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Social Media, Social Problems

Facebook, one of the leading social media platforms has over 2 billion monthly users. After reading and analyzing several articles, “Antisocial Networking” by the New York Times, “Is Social Media Driving People...” by Righ Knight, and “Teenagers on Social Media...” by Clive Anderson Jr., Eknor Johar, and Jocelyn C. Kay, I believe that social media negatively affects teens ability to communicate with others. Social media is a popular trend of today. It allows people to communicate and catch up with family, friends, even new people. Many teens have incorporated social media into their lives. While social media is great, it can negatively affect teens. Social media has a negative effect on a teen’s communication ability with others because it takes away the ability to recognize facial expression, it may contribute towards depression, and it prevents well kept friendships.

First off, one way that social media negatively affects a teen’s communication skills is because it takes away the ability to recognize facial expression. The New York Times states, “...today’s youth may be missing out on experiences that help develop empathy, understanding emotional nuances, and read social cues like facial expression and body language.”(B). This means that teens’s aren’t interacting with friends, which won’t allow them to learn valuable life skills. Facial expression allows one to understand the emotion of a speaker; without it, teens may misunderstand a speaker. In addition, Anderson, Johar, and Key found, “This is due to the ability to cause havoc without remorse...”(Article F). This is saying that without facial expression, one might hurt another’s feelings without knowing it. You can’t recognize if “you’re stupid” or “I

just want to die” is a joke or serious, which can tamper with another’s feelings. Because there is no facial expression on social media, it negatively affects a teens communication skills with others.

Continuing on, another way how social media negatively affects a teens ability to communicate with others is because it can lead a teen to be depressed. In his post, Knight states, “Endlessly comparing([a Facebook user] with peers who have doctored their photographs, amplified their achievements and plagiarized their “bons-mots” can leave Facebook users more than a little green eyed.”(Article D). To translate Knight's words, many Facebook users are jealous of other’s achievements and photos, though they are fake, leading to low self-esteem and depression. Depression can greatly alter one as a person including their communication with close family and friends. A depressed person becomes withdrawn from society often cutting communications with family and friends and lead that person to think negatively all the time. This negative way of thinking can lead to something more serious such as suicide or manslaughter. Additionally, Anderson, Johar, and Key discovered, “the use of social media leads to cyber-bullying, which leads to depression...”(Article F). In a sense, social media opens doors for cyber-bullying, which leads to depression. Depression can make someone withdraw from society and their family. They can unfold a negative image about themselves leading to low self esteem; low self esteem can lead to more depression or anxiety, making it harder for them to get out of their depressed loop. They can stop communicating with their family members and close friends who they’ve usually told everything to. Since social media causes depression, it negatively affects a teen’s communication skills.

Finally, social media negatively affects a teen's communication skills because it prevents them from making well-kept friendships. According to The New York Times, they state, "[close childhood friendships] are essential to allowing kids to develop poise and allowing kids to play with their emotions, express emotions..."(Article B). This is basically saying that friendships help shape young children and their emotions. Close friendships are critical for learning lifelong lessons that will help in the future. One aspect of it is that it helps children form and understand their emotions, which are very important in any relationship. Additionally, the New York Times also states, "Initial qualitative evidence is that the ease of electronic communication may be making teens less interested in face to face communication with their friends."(Article B). To translate, research shows that teens are choosing electronic communication over face to face communication because electronic communication is fast and easy. A electronic communication won't bring as many benefits as a face to face relationship. A childhood friendship is the very first step with communicating with others, if teens can't do this what makes them set for the future. While some might argue that social media helps one who is anti-social to talk to more people, it could make their condition worse and even add onto their problem. Anderson Jr., Johar, Key found, "The use of social media leads to cyberbullying, which leads to depression, thoughts of suicide, and sadness."(Article F). Because social media takes away close friendships that develop a child and prepare them for future relationships, it has a negative effect on children's ability to communicate with others.

In conclusion, social media negatively affects a teens communication skills with others because it diminishes the ability to recognize facial expression, it causes depression, and it prevents well-kept friendships. Aside from Facebook, there are other social media platforms such

as YouTube, Snapchat, and Instagram that have as many as one billion users, eight-hundred million users, and five-hundred million users per month respectively. This shows that social media relates to modern times because it is rapidly growing and that social media relates to modern times because it is rapidly growing and becoming part of everyone's life. We should consider the negative effects of this very popular trend, because as we all know, too much of anything is bad. While this may boast a somewhat some problem, how long will it take for it to be serious?