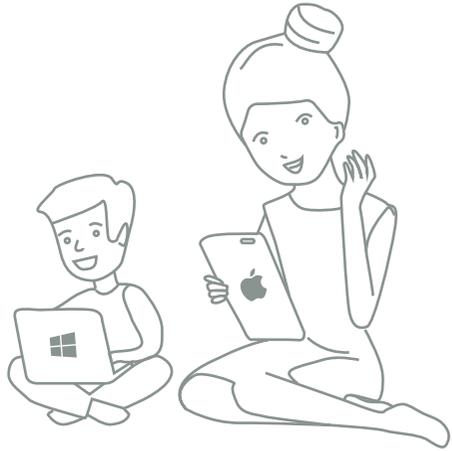# SOCIAL MEDIA AND YOUR FAMILY

SNAPSHOT

- Every minute adds 48 hours of videos on YouTube, 3600 photos on Instagram, 3125 photos to Flickr, 10000 tweets and 684478 individual pieces of content on Facebook.

- Teens believe social media connects them to their friends' feelings.

- According to Pew Research Center, 24% of teens are reportedly "almost constantly, on the net".

- 78% of 10-year olds use at least one social media network.

- 8-10 year-olds spend an average of 46 minutes per day online while 11-12 year-olds spend 106 minutes per day.

- 25% of teens assert that social media makes them feel less shy and more outgoing.

THE GOOD

- Social media allows sharing of information and knowledge, enabling skill improvements through discussions and collaboration across geographic boundaries.

- Exposure to different cultures provides access to diverse ideas, offers new perspectives and provides fodder for imagination.

- Social apps can fuel creativity in innovative ways.

THE BAD

- Passive binging on social media eats up time meant for family, education and creative pursuits.

- Social networking is a big source of information overload.

- Social media users who consume the highest amounts of content report a decrease in social bonding and an increase in loneliness.

THE UGLY

- Children are bullied, exposed to inappropriate content and abused in many terrible ways on social media.

- Dangerous games and trends like the Blue Whale Challenge, the Choking Game and the Fire Challenge spread like wildfire among teens, leveraging the popular reach of social media platforms.

- A study at the University of Glasgow showed that youngsters emotionally invested in social media suffered from low self-esteem, anxiety and depression!

A PARENT'S CHECKLIST

It is important for you to know all about the benefits and pitfalls of social networking sites before allowing your children to access it. Here's what you can do to safeguard your kids from online concerns such as those highlighted above:

- Keep your eyes open to the latest internet trends; especially fads among teens.

- Ask your kids to mentally answer the following questions before clicking on the post button:

  - Will this post/update/photo/ opinion command respect and not ridicule a few years from now?

  - Does my online behavior reflect my real personality, or am I faking it?

  - Could my online behavior affect current and future personal relationships?

  - Could my online behavior hinder my future academic or professional prospects?

- Stay up-to-date with your child's activities at school. Check with teachers on your child's progress or participation regularly.

- If you notice unusual changes in your child's behaviour pattern such as lack of sleep, moodiness, a general disinterested outlook, self-inflicted wounds (cuts, scratches etc.) or poor grades at school, please monitor your child's online activities

- Ensure that your child always disables location/geo-tagging of posts and photos online.

- Do not allow your young kids to post photos of themselves online.

- Restrict the duration of device use at home and in general..

  - Consider installing an internet safety software; this offers a safe way to control without restricting their presence on the internet and social media.

- Ensure that your children's social media privacy settings are always set to private, to shield them from unsavory encounters with shady characters online.

- Set rules so that your kids are only allowed to befriend/follow people online that they know personally.

" **Teach your children the basis of moral judgement and above all teach them to respect themselves!** "

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