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Social Media Awareness: The Impact of Social Media on Mental Health

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Social Media Awareness:

The Impact of Social Media on Mental Health

A Project Presented to
the Graduate Faculty of
Minnesota State University Moorhead

By

Megan Beattie Anderson

In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science in
School Counseling

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Table of Contents

Introduction…….….4

Literature Review……..…5

Training Information.……..…18

Social Media Awareness Training…….22

Appendix……33

Abstract

Communication technology, especially smartphones and the social media apps on them, has become a very large part of the modern world. People of all ages spend hours every day on social media either posting about their experiences or viewing other posts. Though social media can be fun and sometimes useful, it can also have negative effects on mental health, especially in adolescence. Researchers have done studies on these effects and developed scales to measure impacts like social media addiction. These studies show correlation between social media addiction and conduct disorders, depression, and deteriorating social skills. There are resources available to help people become aware of their social media habits and improve them. This program is going to give students the information about social media addiction, emotional regulation, and skills to help them become more mindful of social media use.

Introduction

During my practicum time as a school counselor, I was able to review the results of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey that was sent out from the year prior. The results were shocking. Around 70% of students had listed they had poor mental health and lack of coping skills. Now, as I was reading these results, I was also working on a literature review about cyberbullying, social media, and technology use. As I was reading article after article, a common theme was noticed that technology and social media are used as an unhealthy coping mechanism which in turn is lessening adolescents' emotional regulation in both online activity and in-person interactions.

After reading and processing the literature on social media addiction, internet addiction, and smartphone addiction, I wanted to take the pieces of information that I thought would best help children and adolescents combat these issues and help them take control of their mental health by creating a presentation for them. This is how I came up with a Social Media Awareness training for students. I wanted students to have the tools to better regulate their emotions, online and offline, with the hopes that these skills will help with students' overall mental health. My goal is to have students be more mindful while they are on social media rather than using it to avoid what they are feeling.

Throughout this literature review, information can be found about the overuse of internet and smartphones affecting mental health in ways of depression, anxiety, and general psychological stress. In line with poor mental health, the lessening of emotional regulation and positive face to face interactions are also a symptom of unhealthy overuse of social media. Information on how researchers have best measured the addiction of internet, smartphones, and social media within adolescents and adults is also discussed. Ending this literature review is

existing programming to help fight these addictions and unhealthy social media use through online safety preventions and digital citizenship lessons.

Literature Review

Increase use of Technology and Mental Health Symptoms

Smartphones provide adolescents with continuous social connectivity that, despite its utility, poses certain difficulties. Self-expression in the form of sharing photos, thoughts, feelings, life events, and current whereabouts and activities has long been considered a major motivation for social media engagement, and many teens feel pressure to share self-enhancing or attention-grabbing content in order to increase their social appeal (Hawk, Eijnden, Lissa, & Bogt, 2019). Smartphones likely intensify such behavior by creating opportunities to share any spur-of-the-moment musing or experience with one's entire social network. Additionally, posting "selfies" is a prevalent form of social media behavior that is almost exclusively smartphone based. Smartphones are likely to increase adolescents' frequent use of social media for purposes of self-expression, interpersonal connection, and social validation (Hawk et al., 2019).

An increase in technology is obvious and can be seen everywhere, in schools, restaurants, airplanes, cars, and homes. Using the internet has become a part of everyday life for most individuals, especially adolescents ages 13-17 (Law et al., 2012). The increase of technology brings amazing things, especially in this time of COVID-19 and social-distancing, while also bringing feelings of isolation, disconnect, loneliness and Fear of Missing Out (FoMO), a construct which can be defined as a pervasive worry that others might be having rewarding experiences from which one is absent; it is characterized by the desire to stay continually connected with what others are doing (Fabris, Marengo, Longobardi, & Settanni, 2020). With the growth of discussion about mental health comes more individuals hiding behind a screen, saying hurtful and disparaging statements without consequences.

Along with growing mental health awareness, most of the population owns a smartphone, which means immediate and 24-hour access to the internet, social media, news, and streaming services. In the United States, the proportion of adults who use social media increased from 7% in 2005 to 65% in 2015, representing an increase of almost 1000% (Vally & D'Souza, 2019). Adolescents are spending nine hours on some type of screen, with three of those hours being on their mobile phone, texting, scrolling through social media, taking pictures and videos, and so much more (George, Russell, Piotnak, & Odger, 2018). Research shows that 93% of North American adolescent's report going on the internet and 89% have access to the internet, from their own smartphone, computer, tablet, or parent's smartphone (Law et al., 2012).

Social Media

Social media can be a useful tool for connecting with family or friends that live across the country or to learn a new recipe; it becomes not as useful when adolescents are fixated on whatever is on their screen, using their social media as a distraction from feelings certain emotions or avoiding homework. Being online for three or more hours per day has shown decreases in social skills, attention, focus, and mental health (George et al., 2018). George and the team also report that adolescents spend less social time in person with peers but substitutes that time by interacting with peers online. The modern digital world offers nonstop technology making it almost impossible to unplug and it is increasingly evident that many psychological problems can be caused or exacerbated by such technology (Scott, Valley, & Simecka, 2016).

