Social Media Helpful Tips

Social media can be a great way to connect with friends, family and your community. Learn how to engage safely and protect your mental health.

How does social media impact your life?

### PROS
- Connect with friends and social supports
- Explore interests and identity
- Access knowledge
- Hear from diverse perspectives
- Develop personal and professional skills

### CONS
- Increase risk of poor mental health
- Lose sleep
- Increase contact with cyberbullies and harmful language
- Miss out on in-person connections

Is social media making you feel disconnected?
- Pay attention to how you feel while you’re scrolling
  - If you notice yourself getting stressed or jealous, take a break
  - Avoid doomscrolling and content that causes you stress
  - Find content that makes you feel good
- Reach out to friends about their posts instead of reacting and scrolling on
- Stay in the moment
  - Wait until you get home to post about your day

Do you take control of your accounts?
- Adjust your algorithm
  - Interact with posts that make you feel good and unfollow accounts that make you feel bad
  - Search for terms that enrich your feed
  - Examples: #queerbooks, #hijabstyle, #mentalhealth, #paraathletics
- Change your settings
  - Make your accounts private
  - Turn off notifications

How do you protect yourself from cyberbullies?
- If you’re being cyberbullied or harassed online, tell a trusted adult
- Report cyberbullying and exploitation
  - Cyber Tipline (missingkids.org)
  - TakeItDown.ncmec.org
  - LoveisRespect.org
  - StopBullying.gov
- Report, Mute, Block!

Sources:
https://engage.youth.gov/resources/tip-sheet-social-media-use-and-mental-health
https://www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/priorities/youth-mental-health/index.html
https://www.unicef.org/stories/5-ways-better-mental-health-online

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