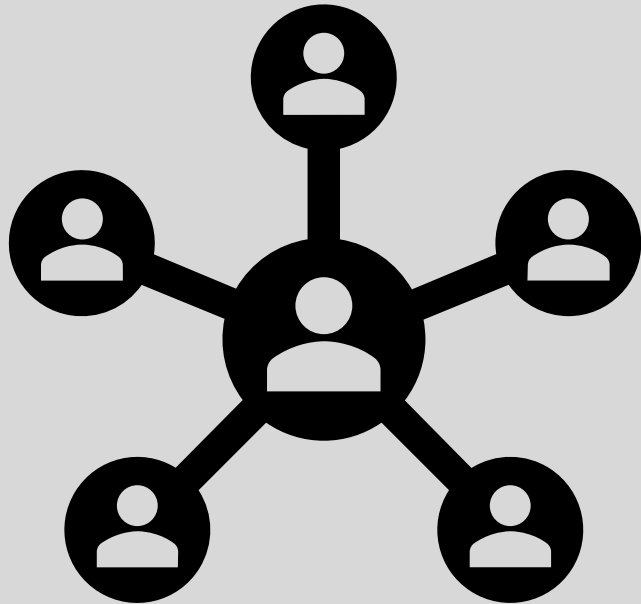




SOCIAL MEDIA & YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

**Texas Child Health Access through Tele-Health
(TCHAT)**

The Internet is not Bad



- Being socially connected to others can ease stress, anxiety, and depression, boost self-worth, provide comfort and joy, and prevent loneliness
- The internet provides us with endless information at our fingertips, eliminating knowledge gaps and increasing accessibility for all
- Studies have shown that there is a clear link between social connectedness and health (cognitive, physical, and mental), and these benefits increase as we get older

Too Much of a Good Thing



THE PROBLEM LIES IS
OVERCONSUMPTION AND **LACK**
OF BOUNDARIES



JUST LIKE IN REAL LIFE, INTERNET
INTERACTIONS SHOULD BE
MEANINGFUL AND CONTROLLED

Social Media & Your Mental Health

- ***COGNITIVE HEALTH***
- ***SEDENTARY LIFESTYLE***
- ***CYBERBULLYING/ HARRASSMENT***

COGNITIVE HEALTH

Negative Affects:

- **Decision-making Skills**
- **Divided Attention**
- **Critical Thinking**

Positive Affects:

- **Rewards the brain**
- **Increased Visual Memory**

THE EFFECT ON CHILDREN

- A study found that excessive amounts of screen time, particularly Internet activity and video gaming, predicted **more sadness, suicidal ideation and suicide planning** among **American teens**.
- An undeveloped brain showered with hectic sensory stimulation can result in **developmental milestone delays** and a **negative impact on basic foundation** skills in children.

SEDENTARY LIFESTYLE

- People now rely on technology for the majority of their leisure activities, limiting challenges to their creativity and physical engagement.
- Sleep disruption, which can lead to anxiety and depression
- Obesity, heart health issues, and more

THE EFFECT ON CHILDREN

- Sleep
- Obesity
- Anxiety
- Self-esteem
- Academic performance
- Depression
- Access to bad influences

- **Cyberbullying or harassment is the use of technology to harass, threaten, embarrass, or target another person**
- Anyone using communicative technology can be targeted
 - Children and teens are especially vulnerable to attacks on their self-esteem, and the molding of their world view
 - Adults are perpetrators and victims as well
- Some sites and apps specifically attract confrontational types who want a place to express extreme views in an in-your-face way (these include 4chan, Reddit, Discord, Twitch, etc.) but it can occur anywhere.
 - Anonymity and the infamy of the shock value reinforce this behavior

Cyber Harassment



Online bullying can be particularly damaging and upsetting because it's usually anonymous or hard to trace.



People can be tormented nonstop whenever they check their device or computer, causing high anxiety



Online bullying and harassment can be easier to commit than other acts of bullying because the bully doesn't have to confront his or her target in person.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying

- Sometimes, people are afraid or not sure if they're being bullied or harassed. So, they don't do anything about it. This goes for both adults and children.
- If you're being bullied, harassed, or teased in a hurtful way — or know someone who is — you don't have to suffer in silence. In fact, you absolutely should report any upsetting texts, messages, posts, or emails.

What to Do

- **Tell someone**

- The first thing to do is tell someone you trust. Online harassment can feel more manageable when brought to the attention of a real world friend

- **Walk away**

- Ignoring bullies is the best way to take away their power, but it isn't always easy to do
 - perpetrators crave a reaction, not giving them one puts the power back in your hands
 - all social media platforms have blocking or filtering features to protect their users. Utilize them

- **Resist the urge to retaliate or respond**

- Walking away or taking a break when you're faced with online bullying gives you some space, so you won't be tempted to fire back a response or engage negatively.
- Do something you love offline, to regain your peace

What to Do

- **Report it**

- If someone sends you mean or threatening texts or emails, report it to phone service, email providers, or your local authorities

- **Be safe online**

- Password protect your smartphone and your online sites and change your passwords often. Once you've posted a photo or message, it can be difficult or impossible to truly delete. So, remind yourself to be cautious when posting photos or responding to someone's upsetting message.

MAKE A CHANGE

- Modelling is one of the most effective ways to change a child or teen's behavior
- By making changes to your own consumption of social media, you can teach your child healthier ways to interact with the internet

Try:

- Setting time limits for social media scrolling, video streaming, and video game play
- Incorporating more active hobbies and pastimes in the home
- Develop an interest in your child's online interests (gaming, social media, youtube videos)

STAY INVOLVED

- The [Children's Online Privacy Protection Act](#) prohibits websites from collecting information on children younger than 13 without parental permission. However, age is based on self-report, so children younger than 13 can simply lie about their age and open accounts.
- <https://www.connectsafely.org/parentguides/> offers parents guides on the most popular sites and platforms.
- Be aware of the safety and protection options of your favorite websites as well



QUESTIONS?