitivity to peers/social pressures



Evidence Indicative for the Advisory



Cohort of nearly 6600 teens ages 12-15 found greater than 3 hours on social media doubled risk of poor mental health outcomes



2021 average time for 8th and 10th graders is 3.5 hours per day



9% increase in depression in college aged population



12% in anxiety



Perhaps more than 300,000 new cases of depression related to social media use



Evidence Indicative for the Advisory

- Correlation of increased social media use with-
 - Cyber-bullying
 - Depression
 - Body image issues
 - Sleep related concerns
 - Self harm
 - Lower self esteem
 - Feeling pressured to act different than self
 - Exposure to explicit material

Evidence Indicative for the Advisory



- Compulsive, excessive use can undermine healthy behaviors
 - Displaying popularity
 - Doom scrolling
 - Self control challenges
 - Stimulate reward center of the brain
 - Potential for addiction
- 1/3 of 11-15 yo young woman describe being “addicted”
- Greater than 50% of teenagers note it “would be hard to give up”
- Effect on sleep and concentration
- Concern for emergence of ADHD symptomatology

Limits on social media use prove beneficial



- Randomized control trial in found limiting use to less than 30 minutes daily led to significant improvements in depression severity
- Deactivation from social media led to improved subjective well being in four weeks



“To better safeguard the mental health and well-being of children and adolescents, policymakers, technology companies, researchers, families, and young people must all engage in a proactive and multifaceted approach. “

– US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy

Indications for Teens



- “Reach out for help”
- “Create boundaries to help balance online and offline activities”
- “Develop protective strategies and healthy practices”

