Social Media and Social Comparison

- People possess a fundamental drive to compare themselves with others.
- People are comparing their realistic offline selves to the idealized online selves of others, which can be detrimental to well-being and self-evaluation.
- This serves many different functions such as fulfilling friendship needs, evaluating the self, making decisions, being inspired and regulating emotions and well-being.
- Social media provides the perfect platform by allowing users to select content on their profiles, post pictures, and represent themselves in ideal ways.
- Social media may promote use of binocular trick (tendency to maximize others positive traits and minimize our own)

Upward Social Comparison

- Upward social comparison occurs when comparing oneself to superior others who have positive characteristics.

- Although upward social comparison can be beneficial when it inspires people to become more like the person they look up to, it often causes people to feel inadequate, have poorer self-evaluations and negative affect.

Upward Social Comparison

- Social Media offers distinct information not available in offline settings such as:
  - Information about the person's social network (number of people in the network)
  - How often they interact with others online
- A person with an active social network (receiving many comments and likes) is usually perceived as a more likeable in terms of popularity, sociability and perceived social capital.
- Some people purchase likes and followers to appear more popular.

https://newyorkbehavioralhealth.com/social-media-use-and-self-esteem

Social Media and Positive Impacts on Self-Esteem

- Self-esteem refers to a person's positive or negative evaluation of the self; i.e. the extent to which an individual views the self as worthwhile and competent

- Self-esteem can be enhanced through membership in social media groups, providing connections to people with shared values and interests.

https://newyorkbehavioralhealth.com/social-media-use-and-self-esteem

Social Media and Negative Impacts on Self-Esteem

- Chronic or occasional exposure to upward comparisons on social media sites can be a negative impact on people's self-evaluation and self-esteem
- Research shows that people who use Facebook frequently report higher depression rates and decreased well-being
- More time spent on Facebook was associated with greater body image concerns among pre-teenage girls, female high school students, and female university students.

Questions you Should Ask Your Child About Technology

General Tech Use

- What is your favorite app?
- What do you do on it?
- What apps or websites are your friends into these days?
- Are you ever contacted by someone online that you don't know?
  - If yes, what did they want? What did you do? How did you respond?
- Do you ever talk to anyone online that isn't in your school?

- Have you ever received a text message from someone that made you upset?
  - How did you respond?
- How do you keep yourself safe online?
- Do you get concerned that people will read what others have written about you online that is not true but think it's true?

Cyberbullying

- Do you ever argue or post hurtful updates on your Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, or another social media site?
- Have you ever had to delete a post or comment on your page that was written by someone else?
- Does cyberbullying happen a lot?
- Would you feel comfortable telling me if you were being cyberbullied?

- Have you ever had to contact a teacher or someone else at school because of a cyber-threat?
- If so, did they do something about it and did it help?

Cyberbullying

- Do you ever get verbally attacked during online games?
- Have you ever had to leave an online game because someone was bothering you online?
- Have rumors ever started about you in school, based on something said online?
  - Did you find out who started the rumor?
  - What did you do when you found out?

- Have you ever blocked somebody online because you felt harassed?
  - If so, did that make it stop?
- Do you feel like your friends would be supportive of you if you told them you were being cyberbullied?
- Do you think your school takes cyberbullying seriously?

https://cyberbullying.org/questions-parents-should-ask-their-children-about-technology

Sexting

- Have you ever had anyone do or say anything sexually inappropriate to you online?
- How did you deal with it?
- Has anyone ever asked any of your friends for an inappropriate photo or video?
- Has anyone ever asked you?
- Do you know about the consequences that can result if you send inappropriate pictures (child pornography laws)?

- Has any adult at school ever talked with you about sexting?
- What might participation in sexting say about your level of maturity, and your readiness to be in a healthy, mature romantic relationship?
- Have you heard stories of other kids from your school (even those who may have graduated) or your community who have dealt with major fallout from sexting?

Safe Social Media Use

- What social media apps do you use most frequently?
- How many friends or followers do you currently have on each?
- Are your accounts set to Public or Private?
- What kind of people have you met on social media, outside of people you know at school?

- Do you get a lot of friend or follow requests from strangers?
- If so, how are you handling that?
- Who do you follow and who follows you?
- Do you use Snapchat?
  - Do you think your sent and received snaps are really completely gone?
  - Is your snapchat map on?

Safe Social Media Use

- Do you know how to use the privacy settings on Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, YouTube, and Twitter?
    - What about on the games and gaming networks you use?
    - Do you have them set so that only those you accept as friends can see what you post?
- What kind of personal information are you posting or sharing online?

- Have you ever posted your full name? Age? School? Phone number? Current location?
- Have you ever been tagged in a photo or video in a way that made you upset?
- Do you know how to edit your privacy settings so that if somebody wants to tag you in a post or photo, you have to approve it?
- Do you know how to untag yourself in pictures?

