# How does social media impact youth mental health

How can using social media affect my mental health?

Using social media without moderation can greatly impact one's mental health by elevating issues such as anxiety, stress, or even depression through circumstances such as cyberbullying, comparison to others, and wanting to maintain a perfect image of yourself. Furthermore, social media can distract you from your education as well as stunt your social relationships. These issues can be seen because of excessive social media use which causes a rift in the bonds you form. You may also develop insecurities and dissatisfaction when comparing yourself to others online.
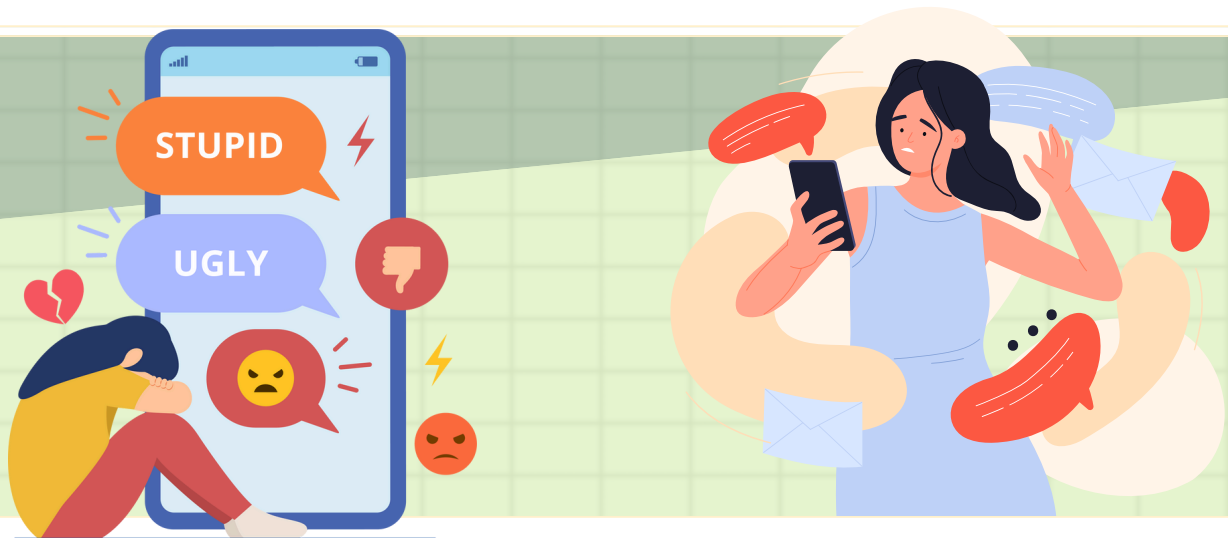
What should I do when dealing with online harassment or cyberbullying?

Unfortunately, when showcasing aspects of your life on social media, you may unknowingly leave a way for others to harass or bully you online. Typically, these individuals do not have your best interest in mind and may leave harsh critiques or judgment against you. It may be best to block these individuals rather than to give into their negative mindsets and argue with them. If the bullying persists, you may want to report these incidents online and start documenting instances of harassment in case further action needs to be taken for your protection both physically as well as mentally.

What are the long-term effects of negative social media use on my well-being?

Long-term social media use can lead to insecurity as you constantly compare yourself to others, potentially resulting in self-doubt, anxiety, and depression. Your self-image may feel pressured to compete with unrealistic standards online. It might also be challenging to distinguish between your online persona and real-life personality, complicating your understanding of your identity. Other long-term effects include shorter attention spans, which can affect communication, and anxiety in face-to-face interactions. Negative social media use can further lead to poor sleep quality, reduced productivity, strained relationships, and heightened comparison and envy.

How can I detach myself from using social media?

Strategies you can utilize to detach from social media include engaging in hobbies such as reading or drawing, interacting and making plans with loved ones, or engaging in exercise. By keeping yourself busy you may feel less inclined to use social media and engage in harmful behaviors associated with excessive use such as comparison to others.

Are there online resources to support me in making lifestyle changes?

There are online resources to help you regulate your social media use and preserve your mental health. You can utilize mental health helplines and can get into contact with mental health centers and facilities to schedule appointments with professionals to support your mental well-being. Let's Talk is one such service that provides online counselling services. You can schedule an appointment at https://letstalk.pairacademy.org/register.php.