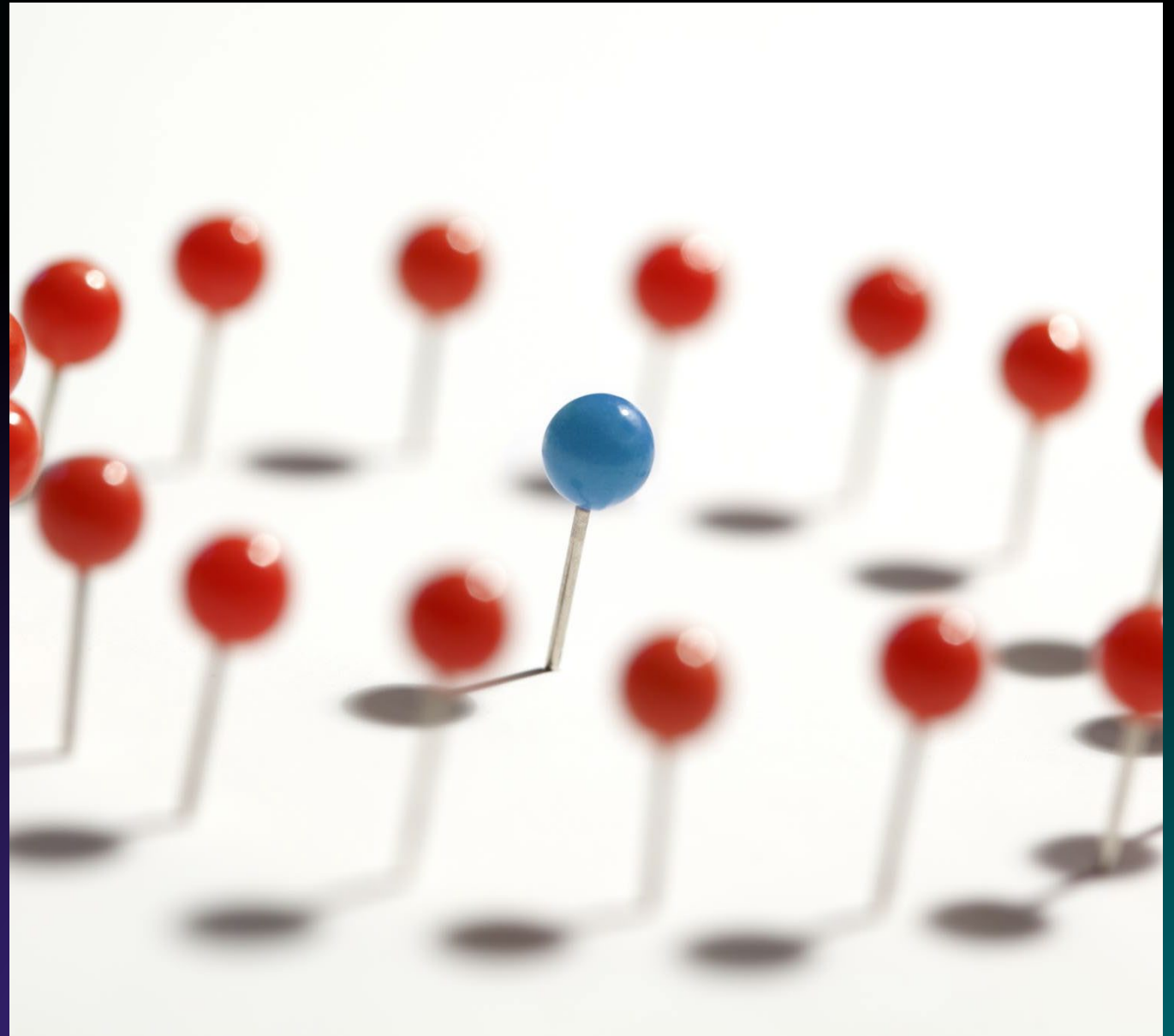
Indications for Teens

- “Be cautious about what you share”
- “Protect yourself and others”
 - Don’t keep online harassment or abuse a secret
 - Don’t take part in online harassment or abuse



Cyber- Bullying

- GENERATIONALLY UNIQUE PROBLEM
- LOSS OF ANY SAFE SPACE
- LOSS OF ABILITY TO MAKE MISTAKES
- LOSS OF DEVELOPMENTAL TIME TO MAKE MISTAKES



Cyber-Bullying

- Signs and symptoms
 - Loss of interest in electronic activities
 - Hiding electronics
 - Mood shifts after use
 - Fear when receiving online alerts
 - Sleep issues
 - School refusal
 - Social withdrawal
- How to Respond:
 - “It took courage to tell me”
 - “This is not your fault”
 - “How do you want to handle it?”
- Encourage children to speak up
- Support them when they do

Predatory concerns are profound

- Per Beau Biden Foundation for the protection of children:
 - 500,000 sexual predators are online daily
 - 1 in 5 children have been contacted/solicited in the past year
 - Contact through public chat/social media/online game
 - 46% of children given away personal data
 - Predators may catfish by seeming similar in age
 - Once initiated concern is “sextortion”
- Not if...when this will happen to children



