

DIGITAL DEPENDENCY

Social media has become a beloved and essential part of our daily lives. But perhaps it's time to rethink our relationship with social media.

Digital Detox: It's time to get a life outside social media

by senior Abby Lashbrook

Nine hours. In that amount of time, you could drive to Kansas City and back, take the ACT three times, or finish a marathon with an hour left to spare. But instead, many choose to spend this time chained to their phones, locked away from reality.

According to CNN, teenagers spend an average of nine hours a day on social media, television, and other digital devices. All this time is wasted posting, tweeting, watching, and obsessing over anything and everything to do with social media.

Personally, I have never experienced social media as an underlying obsession. I don't feel the need to check my phone every five minutes or have a constant itch to tweet. #sorrynotsorry.

Unfortunately, many cannot say the same. There are some individuals who cannot seem to step away from their screen long enough to face reality. They spend more time scrolling through their feed than actually living their life. Social media is supposed to be

an outlet for others to exchange information, express emotion, and make relationships, not a substitute for human interaction.

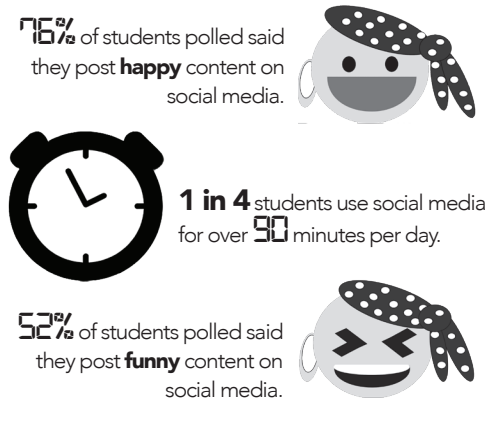
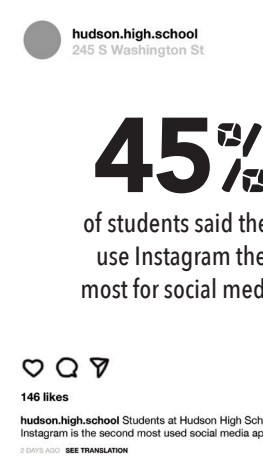
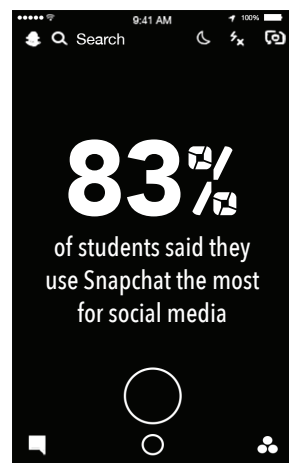
These "social media-holics" focus on the most senseless obscurities of life. They care more about how many "likes" they get on their Instagram post rather than how many A's they get on their report card.

High school should be used to expand a person's knowledge, not their fan base. Too many people depend on getting followers and "likes" to boost their self-esteem.