Safe Social Media Use

- Do you feel like social media apps should be used to vent your frustrations?
- Do your friends vent on social media?
- What kind of videos are you watching on YouTube?
  - Do you have your own channel?
  - How often are you posting and what kind of reception are you getting from those who see your videos?

- Have you ever reported inappropriate videos that you have seen on YouTube? Or any other site or app?
- Does anyone else know your password or passcode for any site or social media app?
  - What about for your laptop, or cell phone?

https://cyberbullying.org/questions-parents-should-ask-their-children-about-technology
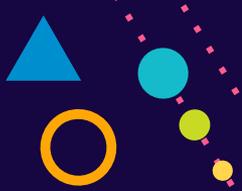
Safe Social Media Use

- How do you feel about your level of FOMO (fear of missing out) right now?
- Do you feel like you can control it based on how much you use social media?
- Do you ever feel like you're addicted to social media?
  - Has that "addiction" ever messed with your emotions or brought you down or negatively affected other areas of your life?

- What do you think you can do to maintain a healthy balance when it comes to social media use?

Steps to Take to Monitor Your Child

- Set age limits on your child's device
- Tell your child to let you know if someone is hurting them or making them feel uncomfortable online, even if the person is acting anonymously
- Make a rule that your child must ask for permission before downloading any apps - even free ones - just so you're aware of them.
- Manage your child's privacy
- Manage Comments or other controls on apps

https://www.familyeducation.com/mobile-apps/a-complete-guide-to-potentially-dangerous-apps-all-parents-should-be-aware-of

Mental Health Tips for Managing Social Media

- Turn off your notifications for at least a few hours each day.
- Set time parameters for when you check your notifications.
- Delete apps and unfollow accounts that contribute to unhealthy body image or other feelings of inadequacy.
- Use an alarm clock instead of relying on your phone.
- Pick a day or time frame to be social media free.
- Turn phone on to Dark Mode or Night Shift to help with sleeping.
- Place your phone at your entrance when you come into your home.
- Plan outings with friends when everybody is off the grid: hiking, vacations.

Apps that help you monitor your child

1. Mamabear (social media safety and location tracking)
2. Dinnertime (limiting device time for dinner, studying and bedtime)
3. Screen Time (how much time they spend on their phone)
4. YouTube Kids (Kid-friendly videos, blocking ads and links)
5. Bouncie (teen's driving safety)
6. RespondASAP (Your child ignoring your calls)
7. Qustodio (web browsing and social media safety)
8. Bark (Cyberbullying and online safety monitoring)
9. Checky (Making sure your child is aware of smartphone obsession)

https://www.familyeducation.com/10-apps-for-parents-to-monitor-kids-mobile-use

Potentially Dangerous Apps

Tik Tok

- **TikTok is an app for creating and sharing short videos.**
- **Users can create short music videos of 3 to 15 seconds and short looping videos of 3 to 60 seconds.**

- **Thirteen is the minimum age to register**
- **BUT there isn't a real way to validate age so anyone can download the app.**
- **The app contains inappropriate language in the videos so it's not appropriate**
- **By default, all accounts are set to public so strangers can contact your children.**
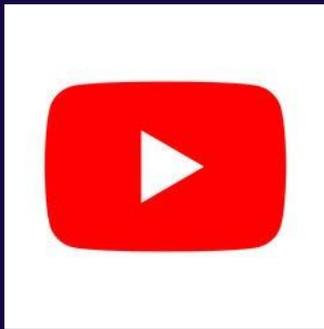
YouTube

- **YouTube is a place to house and share your videos.**
- **You can control privacy settings.**
- **Great resource for educational videos and entertainment.**

- **Inappropriate content has been sliced into both all-ages content and children's content.**
- **Comments on videos can be extremely inappropriate and hurtful.**
- **YouTube also has a known pedophile problem which is major cause for concern.**

https://www.familyeducation.com/mobile-apps/a-complete-guide-to-potentially-dangerous-apps-all-parents-should-be-aware-of

Tellonym

- An anonymous messenger app.
- This app is extremely popular in middle schools and high schools and it allows kids to ask and answer questions anonymously.

- Instances of cyber bullying, violent threats, and sexual content.
- Offers unmonitored access to the internet.
- The age restrictions are inconsistent ranging from 12 to 16
- This app is inappropriate for anyone younger than being in their late teens.

Bigo Live

- **Bigo is a live streaming app.**
- **It is rated for teens 17 and up.**
- **Users can vlog about their lives, live stream video game play, and host their own shows.**

- **There is no age verification**
- **Users have to provide personal info like their age and location.**
- **Bullying, nudity, violence, and profanity is common on this app.**

IMVU

- **IMVU stands for Instant Messaging Virtual Universe.**
- **This is a virtual world game like SIMS.**
- **Users interact with each other as avatars.**

- **There is nudity and sexual encounters in areas that are for 18+**
- **BUT there is sexual talk and behaviors in the regular area of IMVU as well.**
- **There is a Chat Now feature that randomly pairs users with other users and can lead to inappropriate pairings and interactions.**
- **All profiles are public**
- **There can be bullying and predators trying to get other users to share their phone numbers and to send pictures.**

Houseparty

- Houseparty is a video chatting app that's pretty open.
- Friends can communicate with each other through live video and texts in chat groups.

