

Healthy social media use means finding balance

Most Americans use social media. The tools can help you stay connected with friends and family or stay up on the news. But social media use can also be harmful. Some people spend more time on social media than they plan to. Or they may be exposed to things that harm their mental health. It's important to find balance.

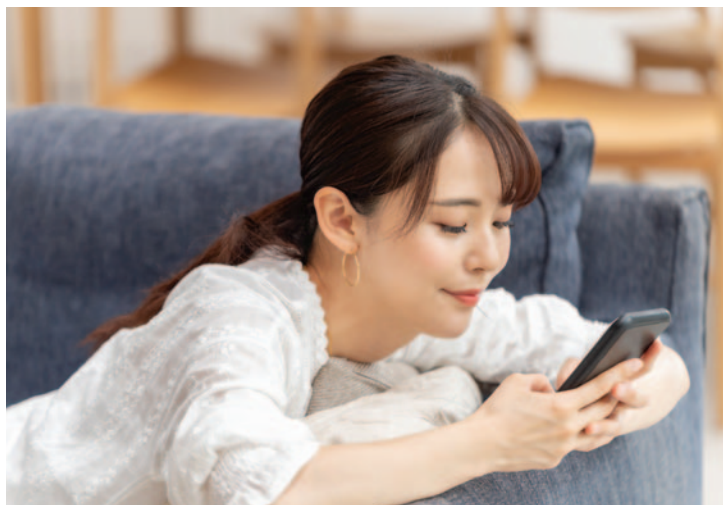


Photo above by Itakayuki, below by Wachiwit, courtesy iStockphoto

Quick facts on social media

1 One sign that you're having problem with social media is if you can't go a few hours without checking it or posting something. Taking a break from social media can help regain perspective.



2 Finding balance with social media use means setting boundaries. Make a decision not to post or view sites during certain days or hours, such as after 5 p.m or on the weekend.

3 To improve your time on social media, follow people who are positive influences. Be kind in responses, because a real person with feelings is behind every screen.

4 Be conscious what you watch and "like" on social media, as the platforms are designed to give you more of that topic, which may not be what is best for you.

5 Social media can be harmful for children too. Talk to your kids about what they see and share online. Some sites allow parents to link their account to their child's and manage what their kids are doing.



>> For more tips on healthy social media use for kids, visit www.kidshealth.org