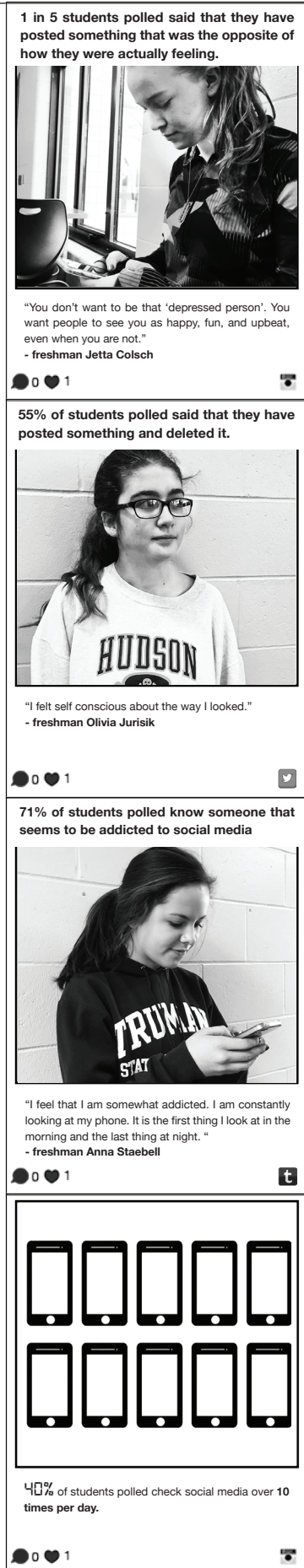
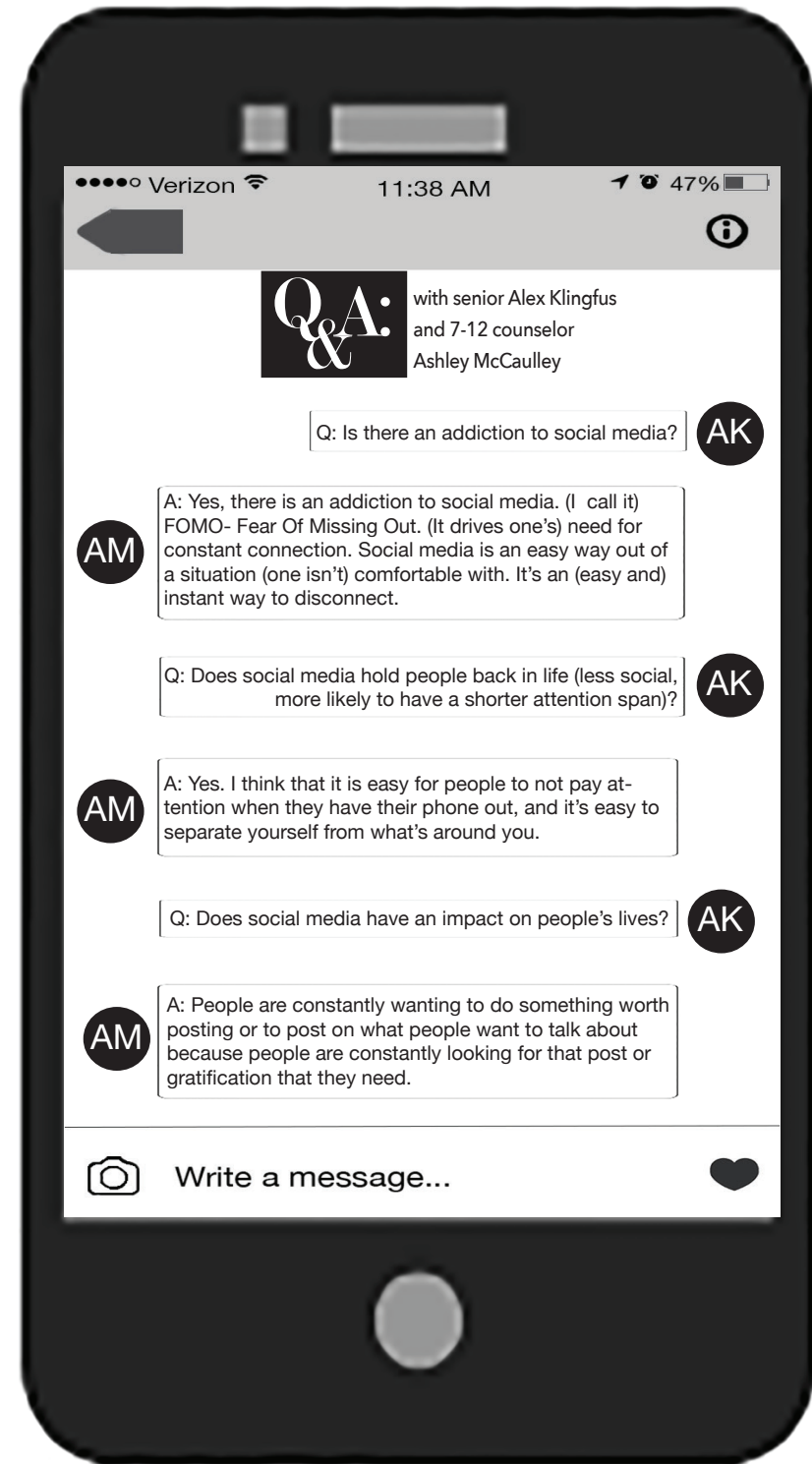
But social media should never be used as a way to satisfy someone's craving for attention, nor should it ever be the basis for one's self worth. When that happens, social media becomes an obsession, an addiction, and a curse.