This constant connectivity might also result in greater levels of stress and dependency related to these technologies. Adolescents who regularly use their smartphones for communication or social media sharing might experience distress and anxiety when they find themselves without access to their devices, and unable to post new content or immediately

respond to friends' text messages and social media feedback (a condition sometimes called “nomophobia”) (Hawk et al., 2019). They can also become overwhelmed by the amount of social media information they might need to process to maintain connection and avoid missing out on important events (Hawk et al., 2019).

Along with connection, both self-disclosing and receiving positive feedback on social media posts are fundamentally rewarding experiences. Smartphones provide the opportunity for individuals to share new content and monitor its popularity constantly, which might create a behavior-reward feedback loop that serves as a basis for addiction (Hawk et al., 2019). The clinical cataloging of social media and smartphone addiction are still debated and not currently classified as disorders in the DSM-V as it is stated that further studies are needed. However, numerous studies in recent years have linked compulsive or “addiction-like” social media and smartphone behaviors to numerous behavioral, emotional, social, and academic struggles among adolescents in North America, Europe, and Asia (Hawk et al., 2019).

The term “problematic use” is used in the present research in order to draw parallels with other current studies that might more freely use the term “addiction”, without directly addressing the debate regarding clinical cataloging (Hawk et al., 2019). Regardless of formal clinical recognition, the problematic use of social media and smartphones and adolescents' growing dependence on these technologies for needs gratification, are interrelated issues that warrant further attention (Hawk et al., 2019). Considering recent studies linking youth's psychosocial problems to increased time spent with social media, there is a critical need for integrative models of the personality, interpersonal, and motivational factors that predict both normative and problematic forms of social media and smartphone use (Hawk et al., 2019). Along with Hawk and team, Vally and D’Souza (2019) also found the emergence of “problematic social

networking sites (SNS) use", which refers to symptoms resulting from excessive and maladaptive SNS use and that are characterized by addictive tendencies.

Technology is redefining normal versus abnormal behavior by changing the term connectivity, 24-hour accessibility, and overall information overload (Scott et al., 2016). By increasing the flood of incoming demands on time and energy, the darker side of technology (in the form of connectivity, accessibility, and information overload) can have significant negative effects on mental health (Scott et al., 2016). These overload issues can reach across the lifespan and affect individuals in many ways, even more so in the development of children and adolescents (Scott et al., 2016). Those changes can contribute to a variety of mental health problems including stress, anxiety, and depression (Scott et al., 2016).

Adolescents

Adolescents may also experience the increased feeling of social isolation, especially if they already experience mental health symptoms. Web-based interactions and communication can exacerbate social isolation which is why the value of reconstructing a social life in person, as opposed to using social media, acknowledging face to face contact is of great importance (Lal, Daniel, & Rivard, 2017). It is also suggested that adolescents spending time online could be compensating for lack of social skills; this is causing a greater absence of social skills if not using what is practiced online, in face to face communication (George et al., 2018). With these mental health problems increasing, lack of connection and social skills comes the absence of emotional regulation.

George, et al. (2018) completed a study looking at the mental health status of high-risk adolescents after being online and their mental health status the next day to see if emotions caused by digital technology can continue into their next day emotions. The study also reviewed

if early access to digital media would cause mental health issues later in life. The study tracked 151 high-risk adolescents, one in three being of low-socioeconomic status; 80% of those adolescents stating that they have a conduct disorder (George et al., 2018). According to Child Mind Institution (CMI), a conduct disorder (CD) is characterized by the callous disregard for and aggression toward others, from pushing, hitting, and biting in early childhood to bullying, cruelty and violence in adolescence.

The finding of the study was that the participants self-reported feeling less anxiety or depressive signs when spending time online (George et al, 2018). Adolescents are finding many coping mechanisms throughout the internet including videos of mindfulness, online counseling, and support groups of students with similar mental health issues. While this is a great use of the internet, the participant also reported feeling symptoms of depression or anxiety one-third of the time when being online (George et al, 2018). A decrease in self-regulation is predicted when technology is used at earlier stages of life (George et al, 2018).

Fear of Missing Out

Through social media, adolescents can maintain their contacts, extend their system of knowledge, or find and exchange information and materials; it also contributes to the structure of their social identity in relation to peer groups, especially in terms of popularity and, therefore, acceptance and sense of belonging (Fabris, Marengo, Longobardi, & Settanni, 2020). The sense of popularity and belonging to certain social groups are labels that adolescents and children at younger ages are starting to have more awareness of and the worry if they fit into that box. This is where the term Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) starts becoming more of a concern. Evidence seems to indicate that adolescents with high levels of FoMO tend to use social media more to compensate for these psychological needs. Along with that, more evidence suggests that FoMO

may ultimately have an impact on the well-being of individuals, increasing negative affect and emotional symptoms (Fabris et al., 2020). The increase in emotional symptoms are caused from the heightened feeling that they do not belong and that they are missing out on important shared experiences, along with social media fatigue. For adolescents showing a higher state of FoMO, they could be more sensitive and prone to distress due to experiencing neglect and negative reactions by peers on social media sites. With the increase of being on social media sites due to not wanting to miss anything, comes the fear of not receiving comments or likes or the fear of receiving negative reactions to their posts. This would then trigger compulsive use of social media in order to fulfill their unsatisfied need to connect with others and maintain a positive online social status (Fabris et al., 2020).

