



4-29-2024

## Effects Of Social Media On Adolescents Self-Esteem And Body Image

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### Recommended Citation

Rylee Solheim. "Effects Of Social Media On Adolescents Self-Esteem And Body Image" (2024).  
*Psychology Student Publications*. 33.  
<https://commons.und.edu/psych-stu/33>

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## **Effects of Social Media on Adolescents Self-Esteem and Body Image**

The rise of social media has transformed the way we connect, communicate, and perceive ourselves. For adolescents specifically, social media apps like Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat have become huge platforms that navigate friendships, identity, and self-worth. Imagine a young boy or girl scrolling through Instagram and they are constantly show images of flawless models, fitness influencers, and people who are shown through media to be “perfect”. In this paper the impact social media has on adolescent self-esteem and body image will be explored through some of the latest research on the topic. We will explore how online interactions can shape adolescent self-esteem and discuss potential interventions to promote healthy self-esteem and body image in the future.

Let’s dive into the research behind the impact of social media on adolescent self-esteem and body image. There was a study done by Steinsbekk et al. (2021) that talks about the longitudinal effects of social media use on appearance self-esteem from childhood to adolescence. Their findings show that increased social media use over time is associated with decreased appearance self-esteem. The highlighted points were the potential negative impact of prolonged exposure to social media on how adolescents perceive their own appearance. The more a teenager uses social media as they grow up, the worse they tend to feel about their appearance. Spending excessive amounts of time on social media can make teenagers feel less confident or to feel bad about themselves. An example of this could be a young girl who spends hours of her day scrolling through social media and seeing a lot of content of beautiful girls, and then she goes to look in the mirror and feels worse about her appearance because she is now comparing herself to those girls on social media. The more pictures they see of other people looking “perfect” causes them to doubt themselves more. Understanding this can help us prevent

teenagers from not only excessive use of social media, but to help them feel better about themselves online and offline.

There are many factors that can contribute to the results that social media negatively impacts adolescents' self-esteem. Acar et al. (2022) discusses the role of emotional problems social media addiction may have in adolescent self-esteem. The researchers suggest that adolescents that experienced emotional difficulties or perhaps show signs of addictive behavior related to social media are more likely to struggle with low self-esteem than those that do not show these signs. Other than these reasons, there are other things that contribute to the effect of social media on adolescents' feelings about themselves. The researchers found that if a teenager already has a difficult time dealing with their feelings and emotions, they are more likely to feel bad about themselves. This shows how there is a relationship between how teenagers feel inside, social media, and how teenagers view themselves. Since we know this, it can help us find new ways to prevent teenagers from the negative effects of social media use.

Findings from Bányai et al. (2016) showed that a significant number of adolescents exhibit problematic patterns with social media use. The large-scale study they performed to examine these problematic patterns showed that there can be damaging effects on the psychological well-being of adolescents, including self-esteem and body image issues. The study found that many teenagers have problems with social media, and they also looked at the affects social media has on teenagers from different places around the world. Some teenagers that show problematic patterns with social media use might start to feel less confident about their appearance because of the content seen on social media. Their research shows how common these issues are and why it is important to talk about them and make steps toward a positive solution.

There is also research done by van Oosten et al. (2023) that shows that adolescents who tend to look at more appearance-related content on social media may be more susceptible to negative effects on their self-esteem and body image. The researchers of the study explored the predictors of visually oriented social media use among adolescents relating to psychological well-being and body image concerns. The findings were that the teens could feel worse about their bodies since they are more exposed to this type of content. The researchers looked at how a teenager's feelings and what they see online are connected and showed us how social media can change how teenagers feel about themselves. It is important to remember this and help adolescents understand that what they see online does not need to make them feel less happy about themselves.

We have learned that social media does in fact play a role in the self-esteem and body image of adolescents, in both positive and negative ways. It is crucial to promote media literacy skills and to show support of adolescents offline to help prevent potential negative impacts that social media has on their well-being. For example, one of my friends was scrolling through Instagram and came upon an account for a gorgeous runway model. She looked at me and said, "why can't I look like this?" and I told her that she is beautiful in her own way and doesn't need to look like the model to be viewed as pretty. This made my friend feel better and showed me how important it is to have that reassurance outside of social media, especially for younger adolescents.

There are many ways to improve how teenagers feel about themselves while they use social media. One example could be if schools teach their students how to tell what is real of fake on social media platforms. There could even be classes or workshops incorporated in schools to focus on social media and promoting positive body image and self-acceptance.

Discussing healthy lifestyle choices and body diversity can help teenagers embrace themselves for who they are and to think positively about who that person is. This method could help them feel better about themselves when they come across a picture of someone “perfect” on social media. Talking to a counselor is another way to help improve a teenagers learn how to be more positive and to treat themselves kindly when it comes to their appearance. It is also important for parents to talk to their children about social media and how to use it safely and responsibly. Teaching their teenager to set rules and limits when it comes to social media and greatly improve their self-esteem. It is important for their parent to show them they are perfect just the way that they are. Promoting mindfulness and stress reduction techniques for teenagers can also help them improve their self-esteem. Combining some or all these methods can help prevent negative effects of social media on adolescents’ self-esteem and body image Here is a video talking about the relationship between social media and self-esteem.

[https://youtu.be/nxolrIIWEMQ?si=jo\\_iWbonyssX6uMv](https://youtu.be/nxolrIIWEMQ?si=jo_iWbonyssX6uMv)

In conclusion, the relationship between social media use and adolescent self-esteem and body image is complex and has many other contributing factors involved. If schools, communities, and families work together to create a supportive environment around social media. By understanding the relationship involved we can help create a more positive and healthier online environment for future adolescents.

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