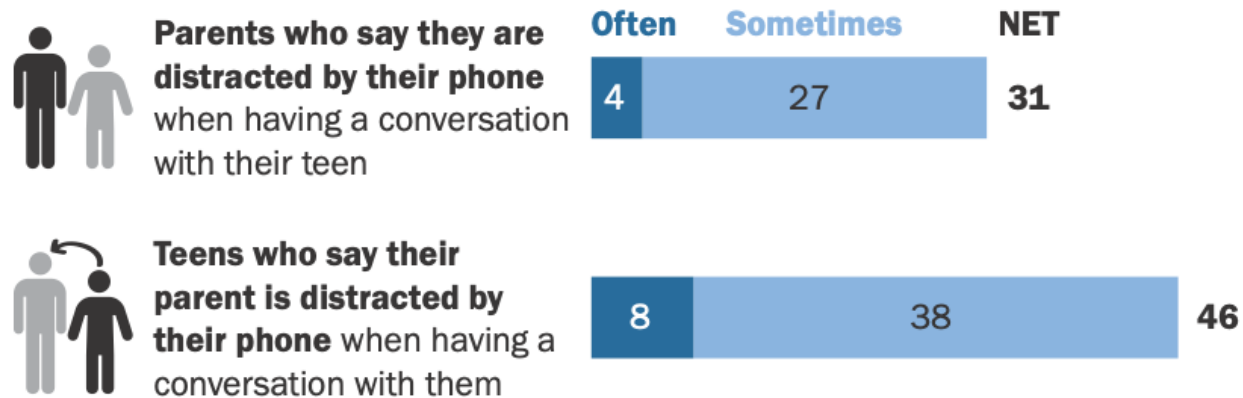
Indications for Parents/Guardians

- “Create a family media plan”
- “Create tech free zones and encourage children to foster in person relationships”
- “Model responsible social media behavior”
- “Teach kids about technology and empower them to be responsible online participants at the appropriate age’
- “Report cyberbullying and online abuse/exploitation”
- “Work with other parents to help establish shared norms and practices...around healthy social media use.”

Parents...not so innocent

Nearly half of teens say their parent at least sometimes gets distracted by their phone in conversations; fewer parents see it this way

% of U.S. parents and teens ages 13 to 17 who say the following



Note: Those who did not give an answer or gave other responses are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted Sept. 26-Oct. 23, 2023.

"How Teens and Parents Approach Screen Time"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

IMPORTANT TO MODEL POSITIVE SKILLS

- IN 2 PARENT HOMES FIND TIME TO DISCUSS
- PHONE FREE MOMENTS CAN BE SCHEDULED
- HONOR WHEN YOUR CHILD "CHECKS IN ABOUT YOUR USE."



Google
Search:
AAP Family
Media Plan

Family media plan: A real-world living document

- Add as many family members as needed
- Offers considerations at age-appropriate levels
- A jump off point for necessary family discussions
- Holds parents and children accountable
- Offers real world tips



Create or Update Your Family Media Plan

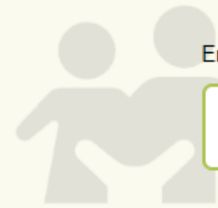
To get started, create a profile for each member of your family. Include their names and ages. You can even add fun avatars for each family member. Add as many family members as you need.

To find this information in Spanish, [click here](#).



Back
←

Continue
2 of 6
→





Enter your family name *

stein

My Family

+ Add Another Family Member

	Family Member's Name *	Age						✕
	stein	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 0-24 months <input checked="" type="radio"/> 2-5 years <input type="radio"/> 6-12 years <input type="radio"/> 13-18 years <input type="radio"/> Adult						

	Family Member's Name *	Age						✕
	stein	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 0-24 months <input checked="" type="radio"/> 2-5 years <input type="radio"/> 6-12 years <input type="radio"/> 13-18 years <input type="radio"/> Adult						

+ Add Another Family Member

Media Balance

Whether at home, school or work, we are surrounded by media and digital devices. At the same time, we know that face-to-face time with family, friends and teachers is important to a child's learning and healthy development.

Kindness & Empathy

Having family expectations about being kind and understanding of others — both online and off — is key to healthy, respectful relationships and positive media use.

Screen Free Zones

Having areas of your home remain screen-free benefits a child's health and development in many ways. A big part of this is understanding and agreeing as a family where screens are not allowed.

Choosing Good Content

There are millions of shows, apps and video games trying to get your family's attention. Finding content that is a good fit with your family can take work. However, it's worth it to find media that gives your child creative experiences, positive role models and true enjoyment.

Communicating About Media

Media shouldn't be a taboo topic. It's all around us, so we have to talk about it. The more you discuss it as part of your daily routine — in the car, dinner table or at a regular family meeting — the more natural it will become.

Digital Privacy & Safety

The internet is still a bit like the Wild West. Certainly, it is not always designed with kids in mind. Talking about digital safety rules can help your child navigate the digital landscape. You can also use a combination of tools: privacy settings, reporting and flagging inappropriate content and ongoing conversations about online behavior.

Screen Free Times

Screens don't have to be in every moment and every space of our day, trying to grab everyone's attention. Carving out time for family conversations and play is really important for your child's health and development.

Using Media Together

Not all screen time is created equal. Enjoying movie night, watching an educational video or exploring a learning app together, for example, turns screen time into family time. Using digital media together can build bonds, promote learning and show your child that you care about what matters to them.