Fabris and team spent time researching Social Media Addiction (SMA). It was found that SMA in adolescents has been found to be associated with depressive symptoms, anxiety, low self-esteem, and general psychological distress. Fabris and team hypothesized that FoMO might be positively associated with emotional symptoms in adolescents, both directly and indirectly. The way their team researched this information was by a series of questionnaires that consisted of asking adolescents of their fears, worries, anxieties, experiences, sensitivity to stress, emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity/inattention, peer relationship problems, and prosocial behavior.

The results that Fabris and team found from their study was that the results supported the relationship between FoMO and decreased emotional well-being in adolescents, along with higher sensitivity to stress associated with experiences, to neglect and negative reactions by online peers on social media. Their findings also support the link between FoMO and SMA and identifies a heightened sensitivity to stress, along with neglect by online peers. With this, they

were able to interpret FoMO as a specific need and predisposing characteristic of addiction in adolescents, which activates a state of distress when the adolescent assesses the situation as unacceptable for his/her own needs.

Emotion Regulation

When children and adolescents fail to implement positive strategies to help regulate their emotions, increased rates of peer rejection, aggression, antisocial behavior, cyberbully or bullying and social media stress can occur (McLoughlin, Spears, & Taddeo, 2018). Young people have a limited capacity for self-regulation and can be persuaded easily by peers to engage in deviant behaviors. Young people may be at greater risk online when they experiment with social media compared to face-to-face context (McLoughlin et al., 2018). Adolescents that use negative emotion regulation strategies to cope with their anger tend to lean into cyberbullying behaviors to cope. With this increase of internet use as an addition to a coping mechanism, it shows how easily cyberbullying can happen (McLoughlin et al., 2018).

It is helpful to know how the average person can process emotions. Human beings know how to regulate their emotions. They can process how other individuals can affect different emotions, timing, and intensity of emotion, and how to express those emotions (Baillien et al., 2018). People can also review and practice different strategies of emotional regulation. For example, one can change the way they think about an incident or change behavioral response to that incident. Changing behavioral responses to an incident does not help when the incident has passed, but it can help to be aware of behavioral responses for next time (Baillien et al., 2018). The problem is most individuals that participate in cyberbullying cannot understand the negative behavioral response of cyberbullying.

Along with strategies of emotional regulation, individuals find many different coping approaches that work best for them throughout many different situations. The differences in emotion regulation strategies have been described as affective styles and are defined as the person's constant individual trait that they use in emotion regulation (Baillien et al., 2018). In other words, affective styles are the way one processes their experiences to the way they show their emotional response. Concealing, adjusting, and tolerating are three affective styles that have been consistently found throughout Baillien and the team's research. Concealing is the tendency to suppress emotions. Adjusting is the inclination to re-adjust for example being able to cheer oneself up after a bad experience. Tolerating is being non-defensive or being able to tell oneself it is okay to feel the way one is feeling (Baillien et al., 2018). Individuals that participate in cyberbullying lack the ability to utilize the three affective styles Baillien and the team have described.

Measuring Internet Addiction

There have been many studies to find the best way to measure social media addiction, smartphone addiction, or internet addiction. One issue of this being that there lacks a consensual definition of the three terms previously stated. As researchers were reviewing ways to measure internet addiction, the realization and development of many scales within assessments were needed. Laconi, Rodgers, and Chabrol (2014) found that there are at least thirteen scales or instruments needed for evaluating internet addiction. The main goal within Laconi and team's research was to identify all the existing instruments that assessed internet addiction which ended up being seventy-four different studies (2014).

Reliability was assessed through test-retest reliability and internal consistency while validity was mainly evaluated through construct validity which can be projected by considering

the relationship between the scale, expert opinion, and other validated measures of internet addiction (Laconi et al., 2014). Validity of tests also looked at the correlation between internet addiction, time spent online, and depression symptoms that were reported (Laconi et al., 2014). After reviewing the reliability and validity of the seventy-four research studies, Laconi and team (2014) reviewed forty-five assessment tools to evaluate internet addiction. The two most notable tests from their research were The Internet Addiction Test and The Compulsive Internet Use Scale with the note that more research and studies need to be completed (Laconi et al., 2014).