- There's no screening and the video is live, so there's nothing to keep kids from inappropriate content.
- Users can send links via chat and even take screenshots.
- There's also nothing keeping friends of friends joining groups where they may only know one person.

Tinder

- A dating tool or an anonymous hook-up (read: one-night stand) locator by 20-somethings, college students, and even younger teens and tweens.

- The app is rated ages 17+ but Tinder's privacy policy allows teens as young as 13 to register (the app connects with Facebook — which is also technically for ages 13+ — to pull in photos for users' Tinder profiles).
- Geo-location features and anonymous nature of the app put kids at risk for catfishing, sexual harassment, stalking, and worse.

Ask.fm

- This app allows users to interact in a question-and-answer format — with friends, peers, and anonymous users alike.

- Some kids have used the app for hurtful cyberbullying that has been linked to suicides.
- Has loose regulation and lack of monitoring.

Kik

- **Kik is a mobile app that people can use to text with friends at high speed and with more of a "face-to-face feel" than regular texting.**

- **The app is rated ages 17+, but there is no age verification so anyone can download it.**
- **Reviews in the App Store and Google Play store reveal that many people use Kik to meet strangers for sexting.**
- **The app also been connected with cyberbullying.**
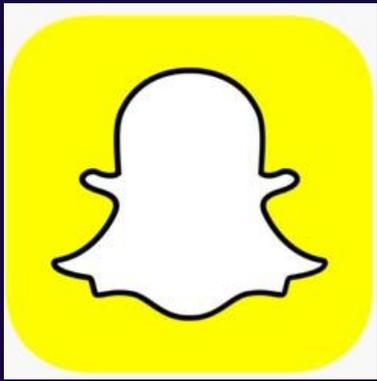
Snapchat

- **Snapchat is an app that allows users to send photos and videos that disappear after they're received.**
- **It's rated ages 12+.**

- **Some kids are using the app to send racy pics because they believe the images can't be saved and circulated.**
- **But it turns out that Snapchat pics don't completely disappear from a device, and users can take a screenshot before an image vanishes in the app.**
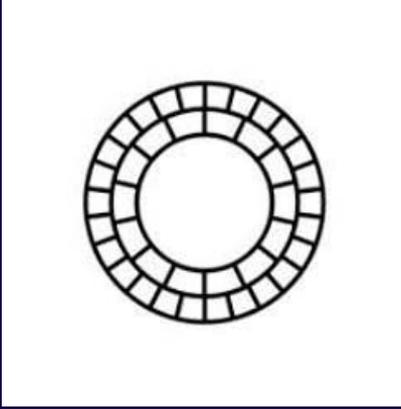
VSCO

- **Vsco is a photo creation app that gives users the tools to shoot, edit and post images to a profile, kind of like Instagram.**

- **You should know that you have to manually turn on privacy settings and limit location sharing.**
- **There are also in-app purchases for more serious photo editing tools that could cost you some serious money if your kid decides to download them.**

Whisper

- **This 17+ app's motto is: "Share Secrets, Express Yourself, Meet New People."**

- **Whisper lets users set up anonymous accounts to make their messages or confessions overlap an image or graphic (similar to e-postcards), which other users can then "like," share, or comment on.**
- **Although the app is geared toward older teens and adults, younger children are finding their way to it.**

Instagram

- **Hugely popular photo-sharing site is owned by Facebook,**
- **Users can add cool filters or create collages of their photos and share them across Facebook and other social media platforms.**

- **The app is rated 13+ and users can find mature or inappropriate content and comments throughout the app**
- **"Trolls" — or people making vicious, usually anonymous comments — are common.**
- **A user can change the settings to block their location or certain followers, but many users are casual about their settings, connecting with people they don't know well or at all.**

Jailbreak Programs and Icon-Hiding Apps

- Jailbreaking" an iPhone or "rooting" an Android phone basically means hacking your own device to lift restrictions on allowable applications
- Cydia is a popular application for jailbroken phones, and it's a gateway to other apps called Poof and SBSettings
  - These are icon-hiding apps. These apps are supposedly intended to help users clear the clutter from their screens, but some young people are using them to hide questionable apps and violent games from their parents.
  - Be aware of what the Cydia app icons look like so you know if you're getting a complete picture of your teen's app use.

https://www.familyeducation.com/mobile-apps/a-complete-guide-to-potentially-dangerous-apps-all-parents-should-be-aware-of