Online morality matching

- Focus on making sure online behavior matches the expected morality
- Per the AAP the average age of pornography exposure is 13.37, but as young as five
- Difficult discussions are needed younger (8-9)





Checking in...

- What have you seen that makes you...
 - Uncomfortable
 - Uncertain
 - Unwell
 - Unsafe
- Have you ever felt...
 - At risk
 - Identified
 - Scared
 - Embarrassed
- Search history/Checking phone is appropriate

Indication for Policymakers

- “Strengthen protections to ensure greater safety for children interacting with all social media platforms”
 - Develop age-appropriate health and safety standards for technology platforms”
 - Require a higher standard of data privacy for children
 - Pursue policies that further limit access- in ways that minimize the risk of harm- to social media for all children





Indications for Policymakers- cont

- “Ensure that tech companies share data relevant to the health impact of their platforms”
- “Support the development of ...digital /media curricula in schools and within academic standards”
- “Support increased functioning for future research”
- “Engage with international partners”

Indications for Technology Companies

- “Conduct and facilitate...assessments of the impact of social media products and services on adolescents”
 - Be transparent and share assessment findings/underlying data
 - Assess the potential risks of online interactions and take active steps to prevent potential misuse
 - Establish scientific advisory committees to inform approach/policy
- “Prioritize user health and safety in the design and development of social media products/services”
 - Ensure default settings for children are set to the highest safety standards
 - Adhere to and enforce age minimums

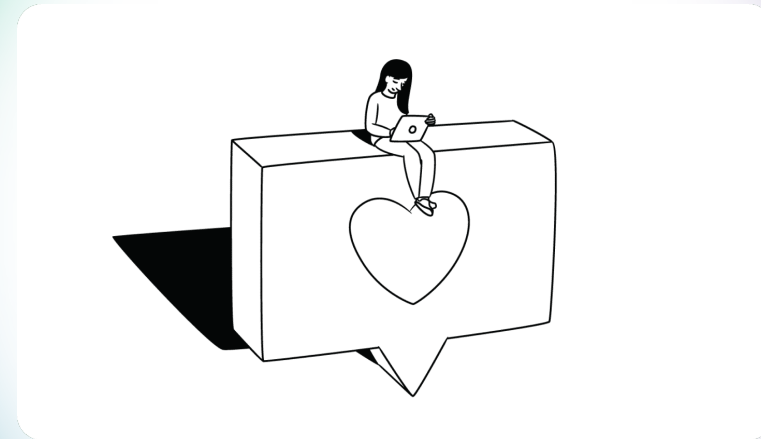
Indications for Technology Companies- cont

- “Design, develop and evaluate platforms, products and tools that foster safe and healthy online environments for youth”
- Share data relevant to the health impact of platforms and strategies employed to ensure safety and well being”
- “Create effective and timely systems and processes to adjudicate requests and complaints young people, family, educators and others”



