

Annie's Angle



Shut It Down Or Get Some Shut-Eye

Annie Howie

Okay, I confess. I am apart of the group of teens who spends nine hours a day on social media. At first, that statistic was surprising to me and I thought to myself, 'there is NO way I spend that much time on my phone a day.' However, I was proved wrong.

For the majority of us with smartphones, there is a feature on our phones that tells us what percentage of our battery was used on a specific application and the amount of hours spent on it. When I looked at mine, I was baffled.

Over the last seven days, I have used 47 percent of my battery life on Snapchat. No wonder I run out of data every time (and am in an never-ending debt to my parents for data overage charges). Almost half of my battery was spent on this one app which does not include other social medias (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) and messaging/calling (the phone's original purpose).

One third of the day. Nine Hours. 540 minutes. According to The National Sleep Foundation, that is the number of hours a teenager needs of sleep. Coincidentally, that is also the amount of time teens spend on their phones.

Sleep Deprivation. Yet another problem facing teens all over. Also according to The National Sleep Foundation, more than 87 percent of high school students in the United States get less than the recommended eight to ten hours.

Think about this for a moment- What if social media and smartphones were non-existent? Would you reach that recommended amount of sleep? I know for a fact I would.

During the week, I either dance from four to nine o'clock or work after school until eight o'clock. Though I'm getting home at a reasonable time, I am rarely starting my homework at a reasonable time. It could be debated as to why I do not get it started as soon as get home (other priorities such as showering, eating, and conversing with my family), but I know the underlying cause.

Ultimately, it is due to the fact that I come home, put on my

pajamas, get in bed, and start the cycle of using my phone: Checking Twitter and Instagram feeds, watching and answering Snapchats, and checking up on Facebook. Before I realize it, it is almost always the 11th hour and I have yet to start on any homework.

If your time once you finally get home for the night (whether it is after school, a job, or extracurriculars) is also consumed by a large amount of screen time, you could probably nod your head in agreeance with me right now that it would be easier to get things done. You could probably even laugh at the sad truth being that if it weren't for social media, we would easily get more sleep. Even to go as far to say that we could maybe achieve more than the recommended hours of sleep.

Alright, so now that I have made you (and me) feel pretty terrible about our social media use and pretty much rethink our entire lives (due to the amount of time wasted on social media) - what is the solution? Heck if I know.

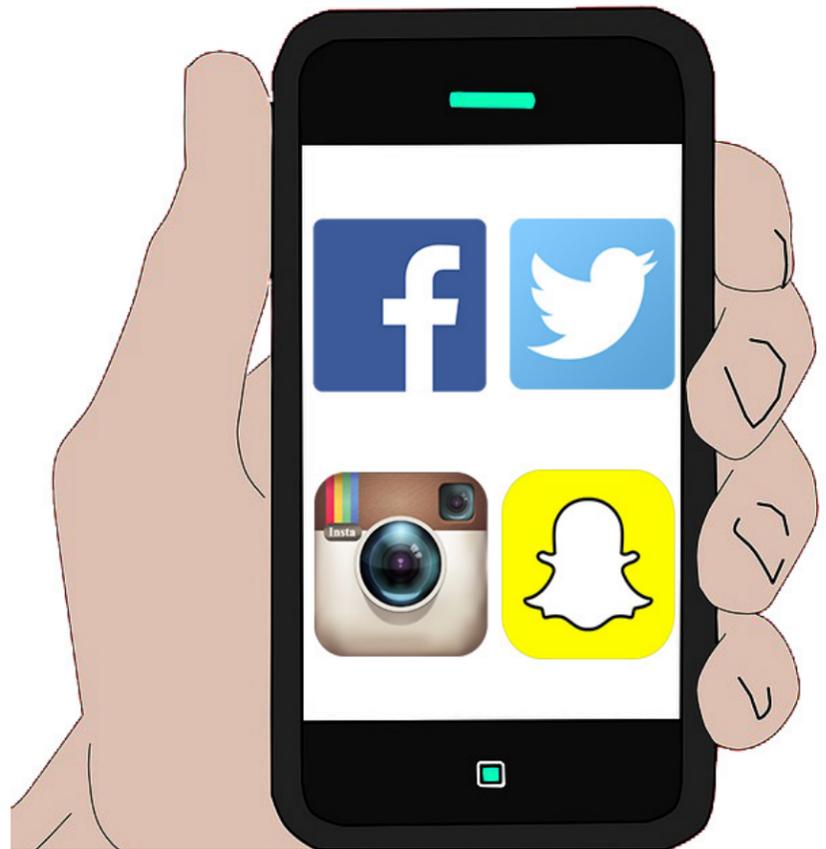
To start, couldn't we all just try to limit our social media usage by putting the phone down for an hour more a day? A mere four percent of the day. One hour. 60 minutes. You and I both can do it. Besides, I know an extra hour of sleep could make a world of a difference.

