

Time spent on social networking sites linked to mental health problems in teens

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A new study indicates that adolescents who use social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram for more than 2 hours each day are more likely to report poor mental health, high psychological distress, suicidal thoughts, and an unmet need for mental health support. These findings send an important message to parents and suggest an opportunity to increase mental health support service offerings on these sites, as described in an article in *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*.

Hugues Sampasa-Kanyinga, MD and Rosamund Lewis, MD, Ottawa Public Health (Ottawa, Canada) analyzed data on students in grades 7-12 from the Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey. About 25% of students reported using social networking sites for more than 2 hours daily.

In the article "Frequent Use of Social Networking Sites Is Associated with Poor Psychological Functioning Among Children and Adolescents," the authors compare time spent using social networking sites to the teens' self-reports of psychological well-being and unmet needs for [mental health](#) support.

"This is where we see [social networking](#) sites, which may be a problem for some, also being a solution," says Editor-in-Chief Brenda K. Wiederhold, PhD, MBA, BCB, BCN, Interactive Media Institute, San Diego, California. "Since teens are on the sites, it is the perfect place for public health and service providers to reach out and connect with this

vulnerable population and provide health promotion systems and supports."

More information: [online.liebertpub.com/doi/full ...
1089/cyber.2015.0055](https://online.liebertpub.com/doi/full/1089/cyber.2015.0055)

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