The Internet Addiction Test (IAT) was reviewed in more depth by Rosenthal, Cha, and Clark (2018). As of 2015, 95 percent of teenagers in America were online (Rosenthal et al., 2018). Four components were found that characterized Internet addiction: excessive use, withdrawal symptoms, low tolerance, and negative repercussions (Rosenthal et al., 2018). The team reviewed the research of another researcher's information from a South Korea study, but Rosenthal and team wanted to complete the IAT in the United States.

There was a solid test-retest reliability between IAT summary scores and the 20 question items in IAT with a fair to modest agreement (Rosenthal et al., 2018). Rosenthal and team (2018) completed this study with a group of young adults, not teenagers. There were no individuals within the study that met the team's definition of Internet addiction, but it could be possible in young aged individuals. It was found that social support and depression diagnosis were found in association with IAT scores (Rosenthal et al., 2018). Results suggested that individuals with a history of depression tended to have higher IAT scores which aligned with other studies in other countries. Along with the correlation with higher IAT scores and depression, it was found that individuals with higher IAT scores also report less social support (Rosenthal et al., 2018).

As Rosenthal and team discussed that a study to review younger aged individuals would be helpful to get a better idea of IAT in the U.S. population, another researcher, Cengiz Sahin, took participates ages twelve to twenty-two years of age to determine if the Social Media Addiction Scale (SMAS) is a usable scale in determining social media addiction. The development of the scale is based on a five-point grading system: definitely not appropriate, not appropriate, undecided, appropriate, and quite appropriate (Sahin, 2018). For participants, the SMAS consists of twenty-nine items and four sub-dimensions on a five-point Likert type scale. The four sub-dimensions being virtual tolerance, virtual communication, virtual problem, and virtual information (Sahin, 2018). The highest score of the SMAS is 145, perceiving oneself to be a “social media addict” and the lowest being 29. There were 998 students that participated in the development of the SMAS. It was determined that the SMAS is a valid and reliable test in determining social media addiction (Sahin, 2018). This is one of the few tools available in determining social media addiction.

It is agreed by most researchers, in this field, that there are very few tools to screen and assess smartphone overuse and addiction. Pavia, Cavani, Di Blasi, and Giordano (2016) focused their research on testing the psychometric properties of the Smartphone Addiction Inventory (SPAI). The results of the research were discovered in reviewing the SPAI correlated well with other studies within this literature review. Five factors were discovered in line with other studies that were noted. The first factor is time spent on a smartphone along with time distortion with difficulty of stopping and devoting more time on a smartphone (Pavia et al., 2016). Compulsivity is the second factor that was revealed. Compulsivity is the discomfort and emotional distress felt by being deprived of using a smartphone which can affect daily life which leads to the third factor of daily life interference (Pavia et al., 2016). Daily life interference refers to the

interference of the smartphone use with other daily activities since the smartphone is on their minds. The fourth factor is craving (Pavia et al., 2016). Cravings of being on a smartphone has the tendency to focus a person's attention from what they are supposed to or should be doing. The last factor is sleep disorders. Being connected to a smartphone has led to later bedtimes, shorter sleep duration, and sleep disturbances (Pavia et al., 2016).

Existing Programming

There are many discrepancies for measuring internet addiction, social media addiction, or smartphone addiction. One point that most researchers can agree on is that programming to help these addictions, mental health, and emotional regulation is greatly needed. One program that has become useful for educators, parents, and students is Common Sense Media. The Common Sense Media website has digital citizenship curriculum for Kindergarten students through 12th grade students, distance learning help guides for teachers, professional development, and so much more. For parents, there are resources that can help them determine which movies, TV shows, and apps are safe for their kids to watch. There is also distance learning help guides as parents, a section on what parents need to know to navigate the internet, and again, so much more.

Another program available for parents, students, and educators is NetSmartz. Like Common Sense Media, NetSmartz is a website that helps parents, students, educators with digital citizenship and online safety. NetSmartz also has an additional website, NetSmartzKids, that kids can go on to play games and watch videos. NetSmartz also has a curriculum for educators to use in school to teach students how to be safe online. Both programs are free for anyone to utilize at any time. Having free programing like Common Sense Media and NetSmartz are important

pieces to help combat internet addiction and social media stress with students Kindergarten through 12th grade along with their parents or guardians.

Conclusion

There have been many studies done to look at the relationship between the use of SNSs and well-being. These studies have produced mixed, often contradictory findings, with some studies having found a positive relationship, while others have found the inverse (Vally & D'Souza, 2019). Some researchers have stated that the nature of this relationship may vary depending on several different factors such as intended purpose when using SNSs, the feedback received from other users during their online interactions, and the type of activity engaged. However, the sum of these investigations suggests that the use of SNSs produces a decrease in well-being and promotes negative mood states over time (Vally & D'Souza, 2019).