There is more to life than a screen. It's time for us to disconnect in order to reconnect, unplug from apps in order to plug into reality, and recharge in order to refresh. #unplug

Did you know?
100% of students polled check social media at least once a day.



graphics by sophomore Kacie Herring



PROS AND CONS of social media usage

PROS:

- "Social media allows you to be connected IMMEDIATELY to the world and the world is CONNECTED to you. It is the fastest way to distribute information."
- senior Andrew Oleson
- "Social media is a good way to show and EXPRESS yourself."
- freshman Nathan Murray

CONS:

- "Many people have been BULLIED over social media, and it has created many CONFLICTS for people when they are trying to get a job."
- junior Morgan Kegebein
- "Social media PRESSURES one with unrealistic expectations of celebrities."
- freshman Halle Haack

ADVICE FROM STUDENTS

"I would say to SHUT YOUR PHONE OFF for awhile and talk with your family and friends and have a good time without your phone. You can have way more fun with your friends and family than being on your phone."
- freshman Sara Hansen

"I would advise them to TAKE A BREAK from social media by putting it somewhere where they would not be tempted to be on it and to distract themselves by doing other activities that would be productive."
- senior Emma Yoder

"DISCONNECT for a week, no matter what, even better if it's on a vacation or something, to help take your mind off of it."
- junior Lucas Lubben

#NoFilter: People should be themselves on social media

by senior Grace Jorgensen

We are all familiar with that full-face makeup, pin-straight hair, and heavily-edited selfie captioned "#IWokeUpLikeThis". #DidYouReallyWokeUpLikeThat?

Teens today use social media as a mask. We use apps and filters to make ourselves and what we eat look better. But what would happen if we started to live our online lives without the filter? What if we decided to show the real us?

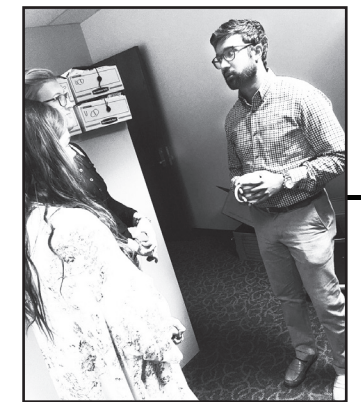
There's a lesson for the viewers on social media as well. It's important to remember that what's portrayed on someone else's social media isn't necessarily who they really are.

The few pictures we see are edited snapshots of their life's constant stream. They aren't sharing the super embarrassing or painful moments that we have all experienced for the world to see, but that doesn't mean they don't have them.

Yet, we still get depressed because we com-

pare ourselves to others' "picture perfect" lives. Little do we know that they are all hiding behind the same facade we do.

Now here's the deal: whether we want to ad-



Seniors Grace Jorgensen and Abby Lashbrook interview Ben Baby from the Dallas Morning News during their trip to the National Journalism Convention in Dallas, Texas. Baby explains how social media has helped create an era of false identities and facades.

"It's all FAKE. No one is actually putting what their life is really like in their Instagram feed. It's just easier to be fake in 2017."
- Ben Baby, sports writer for Dallas Morning News

Now, I'm not saying that we should start posting about every bad day, but shouldn't we start being real about what we post?

We put too much time and energy into otherwise planning what we post, stressing that it might not look flawless, and fretting that we won't get that double-tap validation from our peers. Share the unfiltered and untouched moments.

That is what your followers will truly love—your true form. The pressure to be perfect in real life is already too much, so let's do ourselves a favor and realize that it's okay if our posts are imperfect. It's okay if they're messy. Life is messy, and that's the beauty of it.

The purpose of social media is to better connect with others. But doesn't that require us to be honest? The moment when we choose to lift our masks and unveil who we really are is the moment we, as a society, will be truly connected.

