



Is social media replacing oxygen?



Social Media has become technology's version of oxygen, with more than 1 billion users on Facebook, 800 million Instagram users and 947 million Tweeters.

So what is it about social media that has had us all hooked up to our phones like oxygen tanks? You cannot argue it's great to keep in touch with friends, make new ones, and keep up to date with news. In today's ever-moving world, news on the go is a great thing, especially for our age group, who are statistically less likely to sit down and read a newspaper or watch the news.

Some people have even used social media to launch careers, products or concepts... even our very own TK used Instagram to launch a Bow Tie business and had great success (p.s. watch out for him in the future – he could well be the next Richard Branson!).

However, the toxic element of social media is that it literally can take over your life so much that you are not actually living in the moment, but just through your phone. How many of you spend more time on your phone than actually talking to real people face to face? On top of this, it's simply quite sad that people spend less and less time in the company of other real humans!

There are also other considerations like Cyber bullying, which at its worst has cruelly seen teenagers take their own lives. We really want to raise awareness of how to protect yourselves online and to let you know that if you are a victim of cyber bullying there is always someone you can talk to here at The Academy (you can speak to us any time!). We also want to really shout out about the fact that so much of what you see isn't real... perfect doesn't exist! We want you to ignore the filtered photos, stop putting pressure on yourself to be everything and just do you! Because you are pretty amazing!



Here are our top tips for ruling social media and not letting it rule you

1. Limit yourself! You do not need to check in or post pictures of your dinner!!!!
2. Stick to just your friends when sharing posts, over sharing can be dangerous in many ways

3. Think about who may see what you “like” – potential employers may not be impressed and it is well-documented now how some candidates lose jobs over an extreme social media presence
4. Apply your privacy settings, this takes a bit of time on Facebook, but get it right. You wouldn't leave your front door open so don't leave yourself open on social media
5. Don't post things you wouldn't want your Grandparents to see! You know exactly what we are talking about

Some advice from our team:

Summer says, *“People can hide behind a false persona online, so be careful who you talk to.”*

Kasper adds, *“It's great to use social media to keep up to date with news and current events and keep in contact with friends, just be safe about it.”*

Rose finishes by reminding you, *“Ignore all fake people and make sure you are not reading into fake news, it's all about keeping it real.”*

If you need any more advice then please come to see us – or get in contact with us on all social media platforms of course – or any member of staff at the Academy. Let's embrace technology as it is the future, but let's rule it and not let it rule us!

LOL

The Post 16 Social Media Team