The literature exploring users' motivations for willingly limiting or quitting use of the social media accounts has revealed that voluntary abstaining from social media, beneficial consequences tend to ensure, such as reduced stress, enhanced positive affect, and an increase in life satisfaction (Vally & D'Souza, 2019). With this information, it was also found that if the user was not ready or unwilling to abstain from SNS, that they are less receptive to previous stated experiences. Vally & D'Souza (2019) found that the experience of being 'cut off' from one's friends and the FoMO on important events and experiences within one's social network may further compound the intolerable nature of this experience (Vally & D'Souza, 2019). Mental health concerns are becoming more socially acceptable to discuss, but with Covid-19 endorsing social distancing and isolation, it brings fear of the future with the mental health in children and adolescents with concerns of the increase with social media stress, loneliness, and lack of emotional regulation.

Training Information

This training/presentation is intended for use as an awareness presentation for fifth through twelfth grade students. The presentation is approximately 30 minutes. If possible, the presentation would be presented by a school counselor or possibly an administrator if the school counselor was unable to give the presentation. The materials needed for the presentation would include a computer, screen, projector, and remote. The presentation includes pre and posttests which is available via a link, but a printed version and pencils will also be provided for those students that do not have a smartphone or device at the presentation.

This presentation meets the following American School Counseling Association Standards:

Students:

Mindset

M 1. Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional, and physical well-being

M 3. Sense of belonging in the school environment

Behavior

Learning Strategies

B-LS 1. Demonstrate critical-thinking skills to make informed decisions

B-LS 3. Use time-management organizational and study skills

B-LS 5. Apply media and technology skills

B-LS 6. Set high standards of quality

B-LS 9. Gather evidence and consider multiple perspectives to make informed decisions

Self-Management Skills

B-SMS 1. Demonstrate ability to assume responsibility

B-SMS 2. Demonstrate self-discipline and self-control

B-SMS 5. Demonstrate perseverance to achieve long- and short-term goals

B-SMS 6. Demonstrate ability to overcome barriers to learning

B-SMS 7. Demonstrate effective coping skills when faced with a problem

B-SMS 8. Demonstrate the ability to balance school, home and community activities

B-SMS 9. Demonstrate personal safety skills

Social Skills

B-SS 1. Use effective oral and written communication skills and listening skills

B-SS 2. Create positive and supportive relationships with other students

B-SS 4. Demonstrate empathy

B-SS 5. Demonstrate ethical decision making and social responsibility

B-SS 8. Demonstrate advocacy skills and ability to assert self, when necessary

B-SS 9. Demonstrate social maturity and behaviors appropriate to the situation and environment

Counselors:

Mindsets

M 1. Every student can learn, and every student can succeed.

M 2. Every student should have access to and opportunity for a high-quality education.

M 5. Effective school counseling is a collaborative process involving school counselors, students, families, teachers, administrators, other school staff and education stakeholders.

M 6. School counselors are leaders in the school, district, state and nation.

M 7. School counseling programs promote and enhance student academic, career and social/emotional outcomes

Behaviors

Professional Foundation

B-PF 1. Apply developmental, learning, counseling and education theories

B-PF 2. Demonstrate understanding of educational systems, legal issues, policies, research, and trends in education

B-PF 6. Demonstrate understanding of the impact of cultural, social, and environmental influences on student success and opportunities

B-PF 7. Demonstrate leadership through the development and implementation of a school counseling program

B-PF 9. Create systemic change through the implementation of a school counseling program

Direct and Indirect Student Services

B-SS 1. Design and implement instruction aligned to ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success in large-group, classroom, small-group, and individual settings

B-SS 2. Provide appraisal and advisement in large-group, classroom, small-group, and individual settings

B-SS 6. Collaborate with families, teachers, administrators, other school staff and education stakeholders for student achievement and success

Planning and Assessment

B-PA 1. Create school counseling program beliefs, vision and mission statements aligned with the school and district

B-PA 2. Identify gaps in achievement, attendance, discipline, opportunity, and resources

