

OPINION: Social Media Complexities Expand Among Middle School Students

OPINION BY: Addison Dale

From tiktok challenges to viral memes, social media is an evolving and constant source of teenage entertainment and information. Over 90% of teenagers from ages 12-17 use social media apps.

In today’s digital world, social media is an undeniable way of daily life. It shapes how people communicate, learn, and share experiences.

There are many pros and cons to the use of social media. Many argue that children should be shielded from these platforms until they are older, but maybe it is time to rethink this approach.

Kids should be allowed to get social media once they are in middle school. With all of the advancements in technology, social media has become an important way people connect and communicate with one another.

As time goes on, students are starting to use social media at younger ages. This early exposure allows kids to build relationships, express themselves, and develop their digital literacy skills.

Its like teaching your kid to swim. At first you hold them close and guide them to the shallow end of the pool, to make sure they are safe. Eventually, they have to try it on their own so they can learn to navigate the water on their own.

Social media, like swimming, requires guidance at first, but then with the right supervision and rules, it can help them develop important skills.

Personally, I wasn’t allowed to use social media until I reached high school. No matter how hard I tried to convince my parents, nothing could change their minds.

When living in a generation where social media is such a big part of life, I often felt left out and secluded. It felt like everyone, except me, had social media.

If everyone around you had something and you didn’t, wouldn’t that make you feel left out too? Social media helps prevent that feeling by allowing you to stay connected with friends and family, while also allowing you to build those relationships.

Additionally, students can use social media to plan for their future and careers by building their digital literacy skills and independence.

According to internetmatters.org, an organization that strives to create a future where young people can benefit safely from the impact of connected technology, “85% of parents agree digital skills are essential for their child’s future.”

Social media also allows children to express themselves. It can allow them to pursue some of their interests and passions, while sharing their creativity with others.

Some people may argue that social media can be very dangerous for kids. Although there are some risks, having conversations about safety and privacy on the internet can give the child the information they need to avoid danger.

“Just as we decide when kids are old enough to drive, and we teach them to be good drivers, we can establish guidelines and teach children to use social media safely,” Mary Alvord, a clinical psychologist in Maryland and professor at George Washington University said.

In conclusion, middle schoolers should be allowed to use social media. As technology continues to advance and grow in popularity, social media is becoming both safer and a more fundamental part of everyday life.

Social media has many benefits for students, including building relationships with friends and family, promoting creativity and self-expression, and allowing students to build literacy skills and independence.

By recognizing the benefits of social media, parents can give their children the opportunity to grow their technological skills and establish more personal connections. It’s time to embrace the positive impact it can have, and encourage others to do the same.



Cartoon by Addison Dale



Artist’s Statement - Addison Dale

I made this cartoon using canva and it was meant to represent the harmful effects social media can have on people, including making people feel left out, depressed, and insecure. It can also consume people's lives by becoming addictive and unhealthy. I used some of Canva's "elements" to find the picture of the cigarettes, then I just copied and pasted images of various social media websites from google onto the separate cigarettes. I also used some of Canva's backgrounds to represent some of the smoke in the back and used text boxes to write all of the information on the cigarette box.