

Has Social Media Hurt Society?

by Jaclyn McCauley

One hundred years ago, phones were still relatively new to the world. Fast forward to today when most of our society carries around cell phones and uses social media. Many people use some type of social networking throughout their daily lives without thinking about the consequences. Even though some experts say it is good, social media has negatively impacted our society because it gives us less personal privacy, and it leads to cyber-bullying and depression.

The privacy and security of a person has been jeopardized by social media . Facebook users are able to put out personal information on their pages for friends to see. If the wrong person gains access by hacking into someone's account, they will have private information about that person at their fingertips. Another concern is that potential employers check profiles to see what you post. A person may post a picture that they think is perfectly fine, but an employer may not agree. This could cost you a job. The last issue that affects your privacy is GPS tracking. Many websites or apps allow you to enter your current location for easier use. This allows hackers to know where you are, and can create safety issues. These are just more reasons to be aware of risks that come with social media.

Cyber-bullying and depression is another glaring matter impacting society today. Bullies find it easier to say hurtful words to people online rather than face-to-face because they are afraid of the repercussions if caught. The severity of bullying tends to be more extreme over social media. A bully feels more powerful when hiding behind a computer screen. The use of networking sites and cyberbullying can also lead to depression. When young people see others posting pictures with their friends or tweeting about their amazing day, one can start to feel left out and lonely. When someone is struggling with hard times, these posts can cause emotional harm. People, especially children and teenagers, can receive such negative comments and threats over the internet that they feel worthless. These feelings can sadly lead to the decision to end one's own life. Social media is a driving force in teenage bullying and depression.

Even with all of these issues, experts claim this type of networking can help reduce stress. A new study has shown that social media users, especially women, are less stressed than people who are not involved in this type of activity. Although this may be true, it is not always a good stress reliever. Social networking is a good way to stay connected, but can cause stress when friends post negative thoughts or comments. Another argument against this study is that social media has made some users more anxious about personal interaction. Young people who spend the day with their face glued to the screen of their smartphone, can lack interpersonal skills. Social sites have also caused some people to disconnect from everyday society. A recent study showed that relaxed social media users were not phased when presented with an article about a tragic event where most people would be concerned. The minimal impact on stress reduction is nothing compared to the potential harm of negative social networking.

While some say social media is beneficial because it reduces stress, it has negatively impacted our society, by giving us less personal privacy and leading to cyber-bullying and depression. Social media can affect a person's mind and body. Our world has made many technological advances, but they are not always for the better. People today should try to spend less time tweeting, and more time having face-to-face conversations.

