

HOW TO HELP

- Open, non-judgmental communication about social media use is essential.
- Encourage critical thinking about online content, and help your teen develop a healthy perspective on the curated nature of Instagram posts.
- Set clear guidelines for screen time and online behavior, but involve teens in creating these rules.
- Educate yourself about Instagram's features and privacy settings to better understand teens' experiences.
- Model healthy social media habits in your own life, and promote activities that build self-esteem offline.
- If you notice signs of distress, such as withdrawal from real-life activities or mood changes, seek professional help.



**You can help
minimize social
media's negative
impacts.**

**Real connection is
more important than
virtual perfection.**

**ABOUT 50% OF TEENS
USE INSTAGRAM DAILY.**

TEENS AND INSTAGRAM

Understanding the App



Instagram's APPEAL

Instagram's popularity among teenagers comes from its visually driven platform, which appeals to their desire for self-expression and social connection. The app offers a creative outlet through photo and video sharing, allowing teens to curate their online persona and document their lives.



Features like Stories and Reels provide dynamic ways to engage with friends and discover content. Instagram also serves as a window into the lives of celebrities, influencers, and peers, satisfying teens' curiosity and need for social validation. The app's emphasis on visual aesthetics and instant feedback through likes and comments aligns with teens' developmental stage, in which self-image and peer approval are paramount.

Instagram's Impact on **TEEN** **MENTAL HEALTH**

While Instagram has some benefits, there are growing concerns about its potential negative effects on teen mental health.

The curated nature of posts can lead to unrealistic comparisons, which foster feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem.

The pressure to maintain a perfect online image can be overwhelming, contributing to anxiety and depression.

Cyberbullying, body image issues, and FOMO (fear of missing out) can be made worse on the app.

Studies have linked excessive Instagram use to sleep disruption, decreased attention span, and addiction-like behaviors.

The app's algorithm, designed to maximize engagement, may expose teens to harmful content or reinforce negative thought patterns, potentially impacting their developing sense of self and well-being.