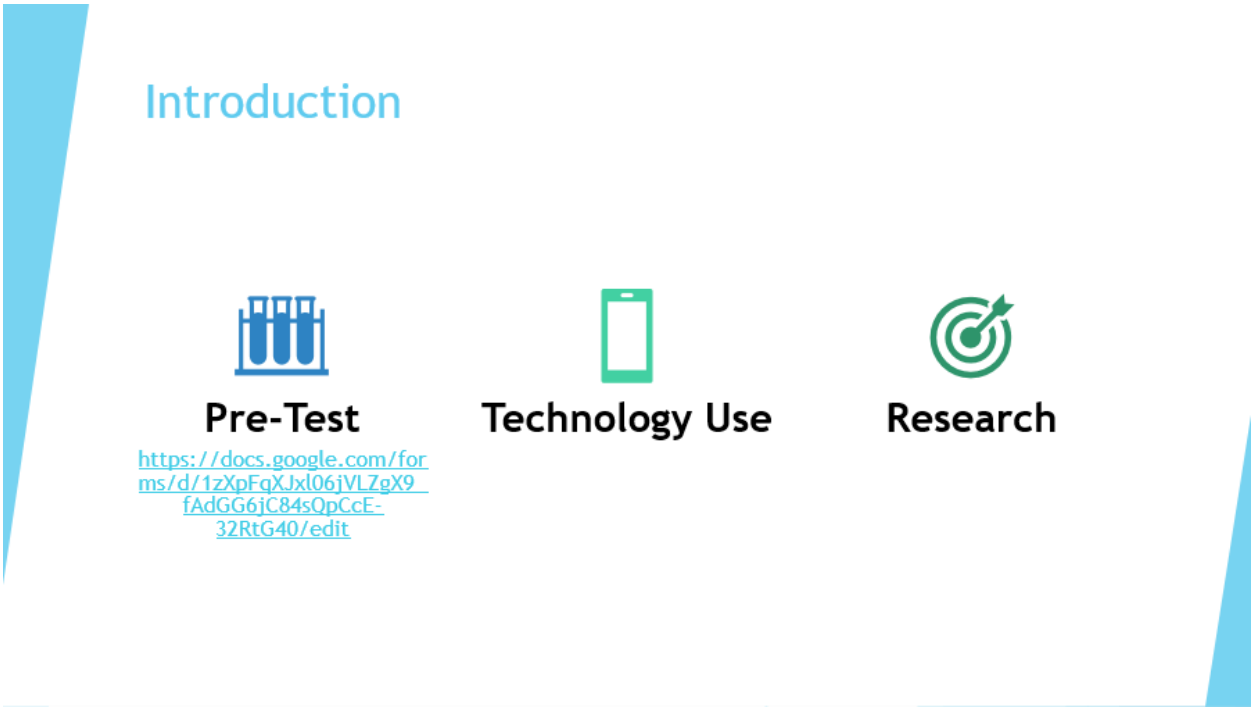
B-PA 3. Develop annual student outcome goals based on student data

B-PA 4. Develop and implement action plans aligned with annual student outcome goals and student data

B-PA 9. Use appropriate school counselor performance appraisal process

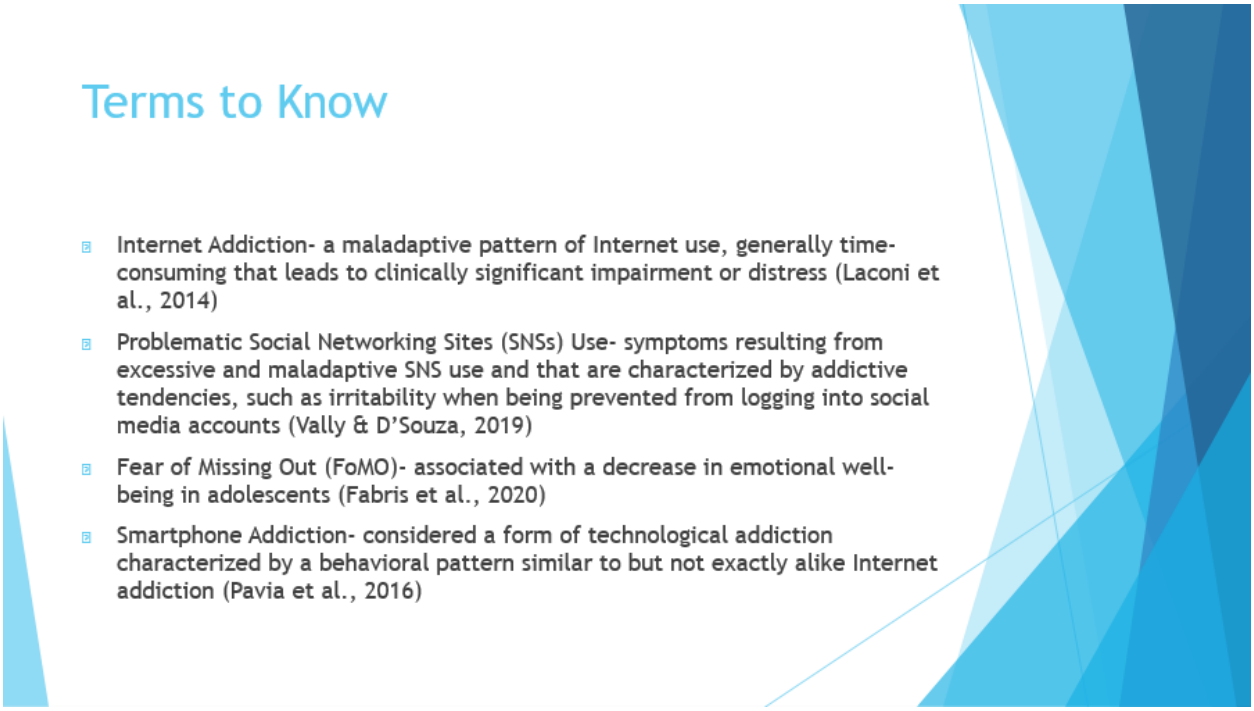
Training

Hello! My name is Megan Anderson- I am a school counselor with a passion for helping students understand what happens when we let social media takes over our emotions and how social media can affect our brains. I created this presentation for students as an awareness to help their learning and to give you the tools to better regulate emotions which will hopefully help you within your everyday life.