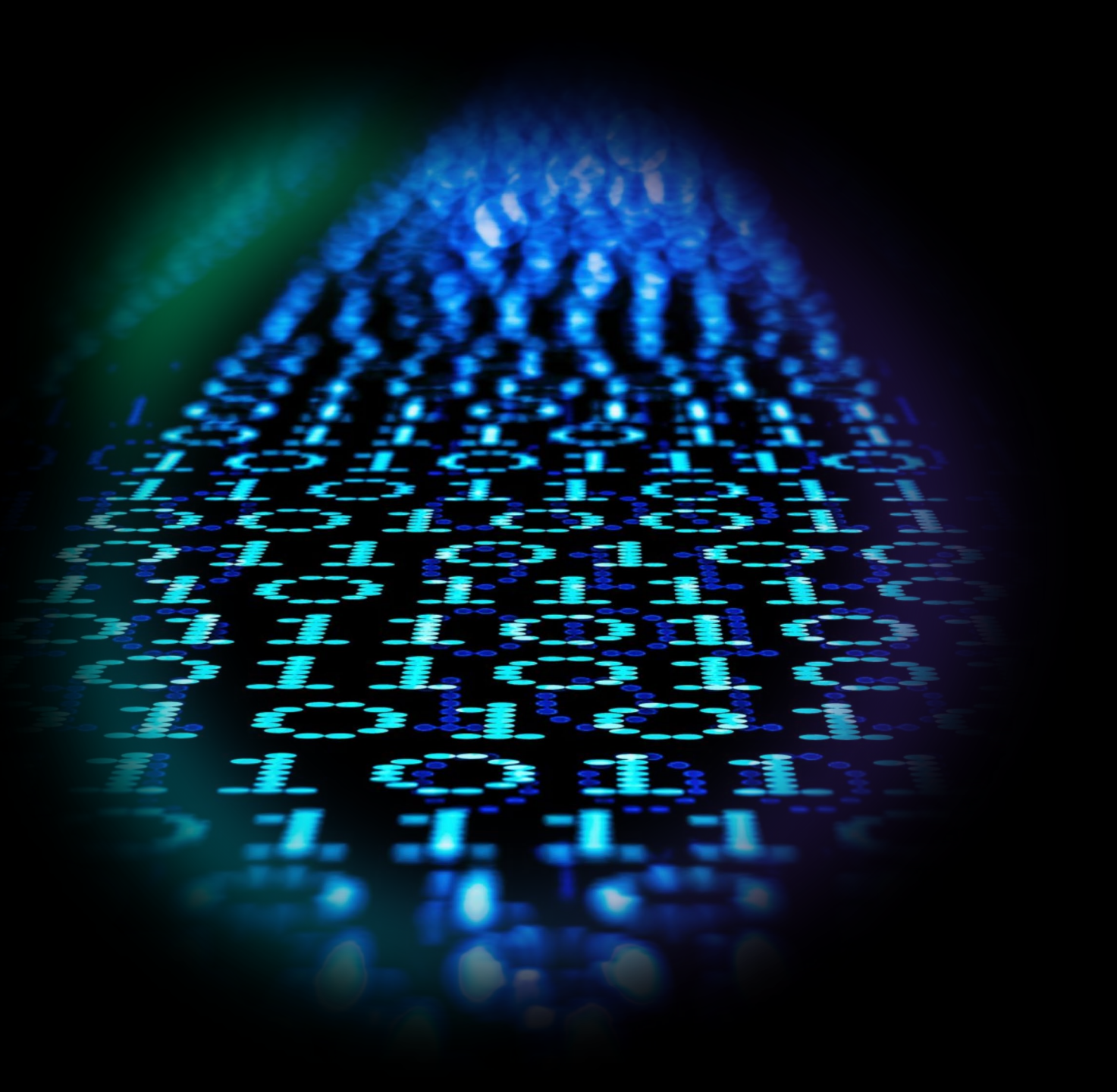
Protective Tech: Aura

- Provides identity protection
- Outlines healthy principles
- Extensive engaged supports
- Non-medical language
 - “Grandma Rule”
 - Reaction control
- Provides age guides
- Reviews social media sites for safety considerations



Aura continued:

- <https://www.aura.com/learn/social-media-safety-for-kids>
- <https://www.aura.com/learn/internet-safety-tips-for-kids-and-teens>
- <https://www.aura.com/learn/how-to-set-time-limits-on-apps>
- <https://www.aura.com/learn/signs-of-cyberbullying>
- <https://www.aura.com/learn/how-to-control-internet-access-at-home>
- <https://www.aura.com/learn/how-to-see-what-my-kid-is-doing-online>
- <https://www.aura.com/learn/social-media-privacy-settings>
- <https://www.aura.com/learn/what-age-should-a-kid-get-a-phone>



Resources



BEAU BIDEN FOUNDATION
FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN



HEADS-ED

Mental Health & Addiction Screening Tool
for Children and Young People



Conclusion

- Social media is a uniquely connective, enjoyable and likely dangerous normative aspect of adolescent development.
- While it can lead to connection, it can also lead to mental health concerns, bullying and predation.
- A holistic societal approach is needed, ranging from policymakers, tech giants to inside the family home.
- As we learn more, increasingly unique resources are available.
- We cannot turn a blind eye on this emerging concern.

questions

References

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