At the end of the day, it is up to you. Ask yourself: Will I continue to be yet another teen included in the "addicted-to-social-media" group, or will I transcend above the inevitable waste of time, psychological trap that is ingrained in our minds and do something productive with my time; or just catch up on sleep?

You decide. But as for me, tonight I plan to try to take my own advice: tell my Snapchat friends we'll talk later, not care about who is arguing on Twitter, or wonder why they posted that god-awful, cliché caption with their fourth selfie this week.

Instead of letting the social-media-monster continue to consume my life, I will hang-out with friends and have real, engaging conversations without the use of our phones. Or, a pastime most of us value, go to sleep.

The Newest Drug: Social Media



Do You Think You're Addicted To Social Media?



"No because I'm only on social media if someone else sends me a snapchat, just to keep the streak going. I spend about 3-4 hours a day."

-Logan James ('19)



"I wouldn't say addicted. It goes everywhere with me, but I'm not checking it constantly. I think I spend about 6 hours a day, and the same time spent on social media." -Nichole Moran ('20)



"I'm definitely addicted. I spend at least 8 hours a day on my phone, about 3 hours on social media."

- Joshua Pearson ('17)

Side Effects Include: Sleep Deprivation

Emily Skroly

Morgan checks her clock as she sets down her phone to start her homework and sees that it is already 12:45 a.m. Yawning, she rubs her eyes, confused how three hours had gone by so fast. Her eyes hurt from staring at the screen and Morgan didn't want to think about beginning the homework she procrastinated. She lost track of time while using social media apps including Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

Social Media has become a major time consumer throughout today's teens. According to The Washington Post, teens spend on average a total of nine hours a day on social media. By using up more than a third of their day on social media, teens take time away from human interactions, outdoor activities, and education.

"I'm definitely addicted, I'm always on my phone and always posting. As soon as I get home from school, I pretty much go straight to my room and then I'm on it for two to three hours, until my parents get home. And then the rest of the night I spend time on my phone, so probably about eight hours," said Elaina Dickerson ('18).

Along with spending most of the day online, it has become common for social media to take a negative toll on teenagers sleeping habits. Young adults are constantly checking their notifications on their phones during their free time. Unfortunately for teens most of their free time takes place at the end of the day, overlapping time they could be using for sleep. According to Business Insider, phone usage before sleeping prevents the brain's production of melatonin, making it longer and harder to fall asleep.

"My addiction to my phone completely cuts into my sleep time. I spend more time using my phone than I should, probably up to eight hours a day; it feels like I'm literally always on it. I feel like the only thing I do is spend time on social media," said Logan James ('17).

Social media is still considered a new trend, which explains its popularity in young adults. Older generations often complain about the lack of communication between teenagers and how they rely on social media for forms communication, education, and politics.