Starting off, I'd like you to take a short survey on social media use. If you have your phone to take it, great! If not, there are paper copies available. I'd like you to be as honest as possible while taking this survey and know this isn't a survey anyone is passing judgement on, it is just to get an idea of how the students here respond to social media use.

Technology Use- Technology is an incredible and ever-changing form of learning. Without technology, we would not have gotten to finish up the 19-20 school year and without social media, we would not have been able to stay connected to family and friends during the lockdown. Technology is incredible! But a good way to think about technology, internet, and social media is that those things are like a knife- a knife is very helpful when used properly and in a safe way but a knife can also cut you if it is used unsafely.

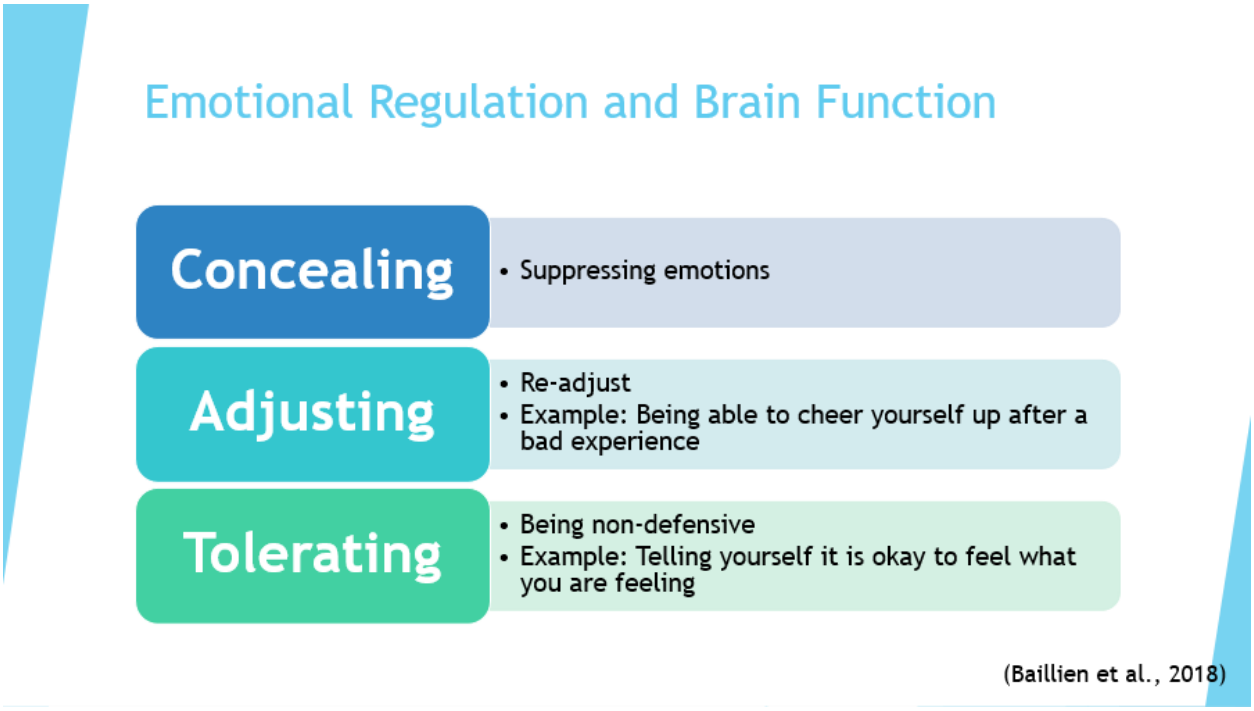


These are some terms before we jump into the presentation. The first term is internet addiction. Internet addiction is a pattern of time-consuming internet use which leads to distress. The next term is problematic social networking sites use. The symptoms of this results in excessive SNS use that are characterized by addictive tendencies. Next, is a term I am sure you have heard of before, FoMO or Fear of Missing Out. It is associated with a decrease in emotional well-being. Last, Smartphone addiction. It is a form of technology addiction, similar to Internet addiction.

My goals for this presentation are for you to take away these three key pieces- how social media affects our mental health and emotional regulation. I hope you will learn about social media addiction is and what the symptoms can include. By the end of this, I hope you take away at least one tip on how to be more mindful of how you use social media in your daily life, and this last one is a big one- this is not a presentation on how or why you should quit social media. That is not at all what I want this presentation to be. Social media is not going away, just like math isn't going away but what we can do is practice skills to better manage the effects of social media.

In a previous slide, we reviewed some important terms to know but I left this one out to be a slide of its own. I want to let you know that there is such a thing called social media addiction. What is social media addiction? There are many definitions and many different terms for SMA. From my research, the best definition I could come up with by combining many is SMA is considered a type of internet addiction. Individuals who spend too much time on social media and that have a desire to be notified of anything immediately. It leads to significant impairment or distress. Other terms for Social Media Addiction can include internet addiction, smartphone addiction, or technology addiction.

