

The Joys and Despair of Social Media

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There are plenty of good things about social media — but also many risks Oxley students should be aware of and avoid. Social Media is any digital tool that allows users to quickly create and share content with others. Social media encompasses a wide range of websites and apps. Some, like Twitter, aim to share links and short written messages. Others, like Instagram and TikTok, are built to enhance the sharing of photos and videos. As parents and educators try to keep up with the rapidly changing methods of communication, it is important to maintain and provide an environment that is safe for the Oxley community.

Children at increasingly younger ages are pleading with their parents to allow them to set up a social media account. This is often much earlier than the legal age of 13 years. Some studies have suggested that as many as three-quarters of children aged 10-12 years have social media accounts, despite being below the legal age limit.

Dr Kristy Goodwin believes that if social media is introduced at the 'right' age, carefully monitored by parents and balanced with real, off-screen relationships, then it can be a meaningful communication tool for older children. Dr Goodwin is quite clear in her belief that social media should not be used or introduced to primary school students.

Social media can be a wonderful way to cater to teenagers' need for social connection and can develop a sense of belonging. People from anywhere can connect with anyone. Regardless of the location. The beauty of social media is that you can connect with anyone to learn and share your thoughts. It is very easy to educate from others who are experts and professionals via social media. You can follow anyone to learn from him/her and enhance your knowledge about any field. Regardless of your location and education background you can educate yourself, without paying for it.

Like any technology, social media is merely a tool. It's neither good nor bad. It really depends on how it's used, with whom it's used, when it's used, where it's used and what's used. Dr Goodwin's concern with social media is that children are being dunked in the social media world prematurely before they're socially and emotionally ready.

It's important as parents to help your child understand what sort of digital footprint they're leaving on social media. To do this it is important to have clear guidelines and rules and ensuring to support your child by educating them in this fast-changing world. It's important that students understand the impact your online activities leave on you, including things you see, hear or read and also things other people say and do to you online.

If your child has any Social Media accounts, you should consider and discuss a few things to limit their digital footprint:

1. Tighten your restrictions on Social Media:
 - Only accept friend / follow requests from people you know in real life
 - Set privacy settings so that the information about you is not visible to the public
 - Change settings so that others need your permission to tag you in posts
2. Delete things that you don't want others to see.
3. Reset passwords. Make sure they are strong and do not share with others.
4. Carefully consider every time you post or share whether you want it to live on forever or if it might affect others negatively.

For more information about raising children in the digital world, I recommend Dr. Kristy Goodwin's Parent Blog - [Blog | Parents - Dr Kristy Goodwin](#)