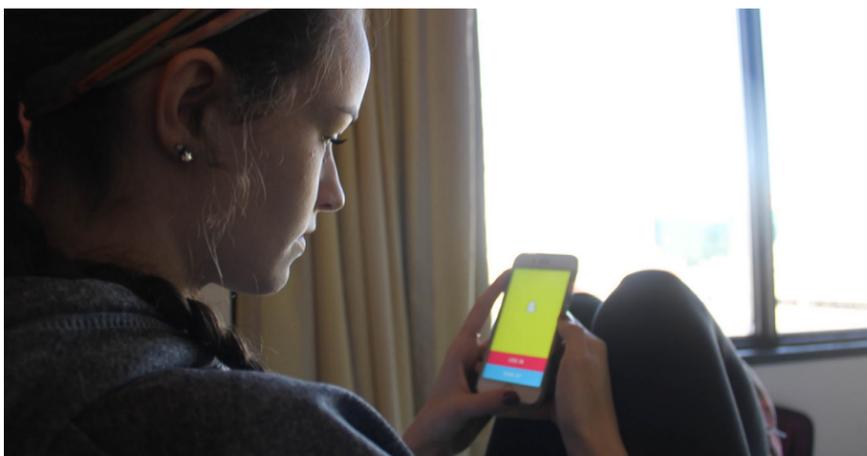
"I would say teens are on their phones around fifteen hours a day. I think that it is an unhealthy addiction just because you are missing out with engaging in conversation with other people," said Derek Galose, father of two teenagers.

While most teens say that their sleep time is af-

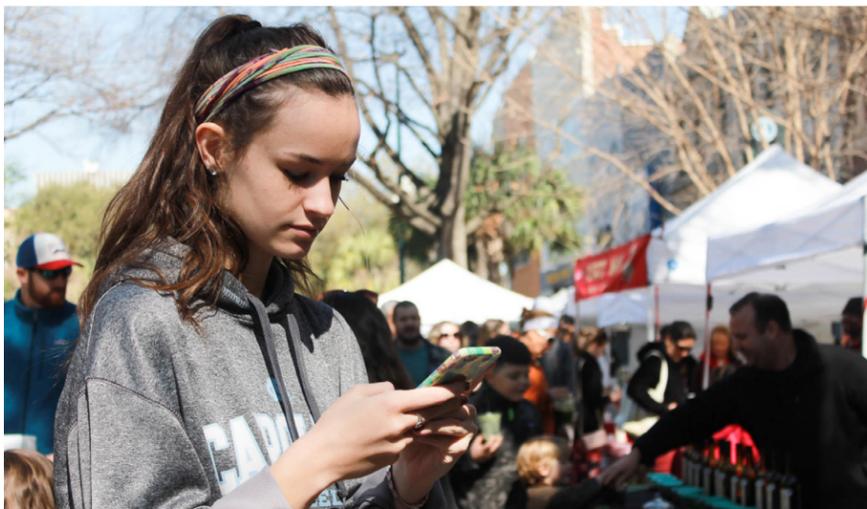
ected by social media, other teens (even ones who are frequently on their devices) say that their phones don't impact the amount of sleep they receive.

"I'm definitely not addicted to my phone, I probably spend about 3 hours on social media. I don't think it takes away from my sleep time," said Robert Rauschenberg ('19).

Overall there are many effects of social media on high school students, especially on the amount of sleep teenagers receive. Some young adults spend tons of their time on their devices, "I spend pretty much the whole day on my phone," says Lily Asaad ('17), while others don't spend nearly that much. While it depends on the type of person you are, the addiction to social media is heavily linked to teens. It is known as a new, favorite past time, but also a new link to many problems.



After returning home from school, the student hops in bed and spends at least 2 hours on her phone. Most likely losing track of time and forgetting how much homework she has to do.



Moments after the teenager glanced away from her phone long enough to check traffic, she returns to being absorbed in her phone and continues to block out the rest of the world.

HIGH SCHOOL: MOST USED SOCIAL MEDIA

