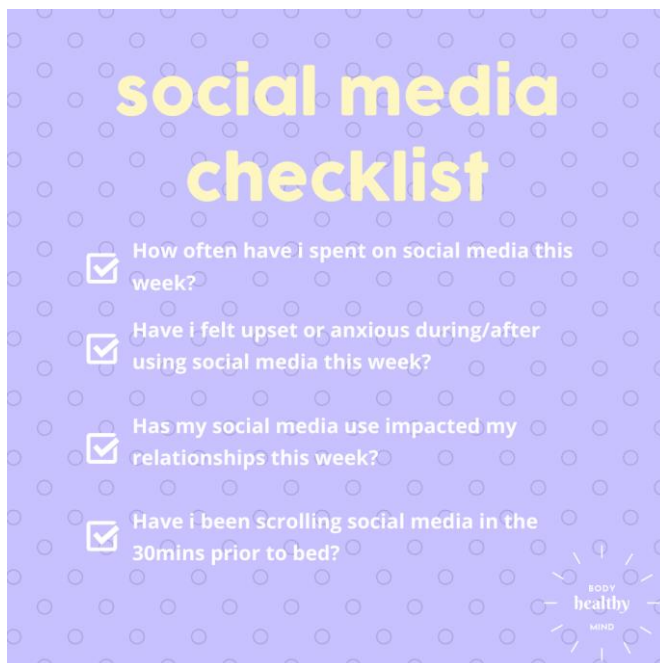


healthy body, healthy mind – healthy social media use

Practically all of us use social media sites such as Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat daily. However, do you know the impacts of them on your mental health? Social media can have positive and negative effects on us all but these effects are most commonly experienced by teenagers.

Take a minute to self-reflect and ask yourself the following questions. It might be helpful to save this image on your phone and try and reflect on it a few times each week.



Were you surprised by your answers? Research shows that social media use has been linked to increases and decreases in self-esteem. When checking your most recent photo on Instagram do you check how many likes you got and compare it to your other photos and other people's photos? How does that make you feel that you have more or less likes? You may feel better that people are liking your photo or profile and giving you attention, or on the other hand, you may feel disappointed and disappointed in yourself for not doing good enough. This is the effect of social media. When you post a photo to social media and it gains lots of likes or attention, your brain releases feel-good chemicals. In turn, this makes you more likely to use social media again to get the same level of satisfaction. This then may lead to over-use of social media and is the same basis in which addiction is formed. This is the negative side of social media.

On a positive note, social media is also a great way to stay connected with those friends and family who are far away. We have also experienced lately the amazing way that the use of social media site zoom has allowed students worldwide, including me, to access their

schooling.

Social media allows us to stay connected with others when physical interaction is not possible and this is highlighted right now during the COVID 19 struggle.

The important thing to remember about social media is that it can have both a positive and negative impact on our mental health and we understand that cutting social media out completely may not be an. It's super important that we are taking moments to pause and reflect on our social media use. When we notice that our social media is having a negative impact on us, we need to make sure we take breaks and do things that are kind for ourselves!

Please contact your local headspace centre or head to [ehespace.org.au](https://www.headspace.org.au) if you would like further support.