SMA has been found to be associated with depressive symptoms, anxiety, low self-esteem, general psychological distress, tension, failure to control usage, feeling lost without a phone. Along with SMA, has anyone heard of the term- Fear of Missing Out or FoMO? FoMO is related to SMA in the sense that FoMO as a specific need and a predisposing characteristic of addiction in adolescents, which activates a state of distress when the adolescent assesses the situation as unacceptable for his/her own needs. Social Media heightens the state of FoMO. Evidence seems to indicate that adolescents with high levels of FoMO tend to use social media more in order to compensate for these psychological needs. Along with that, more evidence suggest that FoMO may ultimately have an impact on the well-being of individuals, increasing negative affect and emotional symptoms. The increase in emotional symptoms are caused from the heightened feeling that they do not belong and that they are missing out on important shared experiences.



When adolescents fail to implement positive strategies to help regulate their emotions, increased rates of peer rejection, aggression, antisocial behavior, cyberbully or bullying and social media stress can occur. These are three coping skills that can help combat social media stress. The first one is concealing- which means suppressing emotions or pushing away certain feelings. The next skill is adjusting or re-adjusting. An easy example for adjusting is being able to cheer yourself up after a bad experience. The third one is tolerating which means being non-defensive or telling yourself it is okay to feel whatever feeling you have. These are all skills we use throughout our day, but sometimes putting a name to them can help us realize what we are doing is beneficial to our mental health.

I want to show you this video from NetSmartz.org called Split Decisions. It is about two different reactions to social media and how they end of affecting this girl's life.

*Watch Video

Ask the question to the audience- What were some major differences between the two reactions? She impulsively posted many negative things vs calling her friend or boyfriend, saying her frustrations but listening to what the other person had to say and not posting a comment. Next, she saw a photo that she didn't like- how did she handle that situation in different ways? Right, she asked the other girl nicely to take it down because she didn't like how she looked vs coming at the girl out of anger and approaching the situation harshly. What was the last thing you noticed after looking at the two reactions? Did you see any of the three skills used, concealing, adjusting, or tolerating? How did that work out for that student?

At the beginning of this presentation, I said I wanted to give you skills to use to help in your everyday life. We talked about concealing, adjusting, and tolerating but here are three skills that can be utilized throughout our day and whenever you are on social media. When you are scrolling through social media, I want you to recognize if you are scrolling for fun or scrolling to avoid something. Research states that a majority of scrolling is to avoid something, such as a certain feeling or a task like homework or household chores. Next is audit your social media diet. I use the would diet because diet is mostly associated with cutting a food item out of your eating like sugar or pop or candy, but with social media, looking through who you follow or what type of content you look at, is there anything you should cut out to create a better online experience for yourself. The last one, is model good behavior on social media. I've heard the phrases "would you say that to them in person" when it comes to posting a rude comment on someone's post. If you wouldn't say that in person, then it shouldn't be said online. Modeling good behavior

will help you continue having a positive social media experience and lessen social media stress. This takes time and practice!

I want to thank you for taking the time to listen to my presentation and participating in answering some questions! If you would fill out my post-test either on your phone or with the paper version, that would be helpful for me to know how I can improve and do better for next time! Are there any questions or comments that I can answer for you?

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Appendix

Pre-Test

Social Media Presentation

Pre-Test

1. Is social media use heavily integrated into your daily routine?

   Mark only one oval.

   - Yes
   - No
   - Maybe

2. Do you find yourself spending progressively more time on social media to get the same satisfaction?

   Mark only one oval.

   - Yes
   - No
   - Maybe

3. Do you rely on social media as a source of excitement, or to cope with boredom or loneliness?

   Mark only one oval.

   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Neutral
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

4. Do you feel a need to use social media, and feel edgy or anxious when you cannot?

   Mark only one oval.

   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Neutral
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

5. Do attempts to quit or reduce social media fail?

   Mark only one oval.

   - Yes
   - No
   - Maybe

6. Does social media cause problems in your life or conflicts with loved ones?

   Mark only one oval.

   - Yes
   - No
   - Maybe

Reference

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Post-Test

Social Media Awareness

Post-Test

1. Had you heard of Social Media Addiction before this presentation?

   Mark only one oval.

   - Yes
   - No
   - Maybe

2. Can you see correlations between your social media use and your mental health?

   Mark only one oval.

   - Yes
   - No
   - Maybe
   - Sometimes

3. Do you think you use social media as a way to avoid certain things such as homework or household chores or talking to someone in person?

   Mark only one oval.

   - Yes
   - No
   - Maybe
   - Sometimes

4. Are the skills that were discussed today skills you could utilize in your daily life?

   Mark only one oval.

   - Yes
   - No
   - Maybe

5. Additional comments, questions, or concerns?